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Our experts explain how.Learn MoreThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recent coverage.Discover The CollectionCurated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of Editors' Picks.Browse Editors' Favorites John Kotter's highly regarded books 'Leading Change' (1995) and the follow-up 'The Heart Of Change' (2002) describe a popular and helpful model for understanding and managing change. Each stage acknowledges a key principle identified by Kotter relating to people's response and approach to change, and in which people see, feel and then change. For change to happen, it helps if a sufficient number of people within an organisation want it. John Kotter suggests that at least 75% of people wanting it creates a critical mass. So developing a sense of urgency around the need for change may help you spark the initial motivation to get things moving... John Kotter introduced his eight-step change process in his 1995 book, "Leading Change." (1) Create Urgency As mentioned above, John Kotter suggests that for change to be successful, 75% of a company's management needs to support the change. So a key early task is to develop a sense of urgency around the need for change. This involves extensive internal dialogue regarding the market and competitor environments. This can involve a full SWOT analysis, scenario planning and full deployment of all the strategic planning tools. Results of analysis and early conclusions should be thoroughly tested with informed third party opinion and a wide cross section of all stakeholders. (2) Form a Guiding Coalition Managing change is not enough – change has to be led. Building the momentum for change requires a strong leadership and visible support from key people within your organisation. The coalition will involve a wide representation of the formal and informal power-base within the organisation. By working as a team, the coalition helps to create more momentum and build the sense of urgency in relation to the need for change. John Kotter recognises the importance of the emotional dimension and the energy that is generated by a "mastermind" group all working together. (3) Develop a Vision and Strategy A drive for change without a clear focus will rapidly fizzle out unless you develop a clear vision of the future that is accompanied with a clear description about how things will be different in the future. The vision needs to defined in such a way that it is capable of expression in a short "vision speech" that conveys the heart of the change in less than 5 minutes. This then needs to be encapsulated in a powerful one or two sentence summary. All members of the coalition need to be fluent in both of these vision statements. You need to work with the coalition to develop the strategies that will deliver the vision. (4) Communicating the vision Communication is everything, and Kotter maintains that as change leader you need to use every means at your disposal to constantly communicate the new vision and key strategies that support that vision. This goes beyond the "special announcement" meetings and involves frequent and informal face-to-face contact with your people - by you and by all individual members of the coalition. Email is not the appropriate communication vehicle – except in support of prior face-to-face contact. But it goes further than talking – you and the coalition have to "walk the talk" visibly and at all times be available and accessible to your people. Be open and honest and address the emotional dimension of your people's fears and concerns. (5) Enabling Action and Removal Of Obstacles This is the stage where your change initiative moves beyond the planning and the talking, and into practical action your change initiative moves beyond the planning and the talking, and into practical action as you put supportive structures in place and empower and encourage your people to take risks in pursuit of the vision. This is where you, as change leader, identify and remove obstacles and obstructions to change. These may arise in processes or structures that are getting in the way. This may also involve addressing resistant individuals and/or groups and helping them to reorient themselves to the requirements of the new realities (6) Generating Short-Term Wins Success breeds success. Kotter advises that an early taste of victory in the change process gives people a clear sight of what the realised vision will be like. It is also important to recognise and reward all those people who make these early gains possible. As change leader you need to be looking for - and creating – opportunities for these early wins. (7) Hold the gains and build on change Kotter argues that many change initiatives fail because victory is declared too early. An early win is not enough. This is the time to increase the activity, and change all systems and structures and processes that don't fit with the change initiative, and bring "new blood" into the coalition. This now all about continuous improvement and each success [and failure] is an opportunity for analysing what worked [or didn't] and what can be improved. (8) Anchor changes in the culture John Kotter says that for any change to be sustained, it needs to become embedded in the new "way we do things around here" – that is the culture. A major part of this is for you, as change leader, to articulate the connections between new behaviours and organisational success. This is where you - and your coalition team - talk about progress every chance you get. Tell success stories about the change process, and repeat other success stories that you hear. As change leader, this is all about your continuous efforts to ensure that the change is seen in every aspect of your organisation. John Kotter - Making Change Real - The Heart of Change In "Making Change Real - The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations" John Kotter, with the help of co-author Dan Cohen, a partner at Deloitte Consulting, illustrates how his famous eight-step approach to change management has worked in over 100 organizations. John Kotter says that the single biggest challenge facing leadership in a change process is just getting people to change their behaviour: "All through our lives we have been taught to over-rely on what you might call the memo approach - the 19 logical reasons to change - and we've under-relied on what Dan Cohen and I found is much more effective, which is presenting something that is emotionally compelling. People change their behaviour when they are motivated to do so, and that happens when you speak to their feelings." 3 key points emerge from their review of companies who have followed John Kotter's eight-step approach to change management and succeeded with their change initiatives. (1) Great change leaders are great at telling visual stories with high emotional impact Martin Luther King did not stand up in front of the Lincoln Memorial and say "I have a great strategy" and illustrate it with 10 good reasons why it was a good strategy. He said those immortal words: "I have a dream," and then he proceeded to show the people what his dream was - he illustrated his picture of the future and did so in a way that had high emotional impact. (2) The leader's example is a powerful method of communicating feeling and facilitating change To paraphrase one of the sayings of Jesus: "Why do you look at the speck of dust that is in the other guy's eye, but not notice the log that is in your own eye?" According to John Kotter this is a big issue. He feels that as people climb further up the corporate ladder they become increasingly out of touch with the impact of their own performance until they cannot see that they have become a part of the problem. As he says: "I suspect a lot of people just haven't been taught, always start with yourself. It is a great rule of thumb for so many things. Start with yourself first!" (3) Organizations need heroes at every level As one of David Bowie's greatest singles puts it: "...I will be king and you, you will be queen...we can be heroes, just for one day". John Kotter believes that buried very deep within everyone is the desire to be a hero [even if for only one day]: "...today's organizations need heroes at every level. To truly succeed in a turbulent world, more than half the workforce needs to step up to the plate in some arena and provide change leadership." In echo of Bowie's lyric he suggests that this might only mean being a hero for one day, but he stresses that the cumulative effect of many such small actions is a significant factor in enabling organisations to change. When asked, in a recent interview, about the importance of leadership in successfully unleashing "the heart of change", John Kotter said: "Crucial. Only leadership can blast through corporate inertia and motivate people to change in a meaningful way". John Kotter - How to Manage Change - A Sense of [the Right Kind Of] Urgency In his seminal 1995 book "Leading Change" John Kotter introduced his eight-step change process, the first of which is to create urgency. John Kotter suggests, that for change to be successful, at least 75% of a company's management needs to "buy into" the change. So for change to happen there needs to be a shared a sense of urgency around the need for change. And this will result from honest and open dialogue with your people about what's happening in your market and with your competition. If many people start talking about the change you propose, the urgency can build and feed on itself. "A Sense of Urgency" (Harvard Business Press, 2008) is the title of John Kotter's latest book on change management and change leadership in organisations. Here he develops the theme from the first step of "Leading Change" and highlights the 2 types of urgency: (1) Inward looking - panic driven urgency This is the urgency born of the "knee jerk" reaction and is fear based. A fear based on losing something. It is unproductive and drains people of energy. It is characterized by frantic and frenetic activity - sometimes known as the "headless chicken" syndrome. People are fearful of losing their jobs and keep on taking on more and more often working 12-14 hour days filled with endless meetings. John Kotter believes that one reason for the catastrophic 70% failure rate of all change initiatives is the leaders do not create a positive sense of urgency around what they are doing. They dive straight into a low level project based attempt at implementing a solution. (2) Outward looking - risk / opportunity focused urgency This "good" urgency is all about a constant focus on the external risks and opportunities. As Kotter says: "It involves relentless focus on doing only those things that move the business forward in the marketplace and on doing them right now, if not sooner." Good leaders will, with the greatest sense of urgency, pay attention to the internal metrics of their business but they are much more focused and much more interested in what's happening on the outside: "They want to have as many metrics about their competitors as they do about themselves." John Kotter believes that all meetings should reference what is happening in the external world - or not take place! He cites the example of a company installing a new software system and suggests that the leader should be saying: "...What other companies do we know that have done this? What problems did they solve, and how did they solve them? Wouldn't that be useful information? Let's get it." Ultimately, Kotter believes that (a) outward focused "good" urgency energizes people and enables to generate positive emotions and (b) it is the responsibility of the leader to model this by example. In my experience, the quality of leadership that you provide is one of the top 5 factors that will determine whether you really do succeed and realise the benefits with your change initiative - or you join the long list of 70% failures. 5 Observations from John Kotter According to John Kotter, in a recent interview in "Management Consulting News", many organisations are now much better at managing and guiding change. But unfortunately the current rate of change that we are all experiencing is faster than the rate at which organisations are improving, and he feels that gap is increasing. He makes 5 observations: (1) The marginal rate of change is increasing [and will continue to do so] He says: "Many organisations just can't keep up with the speed of change." We used to believe that change occurs in cycles and waves that ebb and flow. This may be accurate over long time spans of hundreds of years, but in the present the rate of change is continually increasing. (2) Leaders need to get better at leading and managing change As I see it, Kotter's core message is that leaders need to get better at [to put it in my own words]: "leading your people through change, putting it all together and managing the whole messy business". To deal with this Kotter says that organisational leaders "need to get better at all of the eight steps that I identified for successful change". He specifically feels that leaders need to pay more attention to the early stages of the change process, that is: creating a feeling of urgency, clarifying the vision, good communication and empowering people to take action. And the one key place to focus is on creating and sustaining the sense of urgency about the need for change, and that starts at the top: (3) The sense of urgency re change needs to permeate the whole organisation "The people at the top may think there's plenty sense of urgency, yet if you dig down into the organisation, you discover it's not nearly what it needs to be to sustain change through the whole process." The absence of a universally shared sense of urgency in an organisation embarking on change is: "like trying to build a pyramid on a foundation of empty shoeboxes"! (4) Leaders' deeds are more important than their words Often during the change process, difficult things have to be addressed, such as layoffs, restructurings and redeployments. In these situations, Kotter believes that the leaders deeds are as, or probably more, important than their words. "When people see it being done right, their fear level quite rationally goes down and their conviction grows that the plan can work...People do resist change because they're afraid. But they also resist change if they perceive that it's being done stupidly. If you can get them to understand how they can play a constructive part, sometimes it's amazing what happens." (5) Leaders need to understand what does and doesn't work before embarking on change The key piece of advice that Kotter offers is for organisational leaders to take the time to get themselves informed about what does and doesn't work - before launching into action with a change initiative. As he says: "If you get that knowledge upfront, it can save you great grief and money later on." Strengths and Weaknesses of Kotter's Model John Kotter's contribution to the leadership and management of change is considerable and significant. In my view, these are the greatest strengths of Kotter's 8 Step change Model: It sets out a clear leadership roadmap It is energy based and addresses the emotional imperative of momentum It outlines key steps to build and sustain that momentum The weaknesses of the model: It is action based and tactical and, in my view, does not go far enough in spelling out the specifics of how to achieve clarity of vision and an executable strategy to get from that vision to the realisation of the benefits of the change initiative The focus of the model is on organisational change and does not address the personal transitions that accompanies that change - or at least not to the same degree as William Bridges'transition model. For more on this see: Where Kotter's 8 Steps Gets it Wrong Key factors to address BEFORE embarking on a change intiative Change Management Risk Assessment Change Management Implementation Change Equation - INPACT Assessment Leadership Qualities - Creating a Change Culture Managing Personal Change Return from "John Kotter" to: Change management Theories Return to: Home page Kotter's 8-Step Change Model: this article explains Kotter's 8 step change model, developed by John Kotter in a practical way. Next to what this model is, highlights this article also the 8 steps and we share some practical examples, next to the advantages of this change maangement model. After reading you will understand the basics of this powerful organisational management tool. Enjoy reading! What is Kotter's 8 step change model? Research carried out by the American change and leadership guru John Kotter has proved that major change efforts unfortunately do not always have the desired outcome. He found out that there is only a 30% chance of organisational change success. This is why organizations implement changes unsuccessfully and fail to achieve the intended result. A large scale change initiative can only succeed when a majority of the employees stand behind the change. It is important that this support is gained early in the change process. John Kotter introduced the "Kotter's 8 Step Change Model" to improve an organization's ability to change and to increase its chances of success. Until this day, the model is seen as one of the most adopted management models. By following this step plan organizations can avoid failure and become adept at implementing change. As a result, organizations no longer need to adjust the changes and they will increase their chances of success. 8 steps explained Employees do not always experience change as something positive. However, they are important when it comes to the implementation of change. Following the Kotter's Eight Step Change Model-plan will help organizations to succeed at implementing change. The first three steps of Kotter's Eight Step Change Model are about creating the right climate for change, steps 4 up to 6 and link the change to the organization. Steps 7 and 8 are aimed at the implementation and consolidation of the change: Figure 1 – The Eight Steps of Kotter's Change Model 1. Create a sense of urgency This first step of Kotter's 8 Step Change Model is the most important step according to John Kotter. By making employees aware of the need and urgency for change, support will be created. This requires and open, honest and convincing dialogue. This convinces employees of the importance of taking action. This could be accomplished by talking with them about potential threats or by discussing possible solutions. 2. Create a guiding coalition It is a good idea to establish a project team that can occupy itself with the changes the organization wants to implement. This group manages all efforts and encourages the employees to cooperate and take a constructive approach. Preferably, this coalition is made up from employees working in different jobs and positions so that all employees can rely on the group and identify themselves with the team members. Because of the open character, the groups can also function as a sounding board, which enables an open communication. 3. Create a vision for change Formulating a clear vision can help everyone understand what the organization is trying to achieve within the agreed time frame. It makes changes more concrete and creates support to implement them. The ideas of employees can be incorporated in the vision, so that they will accept the vision faster. Linking the adopted vision to strategies will help employees to achieve their goals. 4. Communicate the vision The most important objective of step 4 of Kotter's 8 Step Change Model is to create support and acceptance among the employees. This can only be achieved by talking about the new vision with the employees at every chance you get and by taking their opinions, concerns and anxieties seriously. The new vision must be fully adopted across the entire organization. 5. Remove obstacles Before change is accepted at all levels, it is crucial to change or, if necessary, remove obstacles that could undermine the vision. By entering into dialogue with all employees, it will become clear who are resisting the change. To encourage acceptance of the vision by the employees, it helps when their ideas are incorporated and implemented in the change process. 6. Create short-term wins Nothing motivates more than success. Create short-term goals so that the employees have a clear idea of what is going on. When the goals have been met, the employees will be motivated to fine tune and expand the change. By acknowledging and rewarding employees who are closely involved in the change process, it will be clear across the board that the company is changing course. 7. Consolidate improvements According to John Kotter many change trajectories fail because victory is declared too early. However, change is a slow-going process and it must be driven into the overall corporate culture. Quick wins are only the beginning of long-term change. An organization therefore needs to keep looking for improvements. Only after multiple successes have been achieved, it can be established that the change is paying off. 8. Anchor the changes in corporate culture The last step of Kotter's 8 Step Change Model. A change will only become part of the corporate culture when it has become a part of the core of the organization. Change does not come about by itself. Values and standards must agree with the new vision and the employees' behaviour must provide a seamless match. Employees must continue to support the change. Regular evaluation and discussions about progress help consolidate the change. Kotter's 8 Step Change Model examples Change is a part of daily life in the business world. The corporate environment is responsive to a variety of factors and is ever-changing. Companies have to react quickly in order to hold onto their position on the market. The 8 step change model by John Kotter can help with this. Below is an example of company owner Jeffrey. He applies Kotter's change model step by step. Example: creating urgency Jeffrey has a company with 100 employees. Over the past quarter he has lost revenue to his competitors. After some research he discovers that his competitors are investing in certain technologies that help them in their daily business, causing them to have an advantage. Jeffrey now has to convince the organisation to also invest in this technology. What are the odds for the company? What does the future look like if we don't invest in this technology? Example: guiding coalition Jeffrey now must select the people in the organisation and recruit them to guide the change process. To do this, he must select individuals from all layers of the organisation. After the team of experts has been put together, Jeffrey must win the trust and commitment of this team. By building a powerful coalition of key figures in the change process, he ensures that the execution of his plans is efficient. Creating a new vision In this step, Jeffrey concentrates on strategy and organisational values to create a vision for the changes. A strong vision will motivate employees within the organisation to get to work on the change process. Creating a support base Now it is essential that Jeffrey is able to effectively get his vision across to his people. Strong communication is a must for this. Jeffrey's vision for change includes automatisation among other things, which means people will have to make changes to their way of working. People with less developed skills in technological products could be worried about this. Communication in such situations ensures that employees realise the change process is also to their benefit. Removing obstacles Jeffrey has now convinced his employees to take part in the change initiative. However, there can still be obstacles. It is up to Jeffrey and his coalition to address these obstacles and remove them. Ensure short-term successes Jeffrey wants everyone to see the benefits of the change process. When employees can see benefits in the short term, they will become more motivated towards the full plan. Short-term goals are extremely important to keep employees motivated and focussed. Consolidate improvements At every step Jeffrey and his team must analyse the results to see how their short-term goals contribute to the goals in the long term. Secure the changes To hold onto the change initiative, it must become a part of the business culture. Jeffrey and his managers should therefore concentrate on the development of a culture that stimulates innovation and change. Advantages of Kotter's 8 Step Change Model The correct use of John Kotter's 8 step change model has a few attractive benefits for organisations and managers. The most important motivators to implement the model are listed below. John Kotter's 8 step change model is very simple and can be applied step by step. It gives a clear description of what should happen in each stage of the change process. The emphasis in this model is on the commitment and wellbeing of the employees. According to the model, that is key is the resolution and the success of the project. Strengths and weaknesses of the Kotter's 8 step change model Strengths The first two steps in the 8 step change model by John Kotter are the biggest strength of the entire model. Many company leaders dive into a change programme without first considering how their employees will respond to it. This can lead to agitation and distrust. Additionally, the method of John Kotter offers a robust framework, serving as checklist, with aspects for managers to consider. Shortcomings Like other models, the change model by John Kotter isn't perfect. For example, some theoreticians have pointed out that change is a more organic process, rather than a linear process with multiple steps. Additionally, Kotter's model does not account for the financial, political, and other forces that can impact change initiatives. Critique based on these shortcomings is valid, but those weaknesses can be almost completely be eliminated by employing another method, such as Lewin's Force Field Analysis. Recommendations by John Kotter When all steps of Kotter's 8-Step Change Model have been followed, John Kotter recommends taking the new vision as a starting point when recruiting and hiring new staff. This also applies to the training of (current) staff. The new vision and the changes must be given a solid place in the organization. Employees who have actively contributed to the change must receive public recognition. Their support is enormous and therefore they will be asked again for their support and help when another change needs to be brought about. It's Your Turn What do you think? Is the Kotter's 8-Step Change Model applicable in today's modern companies? Do you recognize the practical explanation or do you have more suggestions? What are your success factors for applying the Kotter's 8 Step Change Model? Share your experience and knowledge in the comments box below. More information Kotter, J. P. (2012, 1996). Leading change. Harvard Business Press. Kotter, J. P. (1995). Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail. Harvard Business Review OnPoint (March-April), 1-10. Kotter, J. P. and Cohen, D. S. (2002). The Heart of Change: Real-life Stories of how People Change Their Organizations. Harvard Business Press. How to cite this article: Mulder, P. (2021). Kotter's 8-Step Change Model. Retrieved [insert date] from Toolshero: Original publication date: 03/14/2021 | Last update: 04/14/2025 Add a link to this page on your website: Toolshero: Kotter's 8-Step Change Model Welcome to Keynote Speaker Agency where we help event planners find a speaker for an event. We have access to over 5000 professional speakers for hire who can deliver a powerful presentation that will inspire and educate your audience. These are the top experts in sales, business, marketing, innovation, education, technology, inspiration, religion, finance, health, entertainment, sports, and more. On this page you can... Browse a list of speakers and topics. Or, contact us here and one of our agents will help you find the perfect speaker that fits your budget. Business Are you producing a business event or conference? Do you need to find a keynote speaker or guest speaker who is an established expert in the industry who can educate your audience on the leading business trends? Partnering with a business expert with a proven track record can be highly advantageous because they can teach your audience something significant while also increasing your brand value by being associated with them. Whether you want to get your audience to see things in a new light, or if you just want someone who can help your attendees create a new path to success, these presenters would be a great option. These event speakers can cover a wide range of topics including sales growth, marketing, leadership, innovation, motivation, future trends, management, teamwork, and more. Christian Do you need to find a public speaker who is of faith? We have compiled a list of great religious speakers who can share their spiritual wisdom with your audience. These spiritual leaders can cover such topics as hope, passion, courage, believing in yourself, love, purpose, compassion, the meaning of life, self empowerment, and more. Education Are you planning an event for your school? Whether your attendees are in elementary, middle school, high school, or college, these event keynote speakers can deliver a powerful presentation that will educate and inspire them. These experts can cover many subjects such as hard work, the importance of learning, inspiration, following your dreams, overcoming adversity, achieving your goals, staying focused, self-discipline, determination, and much more. Entertainment Are you planning an event that requires someone with a little pizazz? Then you are going to need to get a speaker who is famous, can command a stage, and can hold your audiences attention. We have gathered some of the biggest names in TV, sports, film, and the arts industry. Female In some situations, sometimes you just need a women's touch. While the industry has been predominantly dominated by men, female speakers have been stepping up and delivering great presentations. For this situation, we have compiled a list of some of the top experts who have established themselves as an authority. Christian women speakers Female celebrity speakers Top women speakers General Not sure exactly what type of professional you are looking for? If you are looking to find a good speaker for your event but are not sure who would be the best fit, here are some speaker ideas that will provide you a good mix you can browse: Finance Do you need someone who can shed some light on where things are going in the financial industry? These experts can explore such topics as business finance, personal finance, banking, Cryptocurrency, investing, and more. Banking speakers Cryptocurrency speakers Finance speakers Health Are you looking to get a speaker who understands the latest trends in health and wellness? These experts are at the top of their field and cover such topics as nutrition, fitness, yoga, weight loss, meditation, body building, supplements, and more. Technology Are you looking to offer your audience the latest trends in tech? Do you need someone who can teach your guests something they may not know? We have assembled a directory of some of the best leading experts in the tech field who can educate your participants ensuring that they leave your event learning something new. These powerful speakers can discuss such topics as artificial intelligence, futurism, blockchain, Internet of Things, transhumanism, innovative technologies, and more. Find A Speaker Need help finding a speaker? Let our team help you. We have access to over 5000 experts and thought leaders. Step 1 – Fill out the form below. Step 2 – Our agent will send you some suggestions that fits your budget and needs. Agents respond within 1 business day. But usually within a couple of hours. Recommended reading: Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Introducing Strategies For Managing Change Strategies For Managing Change is all about a structured approach to change management that ensures that organizational changes are smoothly implemented, and that the lasting benefits of change are achieved. It involves leading people, and managing processes, and resources to navigate the transition from an existing state to a desired future state. Whether it's technological upgrades, shifts in corporate strategy, or cultural transformations, change is a constant in the modern business environment. Effective strategies for managing change are crucial to maintaining productivity and minimizing disruption. However all of this is often easier said than done. The term change management is a catch-all phrase that encapsulates all the elements of what it takes to not only achieve the desired benefits of the change, but also to avoid any number of unintended consequences.This is why we refer to the art and the science of change management. It's All About People - And Processes That Work For People Successful change management starts with a clear understanding of two things:[1] The need for change[2] The capability to changeIt provides the tools and resources for success.It focuses as much on the people-side as it does on the business-side.A successful change initiative requires leadership as well as management!This site provides all the resources you need to deal with all of this which you can download for free here: "This is an excellent reference for anyone involved in change management" - Mike Pollard, Business Analyst, Business Improvement Unit, Information & Communication Services, University of Dundee Testimonials A successful change management initiative starts with a vision that defines what the change will look like and why it's necessary. A clear vision helps align everyone towards a common goal, and it involves taking an organization from Position A to Position B to realise that vision.But the realisation of that vision involves bringing your people with you.Strong leadership is essential for driving change. Leaders should be visible, communicate consistently, and demonstrate commitment to the change process. A major challenge to change leaders is that we naturally gravitate to the tangible factors, the things and that we see and can control. We automatically lean towards a fairly mechanistic view of life that sees life as a complicated system. We do our best to understand the moving parts, and this in turns leads us to having expectations of how things will work out. Of course, in all these change situations, we understand that life is complicated.However most of us, most of the time, make the mistake of thinking that if we do all that we can to understand and address as many moving parts as possible, then we can achieve the outcomes that we seek.We treat organisational change as though it is a complicated system, whereas in reality it is a complex system, and so we set ourselves up for failure. A complex systems approach requires us to shift our focus onto the intangible factors and things that we can influence. Change processes are rarely linear and as change leaders we need to be ready to adjust strategies based on feedback and unforeseen challenges. Change management is about process - but it's also about people.The philosophy of this site is about "processes that work for people"! This involves the discipline of seeing wholes - a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing 'patterns of change' rather than 'static snapshots. "Loved the preview to the Practitioners Master Class; fabulous work you are doing, wonderful approach and really resonate with your attention to the human side of change... Many thanks for the gifts of interesting articles you share." - Warm regards, Emma Testimonials Personal Change The goal of this website is very simple. It is to give you very specific strategies for managing change and leading people through change.This means showing you how to put it all together - and manage the whole messy business.But a big part of change is you!Many of the things that happen in your life are random and beyond your control.But, the one thing you can control is how you choose to respond to these events - and it is a choice. The long term impact of these choices can have a major effect on your health, wealth and happiness. The Law Of Response And OutcomeThe outcomes that you experience are determined by your responses to the events in your life.This can be expressed as: Outcome = Event x ResponseThe strength and quality of your response is determined by the skills and the experience you bring to it, and that is based on knowing how to think effectively.The stronger your response - the better the outcome. For this reason we also focus on managing personal change - and we provide you with the practical resources to do this via our supporting site:Zen Tools - For Tough TimesAll pages on this site relating to personal change are now seamlessly and automatically transferred to this site. "Practitioners' Masterclass provides an excellent roadmap for leaders who want to undertake change initiatives. It provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of the many challenges and practical strategies to effectively implement a change initiative." - Ellis Katsof, Executive Director, Niagara Child and Youth Services Testimonials Executive Summaries + Site Map Are you interested in hiring John Kotter to speak at your event, conference, trade show, meeting, or convention? As a keynote speaker, he knows how to command a stage where he can deliver a powerful presentation that will captivate your audience. On this page you can contact John Kotter's speaker booking agency to learn more about his speaking fees and availability. A booking agent will respond to you within two business hours to let you know if they are available and how much they cost. Request Speaker Speaker Bio John Kotter is a highly-sought motivational speaker and expert covering such topics as leadership and change management. He is a best-selling author, consultant, media pundit, and thought-leader who has spoken at many conferences around the world where he gives leaders the skills they need to deal with fast, big changes in society, the workplace, and schools. John Kotter is hired to speak at events and conferences where he can give expertise on important global business affairs. He is also the Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership Emeritus at the Harvard Business School and the chairman of the Seattle and Boston-based management consulting firm Kotter International. Professor Kotter's education at MIT and Harvard gave him the skills he needed to make teaching, inspiring, and helping others his life's work. In 1972, he became a teacher at Harvard Business School. Kotter was the youngest person ever to get tenure and a full professorship at the Business School, and he did this in 1980 when he was 33 years old. John Kotter's best international bestseller Leading Change is the bible of Change for managers worldwide. It describes an eight-step process for making changes that work. In the New York Times bestseller, Our Iceberg Is Melting, the eight-step approach is explained through an allegory. This makes it easy for a wide range of people who need to work together to make big changes in an organization to understand. Based on a study of 504 organizations, Business Week magazine named Kotter the #1 "leadership guru" in America in October 2001. Professor Kotter has written eighteen books, and his work has won him more praise and awards than any other author who has written about Change and leadership. In the 1970s, he wrote five more books in addition, to Buy In (2010), A Sense of Urgency (2008), Our Iceberg Is Melting (2006), and Leading Change (1996). He also wrote Matsushita Leadership (1997), The New Rules (1995), Corporate Culture and Performance (1992), A Force for Change (1990), The Leadership Factor (1988), Power and Influence (1985), The General Managers (1982), and John P. Kotter on What Leaders Do (1982). (1989). Over two million copies of Professor Kotter's books have been sold, and they have been translated into more than 120 different languages. John Kotter's articles from The Harvard Business Review have sold more reprints than any of the other hundreds of well-known authors who have written for that magazine in the past 20 years. His books are in the top 1% of bestsellers on Amazon.com. His three executive DVDs, "Leadership" (1991), "Corporate Culture" (1993), and "Success in a Changing World" (2007), and the educational CD-ROM "Realizing Change" (1998), which is based on the book Leading Change, are all for sale. Professor Kotter has won many awards, including the Johnson, Smith & Knisely Award for New Perspectives in Business Leadership and the Exxon Award for Innovation in Graduate Business School Curriculum Design. Management General said that Professor Kotter's book Leading Change was the best management book of 1996. In the 1998 Financial Times, Booz-Allen Global Business Book Competition for biographies and autobiographies, his book Matsushita Leadership won first place. The plot of a 2003 movie based on his book The Heart of Change won a Telly Award. In 2006, Kotter won the prestigious McFeely Award for his "outstanding contributions to leadership and management development." In 2007, his DVD "Success in a Changing World" won both a Telly Award and the award for the best video training product of the year from Training Media Review. Request Speaker Speaking Fees John Kotter's speaking fees can vary depending on the type of event you are producing and where it is located. His speaking fee can also vary depending on whether you need them to deliver a live or virtual presentation. Please note we do not work with organizations looking for speakers to speak for free, do podcasts or interviews, or do non-paid charity work. Contact John Kotter To inquire about his speaking fees and costs, contact Keynote Speakers Agency today to book John Kotter for a live or virtual event, meeting, special appearance, conference, or trade-show. Our agent will respond within two business hours. Founded by the world's foremost change expert Dr. John Kotter, Kotter is a consulting firm that partners with clients to achieve blockbuster results faster than leaders believed possible. With offices in Seattle and Boston and team members located across the world, our consulting practice help organizations accelerate the implementation of their most critical business strategies. Our tailored leadership development programs help build urgency for change, prompting mindset shifts and enabling people to become better leaders. We relentlessly ask the question: If the world saw more leadership from more people, what could change? We believe so much more is possible. Our new book, Change: How Organizations Achieve Hard-To-Imagine Results in Uncertain and Volatile Times, is available now for pre-order. Get your copy today. 16,541 followers 1w Mass layoffs like Nissan's are a stark reminder: change isn't just operational — it's deeply human. In HR magazine, Kotter Managing Director and Head of EMEA Nick Petschek shares how leaders can build adaptability before disruption hits: Empower leadership at every level Create a culture of testing and learning Prioritize continuous development The goal isn't just to weather the storm — it's to emerge stronger. Link to the article in comments. #OrganisationalChange #HRLeadership 16,541 followers 1w Join us in Washington, DC, July 15–17 for the Kotter Core Change Certification Program — a hands-on, 3-day deep dive into the frameworks, tools, and mindset that help leaders adapt and drive real, lasting change. This program brings together Kotter's essential change leadership courses into one immersive experience — perfect for anyone looking to build the skills and confidence to lead in an unpredictable world. July 15–17, 2025 Washington, DC 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM ET Ready to lead change with intention and impact? Register here: #ChangeLeadership #KotterCertification #LeadThroughChange #LeadershipDevelopment This content isn't available here Access this content and more in the LinkedIn app 16,541 followers 1w Is your organization built for uncertainty? ⚡ Discover if your teams are ready to meet the moment with Kotter's new Adaptability Assessment. This quick tool provides thoughtful, targeted advice for embracing innovation, building trust, and expanding adaptability throughout your organization. Discover strengths, spot opportunities, and gain insights to build a more agile, future-ready organization. Learn more and take the assessment today: . #Uncertainty #Adaptability #Assessment #Change 16,541 followers 1w The Kotter team is just back from an energizing all-company offsite in sunny Sarasota, Florida — and we're still buzzing with momentum! At Kotter, we believe in walking the talk, which is why we spent our time learning from each other, refining best practices, and—yes—applying our own methodology to ourselves by diving deep into Leading Through Uncertainty, our newest leadership training course (you can learn more about the course and our approach via the link in comments). The result? Fresh insights, deeper alignment, and a renewed commitment to helping organizations turn uncertainty and change into opportunity and swift forward movement. This offsite wasn't just a retreat—it was a launchpad for what's next! #AlwaysLearning #TeamKotter 16,541 followers 1w ⚡ Building capabilities in your people doesn't just boost individual performance—it transforms teams. With Kotter's newest training course, Leading Through Uncertainty, teams can: ✔ Build collective confidence ✔ Strengthen collaboration in high-pressure moments ✔ Create momentum, even when the path forward isn't clear This course is available for groups or individuals, and early bird pricing is now available — get 20% off for a limited time. Register today: #LearningCulture #TeamDevelopment #ChangeLeadership There's a reason the name Kotter is synonymous with change. Our founder, Dr. John Kotter, has dedicated his life to what is now the vision of our firm: Millions Leading, Billions Benefiting. We continue the legacy of Dr. Kotter's robust thought leadership in organizational transformation. We know change… because it's all we do. But our expertise isn't just the breadth of our research, frameworks, and principles – it's our people – the artists who bring it to life. Page 2 Over four decades, Dr. Kotter observed countless leaders and organizations as they were trying to transform or execute their strategies. He identified and extracted the common success factors and documented them as the 8 Steps for Leading Change. Since the introduction of the 8 Steps, Dr. Kotter expanded his focus from research to impact with the founding of Kotter. Together with the firm, he evolved the linear 8 Step from Leading Change to the 8 Accelerators outlined in his 2014 book, Accelerate and the firm's 2021 book, CHANGE. Inspire people to act – with passion and purpose – to achieve a bold, aspirational opportunity. Build momentum that excites people to pursue a compelling (and clear) vision of the future… together. Read the Book A volunteer network needs a coalition of committed people – born of its own ranks – to guide it, coordinate it, and communicate its activities. "After being a member of our first Guiding Coalition I was selected to co-lead our second Guiding Coalition. Our work with Kotter gave me the opportunity to explore my own passions in the workplace. As a millennial, it is really important because I'm not sure what type of career I'm going to have, and working with Kotter has exposed me to all different parts of the organization that I wouldn't have worked with otherwise." Ben White / United Way of Greater Kansas City Read the Case Study Clarify how the future will be different from the past and get buy-in for how you can make that future a reality through initiatives linked directly to the vision. Read the Book Large-scale change can only occur when massive numbers of people rally around a common opportunity. At an individual level, they must want to actively contribute. Collectively, they must be unified in the pursuit of achieving the goal together. "It's not a project. It's a movement. It's a journey. Join us and leave your mark." Gert Bosscher / Bunge Learn more from our Kotter Change Certification Program Remove the obstacles that slow things down or create roadblocks to progress. Clear the way for people to innovate, work more nimbly across silos, and generate impact quickly. Learn from one of our clients Press harder after the first successes. Your increasing credibility can improve systems, structures and policies. Be relentless with initiating change after change until the vision is a reality. "The way that you can guarantee success in a difficult change… is to not skip any of the steps or the learnings." John Ham / COTY Learn from one of our clients Articulate the connections between new behaviors and organizational success, making sure they continue until they become strong enough to replace old habits. Evaluate systems and processes to ensure management practices reinforce the new behaviors, mindsets, and ways of working you invested in. Get the Book 01. Strategy ExecutionMobilize people throughout the organization to break down barriers, solve problems, and inspire innovation. 02. Leadership DevelopmentProvide the breadth and depth necessary to advance change capabilities up, down, and across organizations in a sustainable and scalable way. 03. CULTURE CHANGEDrive intentional culture change that starts with new actions, generates better results, and eventually produces an evolved culture. 04. OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCYEngage employees to uncover new ideas and the capacity to lead, innovate, and drive value for the customer and the business as a whole. 05. Merger + AcquisitionsMove the "how" of M&A integration to the top of the priority list – right next to the "what" – focus first on culture and people. 06. Digital Technology TransformationIncrease engagement, transparency, and excitement for the new technology to deliver the desired business impact. Deliver and sustain transformative change. Register today for Kotter's Change Management Certification Program Learn More We've detected that JavaScript is disabled in this browser. Please enable JavaScript or switch to a supported browser to continue using x.com. You can see a list of supported browsers in our Help Center. Help Center