

Leading School Change (When No One Wants To)

October 19, 2021

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Mission-driven, Data-informed Leadership and Governance

**Mission
Driven**

+

**Community
Centered**

+

**Data
Informed**

A decorative background on the left side of the slide. It features a portion of a laptop with a silver and black keyboard in the upper left. Below the laptop is a calendar with various colored tabs (orange, pink, purple, blue, green) and handwritten text including 'PROCESS', 'PLANNING', 'STUDIO', and 'I T'.

Agenda

1

Review (almost) all you need to know about effective change leaders

2

Introduce (almost) all you need to know about change theory

3

Explore all you need to know (for now) about framing change; and

4

Take away an approach for analyzing the likelihood that a change will be successful

Change...when no one wants to.



John P. Kotter begins *Leading Change* with this statement: "The single most important message in this book is very simple. People change what they do less because they are given *analysis* that shifts their *thinking* than because they are *shown* a truth that influences their *feelings*."



Who is in the Room

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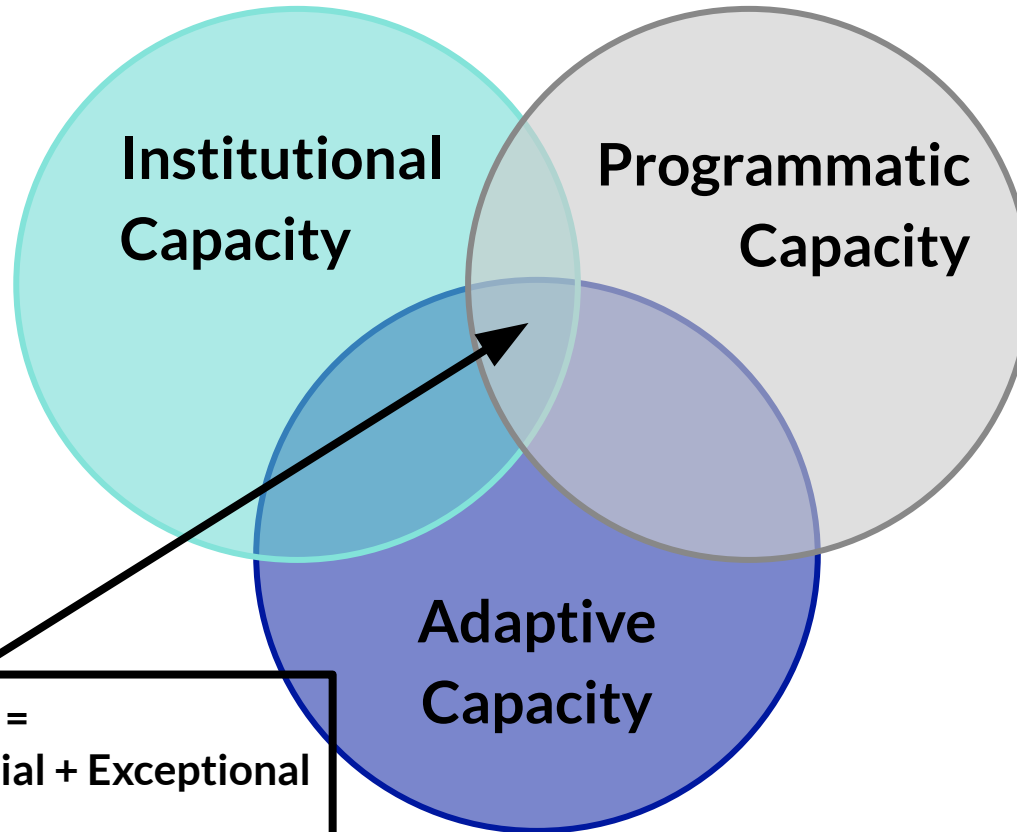
Warm-Up (With a Purpose)

- ◆ Consider a school-based change you've experienced that was wildly successful (or not)
- ◆ With a new friend, **BRIEFLY** share your story, and your thoughts about **2 or 3 reasons** why the change was so successful (or not)



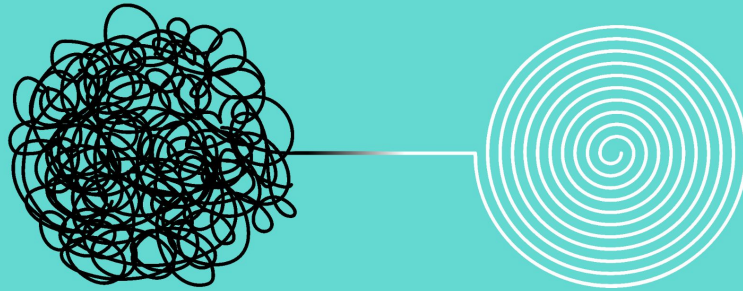
The “Pile of Mush” Problem

Stewardship of What Is Core & Leveraging Organizational Capacity



Core =
Immovable + Essential + Exceptional

Unpacking **squishy terms** ensures everyone has a shared understanding.



Don't assume your team, your head of school, or your board of trustees align on subjective terms.

Looks Like...

**Effective
change
process in
schools...**



Sounds Like...

Feels Like...

Looks Like...

Students
Smiling

Students
on task

Students
collaborating

**Classroom
Observation
Rubric**

Students
encouraging
each other

Students giving
each other
thoughtful
feedback

Students
asking
questions

**Improvements
in student
learning
experience**

Environment of
engagement in
learning

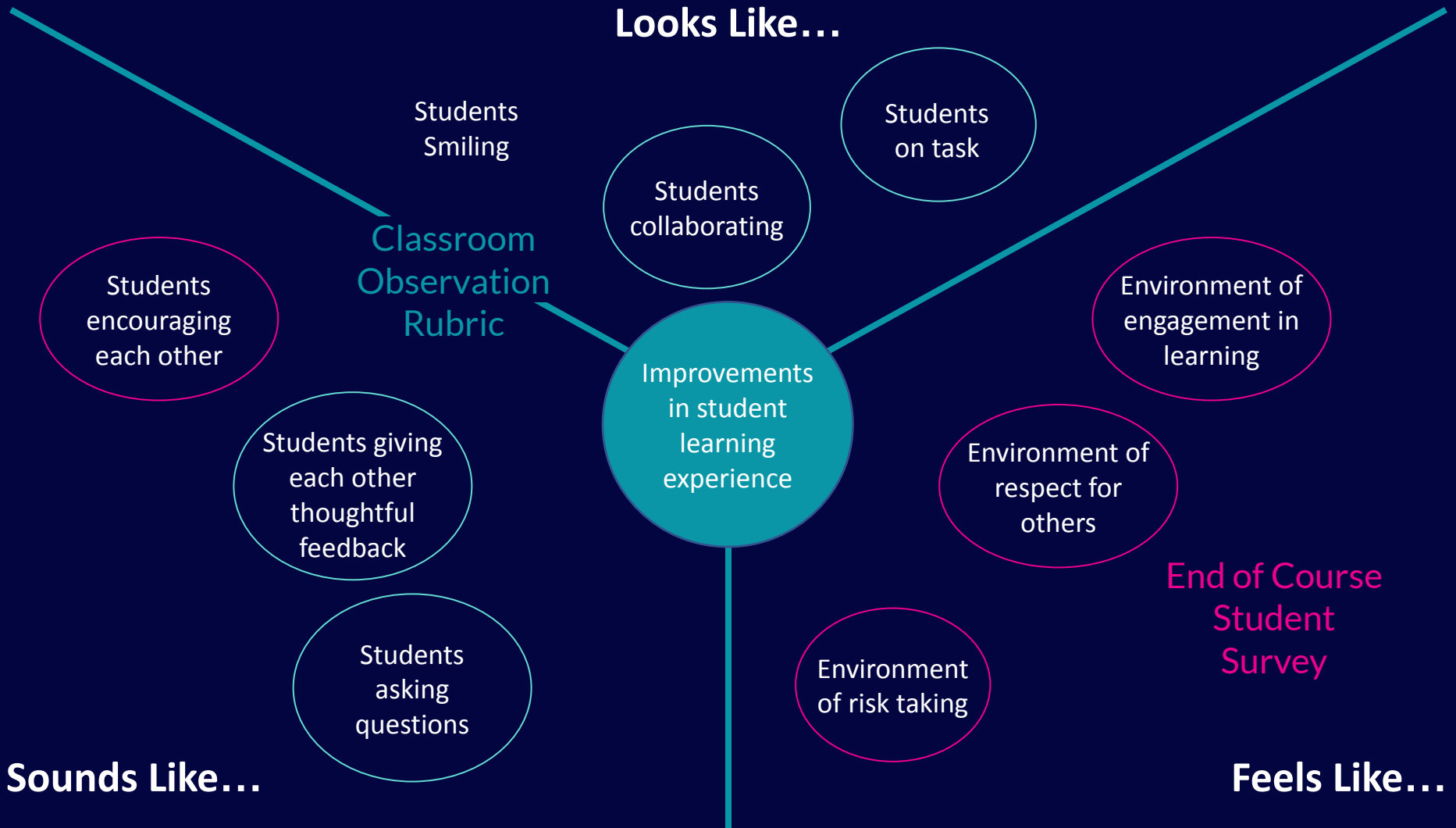
Environment of
respect for
others

Environment
of risk taking

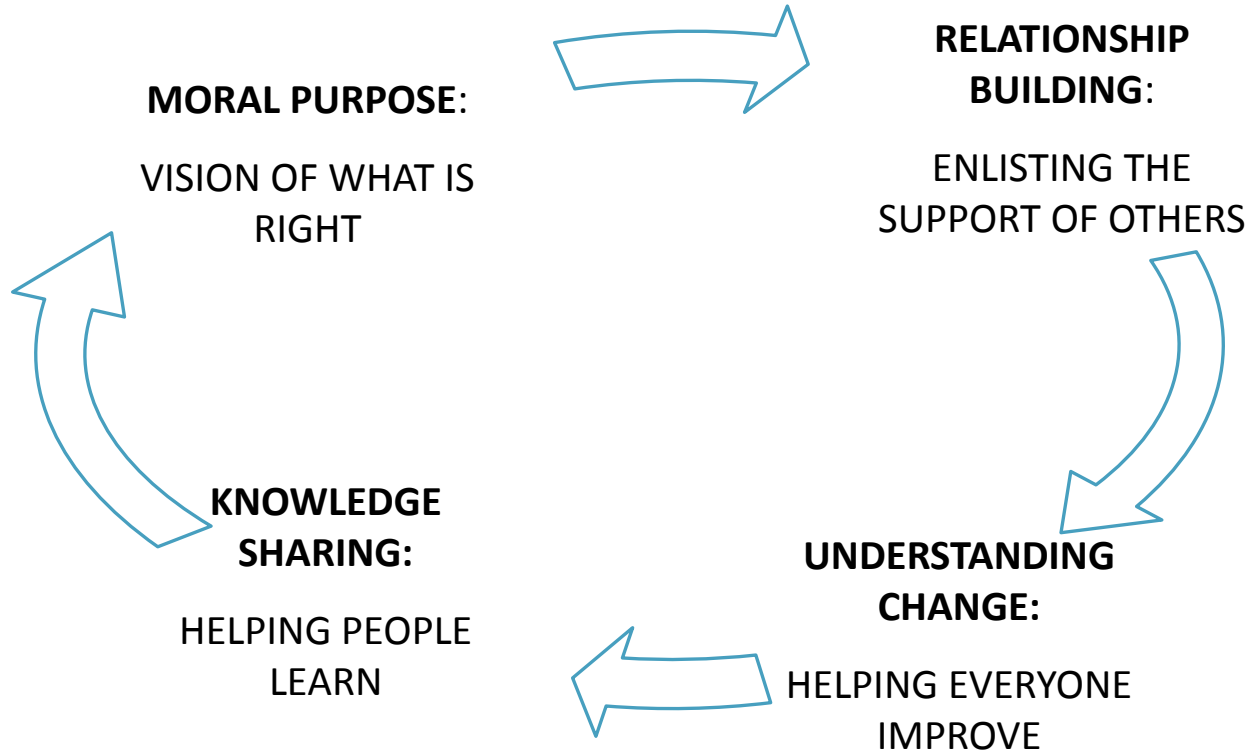
**End of Course
Student
Survey**

Feels Like...

Sounds Like...



What Effective Change Leaders Do Thanks Fullan!



John P. Kotter's Leading Change

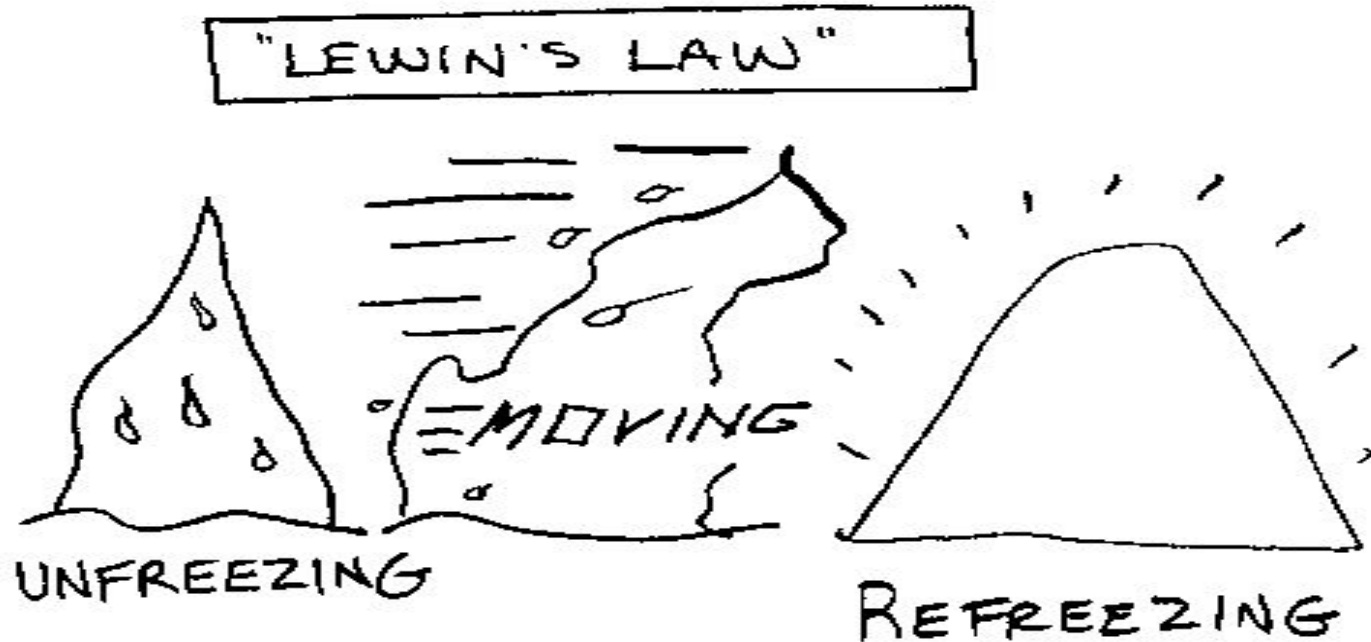
Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change

1. Establishing a sense of urgency
2. Creating the guiding coalition
3. Developing a vision and strategy
4. Communicating the change vision
5. Empowering broad-based action
6. Generating short-term wins
7. Consolidating wins and producing more change
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture

Eight Most Common Errors of Change Process

1. Allowing too much complacency
2. Failing to create an influential guiding coalition
3. Underestimating the power of vision
4. Under-communicating the vision
5. Permitting obstacles to block the new vision
6. Failing to create short-term wins
7. Declaring victory too soon
8. Neglecting to anchor changes firmly in the culture

CHANGE THEORY 101 - Thanks Lewin!



Step 1: Unfreezing

Unfreezing is about accepting the need for change; therefore evidence (data!) must be shared transparently with stakeholders about...

- What isn't "working" currently?
- What problem we are solving?
- What valued goal will we be better able to reach?

Leadership points to ponder:

- Do stakeholders agree on the need for change?
- Do stakeholders agree on the direction / new vision?



Step 2: Moving

BUY-IN = Stakeholders believing the action plan is *do-able*:

- Has the plan (including deadlines and deliverables) been shared?
- Does the plan include formative evaluation and corrective action opportunities (i.e., are you encouraging “failing forward”)
- Do stakeholders understand their role in change?
- Do stakeholders feel capable and/or do they believe that they will receive the assistance to develop needed skills and abilities?

MOST CHANGE THAT FLOPS, FLOPS BECAUSE OF...
POOR IMPLEMENTATION.



Step 3: Refreezing

Institutionalizing the change is all about folks feeling competent.

- Is professional development continuous and reinforced?
- Do policies and practices **actually reinforce the change** or were they developed to **maintain the former realities**?

Inconsistency between what leaders say they want (**change**) and organizational actions spells doom for the new initiative...



Quick Poll

Which of these three steps do you think organizations struggle with the **most**?

- Unfreezing?
- Moving?
- Refreezing?



Role Play

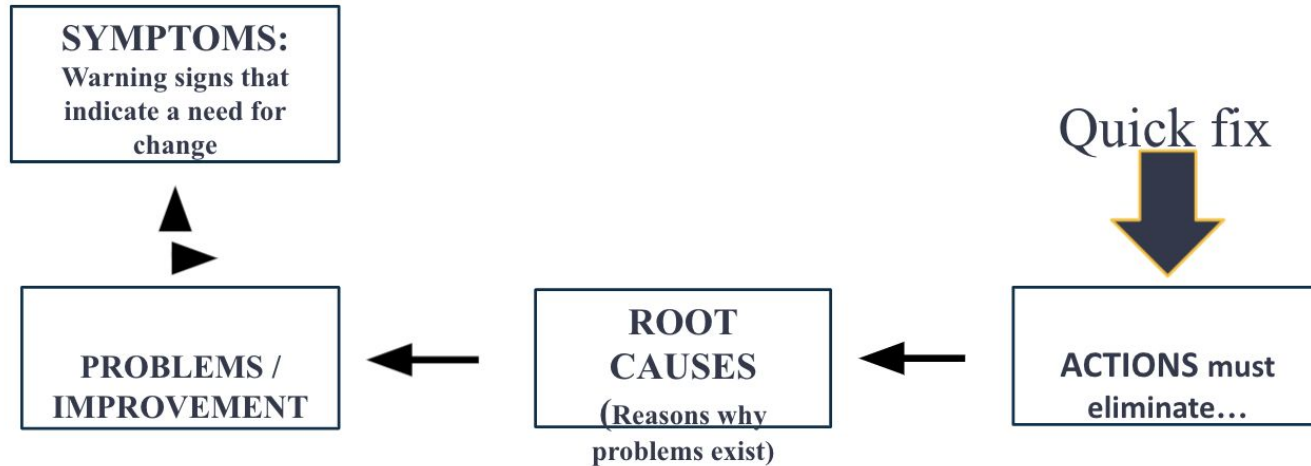


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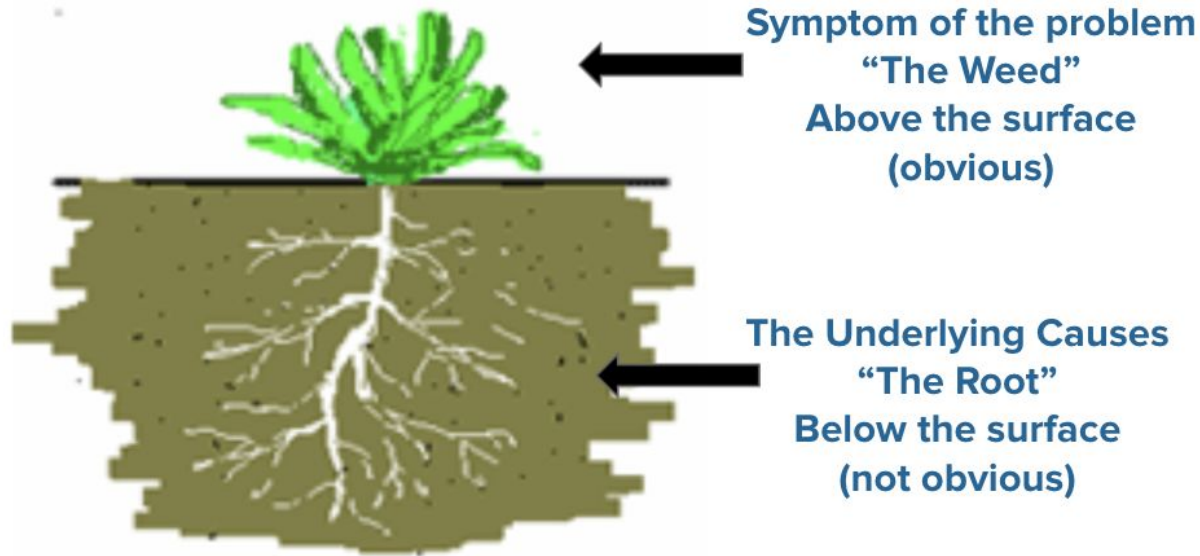
Problem Identification and Problem Solving

An important note about change: problems are solved by eliminating their **causes**.



Addressing Root Causes Instead of Symptoms

Root Cause Analysis Basics



When leadership teams and/or boards address problem **symptoms instead of root causes**, there can be unintended consequences, which can make the problem worse.

Turn and Talk - Part One

Assuming you could do **ANYTHING** and had the support you needed to do it, what change would you most like to implement at your school this year?

For Change to Happen...

- ★ Often, we have to think differently – challenge the “way we do things around here”
- ★ Gaps between the status quo and our “idealized” future need to be made visible, which means that
- ★ **Undiscussables** must be “opened up” in order to build capacity to support change.

So What's an Undiscussable?



Undiscussables

Topics we don't talk about

Organizational
participants behave as
though performance
gaps
don't exist

Talking about this kind
of contradiction or
inconsistency doesn't
happen; hence, an
**undiscussable is
generated**

Undiscussables are
"self-sealing": We do
not discuss the fact that
there are topics we do
not discuss

Turn and Talk - Part Two

What undiscussables may exist in relation to the change you most want to make?

Key Questions for Heads and Boards



Considering the people who you MOST need to support your change...

- Do they **see a need for change**?
- Will they **agree on the direction** you set?
- Will they **agree on the steps** you suggest to start the plan?
- What **risks or problems** will they perceive with the change?

Final Thoughts on Change...

#1: PEOPLE DON'T RESIST CHANGE, THEY RESIST BEING CHANGED. (Lewin)

#2: IT ISN'T THE CHANGES THAT WILL DO YOU IN; IT'S THE TRANSITIONS. (*Bridges & Bridges*)

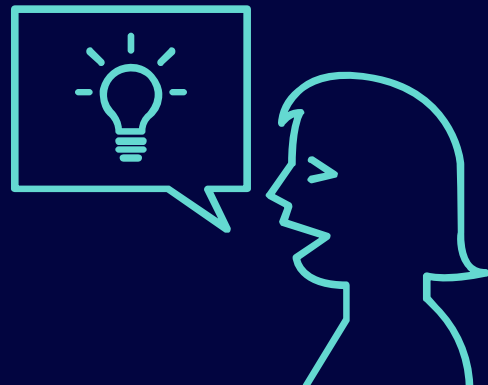
#3: STRUCTURAL CHANGE ALONE SELDOM WORKS; LASTING CHANGE REQUIRES TIME AND ATTENTION TO BOTH SKILL & WILL. (many, many observers)

#4: CONSEQUENCE ANALYSIS IS YOUR FRIEND (Anne-Marie)



Questions

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Additional Mission & Data Team Members



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Leadership and Governance

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Mission & Data is a firm dedicated to the effectiveness, health, and vitality of educational institutions and other organizations that make the world a better place. We are committed to enhancing mission-driven, data-informed leadership and governance by:

Integrated strategy consulting to improve organizational effectiveness and facilitate organizational transformation.

Developing custom data products, visualizations, and dashboards to highlight progress, identify trends, and leverage actionable insights.

Auditing current practice and analyzing organizational data to recommend process efficiencies and strategic improvements.

Coaching leaders and boards of trustees to enact institutional vision and build a culture of inquiry-based decision making practices.

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