

A summary of John Kotter's eight step approach to large-scale change:

Action	New Behavior	Comments
1. Increase urgency	People start telling each other, "Let's go, we need to change things!"	Focus on a sense of urgency among "the relevant people" – which means critical mass sufficient to overcome complacency, fear, or anger – <i>all of which undermine change.</i>
2. Build the guiding team	A group powerful enough to guide a big change is formed and they start to work together well.	Pull together the credibility, skills, connections, reputations, and formal authority required to provide change leadership. Work together. <i>No lone ranger acts. No solely individual efforts.</i> <u>Build trust.</u>
3. Get the vision right	The guiding team develops the right vision and strategy for the change effort.	Create sensible, clear, simple, uplifting visions and sets of strategies. <u>Take risks and don't get bogged down in details.</u>
4. Communicate for buy-in	People begin to buy into the change, and this shows in their behavior.	Send simple heartfelt messages through multiple channels to induce understanding, develop gut-level commitment, and liberate more energy from more people. <i>Deeds surmount words.</i> Symbols speak loudly. <u>Repetition is key.</u>
5. Empower action	More people feel able to act, and do act, on the vision.	Remove the roadblocks, the barriers to change: <u>processes or people.</u> Don't leave your people to fend for themselves. Their power will come from <i>your ability</i> to remove whatever obstacles there are in the road.
6. Create short-term wins	Momentum builds as people try to fulfill the vision, while fewer and fewer resist change.	Help people produce critical short-term wins – which will fuel the overall effort. <i>Manage the process carefully</i> so that you're <u>selecting the right initial projects</u> – those that cynics and skeptics <i>cannot sink.</i>
7. Don't let up	People make wave after wave of changes until the vision is fulfilled.	Momentum builds after the first, early wins. <i>Don't try to do too much at once.</i> Build intentionally. Seek feedback at every turn. <u>Listen.</u>

8. Make change stick	New and winning behavior continues despite the pull of tradition, turnover of change leaders, etc.	Making change stick means nurturing a new culture: group behavioral norms and shared values. <i>Key events will matter, e.g. who you promote and who you don't, how new employees are oriented, what behavior you choose to reward and what behavior you choose to eliminate.</i>
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Kotter says that the central challenge in all eight stages is changing people's behavior. The central challenge is *not* strategy, *not* systems, *not* culture. These elements and many others can be very important, but the core problem without question is *behavior* – *what people do*, and the need for significant shifts in what people do.

Changing behavior is less a matter of giving people analysis to influence their thoughts than helping them to see a truth *to influence their feelings*. Both thinking and feeling are essential, and both are found in successful organizations, but *the heart of change is in the emotions*. The flow of see-feel-change is more powerful than that of analysis-think-change. These distinctions between seeing and analyzing, between feeling and thinking, are critical because, for the most part, we use the latter much more frequently, competently, and comfortably than the former.

Who Killed Change?

*[a summary of John Britt & Ken Blanchard's book by that title
reviewed by Cam Taylor]*

This past month I sat in on a one hour teleconference with co-author John Britt who wrote (along with Ken Blanchard and others) the book "*Who Killed Change?*" In typical "Blanchard" fashion, the book is written as a story with much to teach on the subject of change. After spending an hour with John Britt I decided to buy the book and read the story for myself. It was well worth it.

The book tells the story of a Columbo-style detective, Agent Mike McNally who is found investigating the murder of yet another change in an organization. One by one, Agent McNally interviews thirteen prime suspects to see if he can figure out who murdered Change.

Several assumptions stand underneath this story about change. Some of them are:

- *People leading the change think that announcing it is the same as integrating it.*
- *People's concerns with change are not surfaced or addressed.*
- *Those being asked to implement change are not involved in the planning.*

The thirteen murder suspects are always the same. They are:

1. **Culture** - the predominant attitudes, beliefs and behavior patterns that characterize the organization.
2. **Commitment** - builds the person's motivation and confidence to engage in the new behaviors required by the change.
3. **Sponsorship** - a senior leader who has the formal authority to deploy resources (time, money and people) towards the change initiative - and who ultimately is responsible for the success of the change.
4. **Change Leadership Team** - actively leads the change into the organization by speaking with one voice and resolving the concerns of those being asked to change.
5. **Communication** - creates opportunities for dialogue with change leaders and those being asked to change.
6. **Urgency** - explains why the change is needed and how quickly people must change the way they work.
7. **Vision** - paints a clear and compelling picture of the future after change has been integrated.
8. **Plan** - clarifies the priority of the change compared to other initiatives; works with those being asked to change to develop implementation; defines and builds the structures needed to support the change.
9. **Budget** - analyzes proposed changes from a financial perspective to determine how best to allocate resources.
10. **Trainer** - provides learning experiences to ensure those being asked to change have the skills needed to follow through with the change and eventually succeed.

11. **Incentive** - recognizes and rewards people to reinforce desired behaviors and results that enable change.
12. **Performance management** - sets goals and expectations regarding behaviors and results that enable change; tracks progress; and provides feedback and training.
13. **Accountability** - follows through with people to ensure their behaviors and results are in line with agreed upon goals and expectations; ensures leaders are walking their talk.

It would be safe to say that I read this book looking for some insights on how to successfully lead people through change. One insight I gained was to learn that the characters who can kill change are the same characters who can help change thrive in an organization.

Churches going through transition and change sometimes see their change initiatives stalled or killed because of one of these characters. As leaders and facilitators of change, being better equipped will increase your chances of success in this important work. What you'll find in this easy to read book is both a good story as well as some practices that will help you succeed when wading into the change arena. After all, there comes a time when status quo just isn't good enough!