

The Taming of the Change



A Comic Drama in Six Parts
(An almost comical look at the Process of Change)



Statement of Concept

*All the world's a stage,
and all the men and women merely players;
They have all their exits and their entrances,
and the one man in his time plays many parts.
As you like it, Shakespeare*

Change is a process. Regardless of how it affects (afflicts?) your organization, we respond to it in predetermined patterns and sequences.

This process contains high drama, conflict, tension, failure, (success?) and unavoidable comic elements.

Even a rudimentary understanding of this process, greatly enhances our ability to manage Change.

I hope you enjoy this tongue in cheek 'Playbill' as an amusing and useful outline of the Change process. These concepts are based upon the work of Virginia Satir.

Yours Truly
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O you Gods!

*Why do you make us love your goodly gifts
and snatch them straight away!*

Pericles, Shakespeare

- ☑ Status quo is the sum of all current competencies.
- ☑ A competency is a result of a personal investment.
- ☑ It is only natural for people to protect this ‘asset.’

When faced with a ‘change,’ which asset is threatened?
Which asset does the target audience think is threatened?

~~✎~~ *Before inflicting Change, know the Status Quo (SQ).*



*What see you in those papers that you lose
so much complexion? Look ye how they change!*

Henry V, Shakespeare

- ☑ The foreign Element (FE) is any event which disrupts the Status Quo.
- ☑ An FE is either externally inflicted or internally imposed on the Status Quo.
- ☑ In either case, the FE destroys the investment made to achieve the Status Quo

Which assets exactly, does the FE affect?

~~✎~~ *The FE and SQ together define the 'Change'.*



Act 3:

Resistance and Denial

*New customs,
Though they be never so ridiculous.
(Nay, let them be unmanly), yet are followed.
Henry VIII, Shakespeare*

- ☑ Resisting Change is merely asking the legitimate question: “Why should I give up that which I worked so hard to acquire?”
- ☑ Denial is merely continuing to use past behaviours which were once praised... It takes time to break a good habit.

Do you really wish to have people who don't practice good habits? Or who throw away good investments without good reason?

~~✎~~ *Both Resistance & Denial are normal behaviours.*



Act 4:

Chaos

*Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Macbeth, Shakespeare*

- ☑ The FE makes existing Competencies obsolete, the result is ‘incompetence.’
- ☑ Incompetence is merely the absence of skills.
- ☑ When ‘incompetent’ people make mistakes, it’s a direct result of trying to get it right! Mistakes are unavoidable.

Do you praise people for a job well done?
In times of Chaos do you praise their attempts to succeed?

~~✍~~ *Chaos Hurts!*

*The role of management is to minimize the hurt...
and in so doing, achieve the Change.*



Act 5:

Integration

*Our doubts are traitors,
and make us lose the good we oft might win
by fearing to attempt.*

Measure for Measure, Shakespeare

- ☑ As people regain their skills, they get a sense of regaining their 'Power,' this is exhilarating.

- ☑ When they then make mistakes, even small ones, there is a tendency to overreact to the significance of the error.

Is there a provision in your implementation plan to handle the inevitable overreactions during the Integration Phase?

~~☑~~ *It's always darkest before the dawn.*



Act 6:

New Status Quo

*Experience is by industry achieved
and perfected by the swift course of time*

Two Gentlemen of Verona, Shakespeare

- The process of Change moves us towards the acquisition of new competencies.
- Celebrating the passing of the old Status Quo is a perfect way to remind people of what they have achieved... It's not 'just' symbolic.

Only by doing a regular post mortem of Change can you create a learning organization.

What did you learn during this journey?

~~✎~~ *Take a deep breath... and prepare yourself for the next Foreign Element.*



Change Hurts: Any significant change requires the leaving behind of hard earned skills. This is, and should be, a difficult task. The alternative is an organization which changes whenever the wind blows. The two-fold challenge to all managers is to minimize the pain of Change when the change is necessary, and... to avoid unnecessary Change.

Denial is Involuntary: When asking people to Change, we're asking them to break - what were once considered 'good' habits. It should not come as a surprise (or a frustration) to savvy managers when people find Change difficult.

Chaos is Unavoidable: This is simply the observation that it takes time to learn new skills. The manager's task is to minimize the duration of Chaos... by creating an environment where learning takes place as easily as possible.

Change is a Constant: Even a tired old cliché contains more truth than we give it credit for. We know Change is constant, yet we manage our organizations as if Change is a constant 'surprise'...



Do: Reward people for all attempts to get it right ...
even when they get it wrong.

Do: Invite and answer all questions about the Change.

Do: Celebrate the passing of the old Status Quo

Do: Ask for involvement.

Don't: Expect things to go smoothly ... remember Murphy.

Don't: Ask for 'buy-in', if you do, you've made it 'your'
Change and not theirs.

Don't: Expect this Change to be exactly like the last one.

Don't: Change too many things at once... the more Change,
the less control.



- ✂ Change is good! Okay... you go first!
- ✂ The only person who likes Change... is a wet baby!
- ✂ On being told about Change... remember Miranda..
“You have the right to remain silent... anything you say..”
- ✂ Only Superman Changes alone in a phone booth.
- ✂ Don't go in the water until...
until you know how to swim!
- ✂ This won't hurt a bit.
- ✂ I hate change... I wish I could change that.



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