

Leading Organizational Change

All change in organizations ultimately depends on some stakeholders taking some new or different course of action. Consequently, our focus in the workshop was to identify how we can influence stakeholder groups to take actions.

Below are a few of the most important insights we offer.

1. Begin by clearly identifying a specific, behavioral change. Is it an action that passes the “video test— one that could be captured on film?
2. Perform a stakeholder assessment. Understand your stakeholders’ needs, concerns, motives, interests, and barriers—especially their barriers.
3. Understand that any significant change may trigger anxiety, loss, and a period of re-adjustment. This is not necessarily resistance to change.
4. Do not think of your stakeholder group as homogeneous. Within any stakeholder group you likely have a group of influential early adopters who can be used as the ambassadors for your change project.
5. As you consider influence tactics—methods to move your stakeholders to act—do not over-rely on “push tactics” designed to persuade or convince. Going into “sales mode” is often exactly what is not needed at the early stages of change. Instead, consider “pull tactics” that allow you to better understand your stakeholders and your stakeholders to adjust to the change in question.
6. Consider a broad array of influence tactics and do not settle simply for the “usual suspects” like providing incentives.
7. Among the 26 influence tactics we shared, we focused special attention on:
 - Involvement: engaging stakeholders in planning and executing the changes
 - Baby steps: trying to drive preparatory or partial actions
 - Barriers: having stakeholders identify and plan for overcoming barriers
 - Confidence: working to boost stakeholder self-efficacy in performing the needed action
 - Short-cuts: identifying ways to make performing the action easier
 - Modeling: finding ways to model the action for stakeholders
 - Spotlighting: finding ways to “shine a light” on others who are performing the action
 - Competition: identify opportunities to turn performing the action into a competition
 - Incentives: providing (small) rewards for the performance of the action
 - Recognition: finding ways to acknowledge or recognize people who perform the action
 - Space and time: Adjusting spatial or temporal arrangements to make performing the action easier
 - Triggers: employing reminders or prompts to occasion performing the action
 - Visibility: making either the performance of the action or results of the action visible



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