



Sustained Change Requires Mindset Change

The one thing that most recent change programmes have in common is that the time from decision to implementation has been much shorter than people have expected or experienced in the past. Whilst these programmes may have resulted in change, will it be sustained? Has the mindset, and resulting behaviours, of the organisation's people also changed?

Mindsets are powerful anchors to the present

Mindsets drive behaviour and are based upon a set of assumptions, methods or systems held by one or more people or groups of people. They are usually so established that they create a powerful incentive to continue to adopt or accept prior behaviours, choices or tools. As a result, changing well-established and often deep-rooted mindsets is much more difficult and takes longer than changes to the more structural aspects of a business, like processes, organisation and sourcing.

Organisations can fall into a trap of defining what behaviours they want from their people and then putting in place programmes – often training and communications – which they believe will result in the target behaviours. More often than not this is done without putting any effort into really understanding what it is that causes people to behave the way they currently do. As a result, resources and money are often wasted through a failure to address the root causes of the current mindset.

Mindsets can be understood

Assessing the causes of the current mindset of an organisation requires looking in detail at the factors that have led people to believe in certain truths, and develop unwritten rules about how to act and behave under a given set of circumstances. The assessment must consider; where people look for role models for their actions and behaviours; which formal and informal communication channels people listen to; the impact of policies, processes and procedures; the levels of confidence and capability people have to act and behave in given ways.

The assessment of the current mindset provides a detailed view of what the deeply embedded beliefs, truths and unwritten rules are that drive behaviours, alongside what the real intrinsic and

Eat Your Peas: A Recipe for Cultural Change

In a recent [strategy+business](#) article Rutger von Post argues that the methods used by UK celebrity chef Jamie Oliver to promote better health in a West Virginia city could be used to change organisational cultures and improve performance.

What Jamie learned in the first of his Food Revolution TV series was that success depends upon not just having a plan or on expertise, but a willingness to experiment, learn and intuitively shift gears on the fly. And he did this by starting on a very small scale, with a single vegetable: the pea.

To read Rutger's article, click [here](#).

To watch an episode where Jamie changed the eating habits of a city, click [here](#).

Four Ways to Know Whether You are Ready for Change

Why can some companies take advantage of any change the market brings, while others struggle with even the smallest internal or market-necessitated modifications?

In a recent HBR [article](#) Chris Musselwhite and Tammie Plouffe make the case that the companies most likely to be successful in making change work to their advantage are the ones that no longer view change as a discrete event to be managed, but a constant opportunity to evolve the business. They also give examples of companies that are starting to treat change as a constant event, and not as an initiative that needs to be managed.

To read their article, click [here](#).

Change Must Be About Improving Tomorrow – Not Changing Today

Traditional change management looks at 'today', decides what needs to be changed, and initiates a project to change it.

Formicio's Jane Northcote argues that the problem with this approach is that it is

extrinsic motivators are for their people. No two organisations will ever have the same set of causes and, therefore, there will never be a simple off-the-shelf solution such as a training programme or a communication campaign that will deliver the desired sustained change.

Changing mindsets is a journey

Changing the mindset to a desired future state always requires a carefully planned journey that helps people experience and learn new ways of acting and behaving.

Changing mindsets in an organisation is possible, but it is neither quick nor easy. However, it is impossible if you don't know the causes of the current mindset. We would not embark on any other change journey without a detailed understanding of the current state and the desired future state: why do we often try (and fail) to change mindsets without knowing the current mindset?

To read my full article, where I give examples of mindsets that conflicted with target business outcomes, click [here](#).

I welcome your thoughts.

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fundamentally flawed, in that it assumes that 'today' – the situation to be changed – is static, and that it can be measured and analysed. A more 'dynamic futures' approach is therefore required that focuses on how we intend that things shall be.

To read Jane's article, click [here](#).

Formicio Receives Valuable Content Award



We're delighted to have received the [Valuable Content](#) Award for our monthly bulletin and insight articles.

The award is given to business websites that are "packed with helpful, authentic content, written with passion and presented with the user in mind".

Previous recipients include [Trusted Advisor Associates](#) and [Hinge Marketing](#).

Parting Thought

"Things do not change; we change."

Henry David Thoreau
American Author, 1817-1862