

Urgency – Establishing Commitment: For Yourself and Your Team

Establishing urgency is the first critical step in change leadership. This toolkit are the key questions we use to help discover if urgency is high, medium or low.

For Yourself

Whether it's a new technology implementation, an acquisition, or a change in performance management programs, the change sponsor's commitment and role modeling creates buy-in for the change. Developing buy-in is often ignored, but it is how change really takes hold.

To frame your leadership commitment, answer the following questions:

1. Describe the change needed in the organization. Both the business change *and* how the change in culture is the way to get the business results.

2. How excited are you about the entire change that lies in front of you? (If you are not visibly excited and able to inspire this in others, why should anyone else be?)

3. Describe what short-term re-allocation of resources (e.g. people, time, money, training) you believe will need to occur to ensure the long-term success of this project. [One mistake leaders make is to assume you can continue business as usual in all ways and still lay foundation for a major change. You can't get something for nothing – it's all about prioritization).

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4. How much time are you willing to dedicate directly to communicating, educating and reinforcing the change (hours per week)? Effective leaders will say between 20-40% of their time is spent doing just this during major change efforts.

5. Describe your overall commitment on a scale of 1-10. What would have to be different to achieve a 10?

6. Who are the primary “make-or-break” influencers (either supporters or resisters) you need to influence to increase the overall organization’s commitment to this change? (e.g. parent company, board, your boss, peers, your reports, peers, etc.)

For Your Team

Have your team answer the same questions you just answered. Conduct a meeting to discuss everyone’s answers. Focus on what is needed to reach a critical level of commitment.

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