# UNIT-3 Change Management

## Learning Outcomes

**By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:**

- ✓ Discover how you can prepare for and embrace the forces of change.

# Unit 3

# Change Management

## About Change

There has been a great deal of research and much has been written about the effect of cataclysmic change in organizations. It is becoming clear that an organization's approach to change creates a ripple effect that reverberates through the organization for months or even years.

Managers and team leaders can have a powerful effect on how workers react to the threat of change, either positively or negatively. Unless we as individuals come to grips with the underlying psychological effects of radical change, we will be ill-equipped to guide others, or our organizations, through that change.

Programs don't fix people. People fix people. Once we understand why we find change so threatening, we can begin to accept and manage change for ourselves and for others.

While adapting to change, it is helpful to analyze what William Bridges has called the change cycle. This cycle details three stages that each of us goes through when adjusting to change.

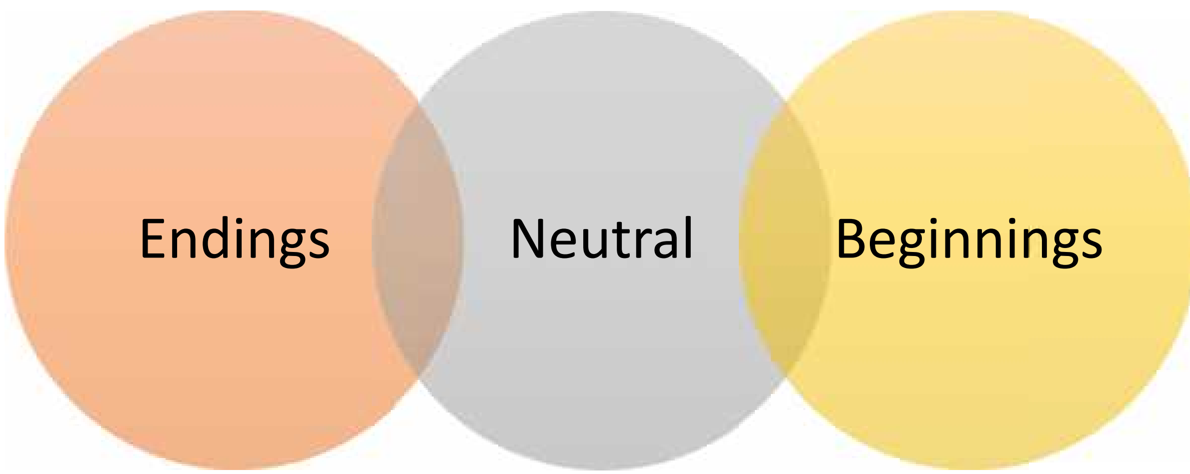


**Fig 3.1**

**Endings**

There is an Endings stage, where we let go of something known and dependable. Not acknowledging an ending makes it difficult to move forward. People may not want to acknowledge beginnings or endings but they usually agree on the stress and confusion that they feel during this time.

**Neutral**

There is a neutral zone, where we hang in mid-air, without orientation to the past or future. Here you will want to find anchors, arrange temporary structures, and explore the other side of change, particularly its positive aspects.

Some characteristics of this stage are:

- Time to complete endings and begin new patterns.
- Strong need for support from others.
- Major transitions unleash powerful conflicting forces in people.

It’s interesting to note that Western culture avoids the neutral zone experience. The neutral zone is treated like a busy street to be crossed as quickly as possible. However, it is important to take the time to complete endings and integrate new patterns. Most organizations (and many people) skip transitions and jump to new beginnings.

**Beginnings**

Finally, there is a beginnings stage, where we plunge headlong into something unknown and unknowable – our own future. This stage is a void to be filled with renewed enthusiasm and a new direction.

Organizations think about beginnings long before people do. As well, there is often conflict between the organizational impetus and the critical mass to make it happen. At this stage, people need drawing leadership (vision and purpose) rather than pushing management (goals and plans).

Here are some more thoughts about change:

- All change begins with an ending.
- Just because you understand something doesn't mean you accept it. Western culture teaches us to intellectualize. If you understand it, then you can deal with it. However, we don't always have the skills to deal with emotional reservations. Intellectually, we might accept change, but emotionally, we may still resist that change.
- Change is often viewed as loss.
- Studies show that as little as a 15-20% change in a job description will cause people to describe having a whole new job.

## Individual Exercise

| Change Situation | Ending Events | Neutral Events | Beginning Events |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

## Key Factors in Successful Change

**Empathy: The First Key to Successful Change**

A practical definition of **empathy** is, “putting yourself in the shoes of the other person.”

In managing change, the first key is to know to what extent the change will be resented or rejected, accepted or welcomed. If everyone is enthusiastic about it, it is probably OK to proceed immediately. But if it will be resented and resisted, it is probably wise to reconsider or go slowly.

In order to be accurate in analyzing the degree of resistance or acceptance, it is necessary to consider each person individually. The better a manager knows the individuals who will be affected by the change, the more accurate will be his or her analysis of their reactions.

**Participation: The Second Key to Successful Change**

Empathy, the first key, requires a manager to determine feelings and reactions toward a change. The second key, participation, requires a manager to get involvement from those concerned with and affected by the change.

Participation is a very important factor in the successful management of change. It begins with a philosophy among all levels of management beginning at the top. They must believe that **participation** can benefit both the organization and the employees.

It then requires **implementation**. In most cases a formal approach is best, such as quality circles (with structure and training). In some cases an informal approach can be successful.

Not only can participation contribute to the quality of the change, but it can also be significant in increasing the acceptance of those who must implement the change. And this is what managing change is really all about! It involves both the decision itself and its implementation. A good decision based on all the available facts can fail because of lack of acceptance, resulting in resistance and even sabotage. Participation is the key that can contribute to both quality and acceptance and results in a win/win solution for both managers and their employees.

**Communication: The Third Key to Successful Change**

Communication, the third key, requires the manager to maintain continuous, complete, and clear communication with all persons affected by the change.

It probably isn't necessary to point out that communication is so important when you are managing change, but we would like to call attention to the following aspects of communication that are frequently misunderstood or often ignored.

**Definition.**

Communication means to create understanding and not merely to send information. If people don't understand, the manager has not communicated.

**Who.**

The criteria for deciding to whom to communicate should include those who want to know as well as those who need to know.

**When.**

Care should be taken regarding the timing of the communication. First of all, managers should be told before non-managers and union officers get the information. Secondly, those who will be affected should be told as far in advance as practical.

**How.**

Managers should give thought to the method of communicating before doing it. It is important to understand the advantages and disadvantages of oral and written communication. In most cases, oral both methods may be necessary to achieve understanding as well as to gain acceptance. In very few cases will written communication alone do the job.

**A Step-by-Step Plan for Change**


**Fig 3.2**

## Case Study: Getting More from the Last Hour

**Getting More From the Last Hour**

Employees in one department have fallen into the habit of slacking off during the last hour of work. Supervisors were under a good deal of pressure from their managers to do something about it. Privately they acknowledged the slowdown as a real problem, but in fact they did nothing.

Rather, they scheduled themselves into their offices during the last hour of the day, under the guise of using that hour for planning the next day's work. The result was that they didn't have to see the problem. Each supervisor intuitively sensed that to take action would be unpopular and would bring criticism from both supervisory colleagues and from employees for trying to win points with management.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that employees had work-related justification for being away from their primary work area and in contact with employees in different sections. Thus employees could be supervised by their area supervisor, or by a supervisor from another area.

Twenty supervisors report to four managers.

**If you were one of the managers responsible for productivity and morale in this department, what would you do to correct the situation? (Hint: Use the model that we just discussed as a template for your action plan.)**

## Further Reading:

- ✓ *Change Management: A Guide to Effective Implementation,(2008), By Professor Robert A Paton, James McCalman*
- ✓ *Change Management: A Balanced and Blended Approach,(2012), By Michael Reiss*