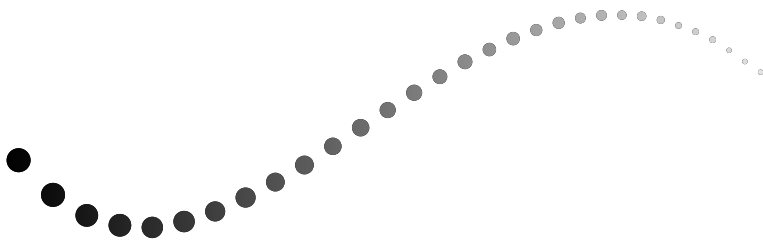


Library Management in Disruptive Times

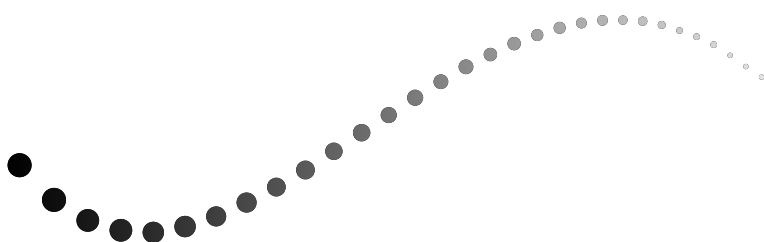
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Library Management in Disruptive Times

Skills and knowledge for
an uncertain future



Edited by
Steve O'Connor



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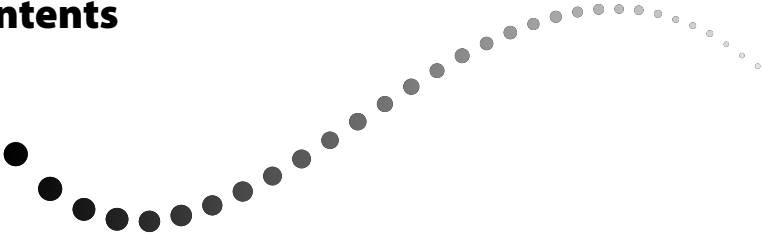
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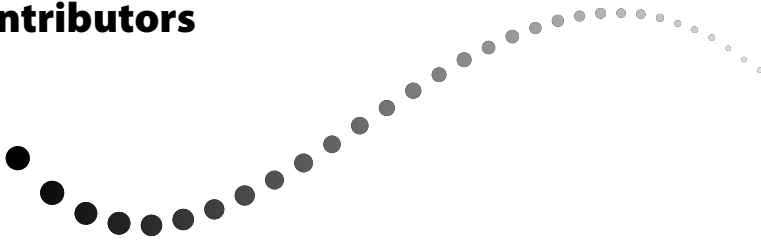
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Contributors



Choy Fatt Cheong

Choy Fatt Cheong is University Librarian at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). He began his career in librarianship at the National University of Singapore in 1984 and moved on to the Ministry of Defence in 1991 as Chief Librarian of SAFTI Military Institute. He was Principal Lecturer and Course Manager of Information Studies at Temasek Polytechnic from 1995 to 2000. He left the Polytechnic to set up his own consultancy and training company in 2000 and worked on various projects until 2004, when he assumed his current position. He also taught at the Division of Information Studies at NTU as Adjunct Associate Professor in 2003. He was President of the Library Association of Singapore from 1997 to March 2005 and served as a member of the Board of Directors at the Singapore National Library Board for six years until 2003. He is currently a board member of IATUL (the International Association of University Libraries) and leads several groups in the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) involving professional development, library education and a library executive management programme.

Bill Fisher

Bill Fisher is Professor with the School of Information at San Jose State University (SJSU) in California. He has been teaching in the library and

information science (LIS) field for over 30 years; prior to joining SJSU, he taught at University of California Los Angeles; he has been a visiting professor at the University of British Columbia and is currently an adjunct professor at Queensland University of Technology. His teaching areas include administration/management, leadership, and organizational development, as well as resources/services in business/economics and sports/recreation. He has published on many aspects of management in libraries, including strategic alignment and the organizational impacts of change.

Daniel Forsman

Daniel Forsman is the Library Director at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden. Chalmers is a highly progressive university with a dynamic and ever-evolving library. Since 2010 the library has been using Scrum as an agile software development tool and has invested heavily in user experience (UX) methodology. Early in 2014 the library was reorganized, with the aim of introducing agile principles throughout the library organization, thus providing opportunities for all parts of the library to innovate and adapt to change.

Before becoming Director, Daniel managed many of the back-end operations of Chalmers Library, including library systems, cataloguing, inter-library loan, acquisitions, and web and social media presence. His first years in the profession were spent as a systems librarian, with a focus on library automation and the development of electronic services for libraries.

Sue Henczel

Sue Henczel is a library manager, practitioner, trainer and educator. Her areas of specialization include library metrics, information audit and professional associations. During her career she has held key roles within professional associations including Public Libraries Australia, the Special Libraries Association (SLA) and the Statistics and Evaluation Committee of the International Federation of Library Associations. Sue is an SLA Fellow and recipient of the 2008 Presidential Citation for services to the Association. She is a member of the Library Management (Emerald) Editorial Board and is its Book Review Editor.

Sue is currently a PhD candidate at RMIT University, Melbourne, where

she is researching the impact of national library associations, and occasionally teaches on the Master of Information Management programme.

Petros A. Kostagiolas

Dr Petros A. Kostagiolas is Assistant Professor of Information Services Management in the Department of Archives, Library Science and Museology, Faculty of Information Science and Informatics at Ionian University, Corfu, Greece. He is also a visiting lecturer at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. He holds a PhD in the field of quality and reliability management from the University of Birmingham, UK, and he has published his work in international journals and conference proceedings. He has been co-author of four management books in Greek and is the author of a book in English published by Chandos-Elsevier. His research interests include the theory and practice of information services management, intellectual capital management, quality management, as well as information-seeking behaviour in various settings.

Steve O'Connor

Steve O'Connor is the Director of Information Exponentials. Steve's book on scenario planning for libraries and other organizations, *Imagining Your Library's Future*, is being published in Chinese by the National Library of China. He is the author of over 60 articles and a frequent presenter at international library and information management conferences. Most recently, he has been appointed as an Adjunct Professor at Charles Sturt University, where he engages in a variety of advisory and research roles. Steve's passion is to foster creative and dynamic communities that deliver positive and measureable results for their members. He has conducted scenario planning projects for many libraries and consortia, including for Lyris in its transformation from SOLINET into the largest library consortium in the USA. Steve has worked in libraries for most of his career. During the last 20 years, he has been University Librarian at two major academic libraries – University of Technology, Sydney, and Hong Kong Polytechnic University; CEO of CAVAL, a non-profit company providing a range of services to all library sectors; and founder of Information Exponentials. Steve harnesses the power of the imagination to create powerful, realistic and community-accepted future scenarios. He

has conducted workshops on library futures and scenario planning across Australia and China and in Hong Kong, Singapore, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur. Steve is the Editor of the journal *Library Management*.

Michael Robinson

Michael Robinson took up the position of Chief Executive Officer at the Australian library consortium CAVAL in September 2012. Prior to this he was Librarian at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, where he was actively involved in planning and implementing co-operative developments among Hong Kong university libraries with JULAC, the Joint University Librarians Advisory Committee. He was previously the Director of Library and Learning Resource Centre Projects for RMIT University Vietnam, undertaking major library building and infrastructure philanthropic projects for four Vietnamese universities, in addition to projects such as the authorized Vietnamese translation of the Dewey Decimal Classification (14th Abridged Edition) and programmes to support the re-establishment of the Vietnamese Library Association. He has been actively involved in library professional associations for many years, having been a member of the initial project development group and, subsequently, Core Trainer for the IFLA Building Strong Library Associations (BSLA) programme, conducting BSLA programmes in Vietnam, Nepal and Myanmar. He was the President of the Hong Kong Library Association from 2008 to 2009, and previously the President of VALA, the Victorian Association for Library Automation. Earlier in his career Michael was Associate University Librarian and Manager, Business Development, at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia.

Ian Smith

Ian Smith is an Australian-based change management consultant and facilitator. He is an established and popular author on change and organizational improvement. Ian's writing strives to give managers and organizational leaders ideas and practical tools for grappling with the problems of effecting change with and through people.

Ian's career in the Australian higher education sector has spanned over 40 years, with four career switches: librarian, human resources manager; change manager, and independent consultant/facilitator/mediator. The

service ethos inherent in the work of libraries and librarians has run through all of Ian's work, as has the capacity to work with and interpret complexity – this latter skill first learned as a reference librarian in pre-internet days.

Colin Storey

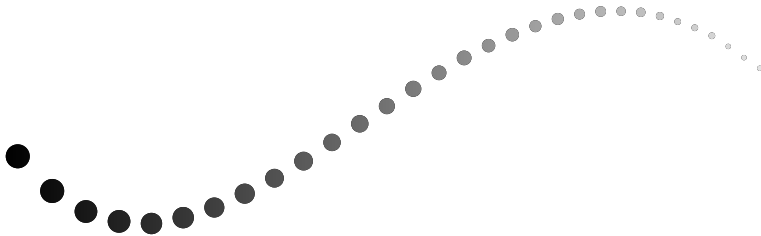
Dr Colin Storey, now retired to the leafy lanes of Suffolk, England, was the University Librarian of the Chinese University of Hong Kong from October 2000 to December 2012. He worked in academic libraries in the UK and in Hong Kong for 40 years.

Born in Liverpool, Colin received his BA (Leeds University, UK) and MPhil degrees (University of East Anglia, UK) in modern Chinese Studies. He moved to Hong Kong in 1988, as Associate Librarian at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He was awarded a PhD from the University of Hong Kong in 2000 for a thesis on information flow in academic libraries in the People's Republic of China, 1949–89.

Colin's professional interests include: academic library strategic management (particularly in times of economic stringency), personnel management and staff development, human interfaces with new technologies; intellectual property and copyright, and rare books. In retirement, Colin continues to struggle with mastering electric blues guitar and to sort out thousands of his books which have been in storage for 25 years.

Introduction

Steve O'Connor



As an accidental editor

As the editor of this volume, I sought chapters from a wide range of knowledgeable, influential and thoughtful contributors around the globe. They were each asked to write about the impact of ‘disruptive change’ on libraries, library management and library managers as they saw it. Each author has a particular area of expertise and perspective on that impact. I believe that the resulting volume offers perspectives on many aspects of library sectors, professional associations, geographic regions and education.

From my perspective as a journal editor, it is often absorbing to read and judge the many unsolicited articles received from fellow professionals. The journal articles are reflective of the issues that are on the minds of those who are leading the profession. Admittedly, the writers are not always in leadership roles, but they are influencing the thinking and management behaviours in the profession at all levels. Those that are published become part of the corpus of what is happening in the profession at that particular time.

The chapters of this volume, however, have been specifically commissioned. Many of the authors have published at one time or another in *Library Management* and elsewhere. But here they are writing to the brief ‘What is the impact of disruption in libraries on your area of expertise?’

Ian Smith is an international authority on change management. His writings are sought after and his advice and insights are well received. His Chapter 1, on the five themes of change, is an excellent chapter with which to begin the discussion on disruption. Ian's experience is clearly articulated and highly readable.

Bill Fisher is a professor in the School of Library and Information Science at the San Jose State University. In Chapter 2 he discusses management fads and fashions and their impact on libraries. Bill is a highly experienced and insightful library academic working in the area of leadership and management. His starting point is that the current 'off the shelf' management theorem seems to provide the easy way forward. He argues that management is pure, hard work, especially in an environment where the only constant is change. He guides us to the areas we need to focus on in order to achieve good results while remaining wary that the fads and fashions may not deliver the easy, long-term solutions that we hope for.

Choy Fatt Cheong is a highly experienced and perceptive university librarian based in Singapore. He is one of Asia's most knowledgeable librarians. It is perhaps understandable that he should have chosen Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science as the point of departure for his chapter. In Chapter 3 he develops a new set of Rules of User Engagement for libraries, extrapolated from Ranganathan but clearly shaped by the impact of the internet.

Michael Robinson, as the CEO of a large consortium company based in Melbourne, has brought a wealth of library experience in Vietnam, Hong Kong and Australia to his role. In Chapter 4 he argues that the value proposition of consortial activity, where costs and, especially, value are paramount, is becoming stronger. Michael demonstrates this value proposition across the range of library business offerings made by CAVAL.

Petros A. Kostagiolas is a professor at the Ionian University in Greece. In Chapter 5 he assesses the impact of the economic crisis in his own country and more broadly in Europe. He argues that the economic crisis has led to a new evaluation of decision-making processes in libraries. This includes evaluation of the value of public investment in libraries and the kinds of meta-marketing which should be undertaken.

Daniel Forsman is a university librarian in Sweden, and in Chapter 6 he looks at agile management techniques as a means to constantly re-evaluate priorities in libraries. As crises of identity, finance, management

styles and acceptance of libraries become real, 'agile management' offers a different way forward.

Susan Henczel is a widely experienced librarian, author and academic with strong international connections. In Chapter 7 she writes about the role of the professional association in redefining the profession for sustainability in a disrupted world. Now that many librarians are working outside the traditional structures of the library, the challenge is that much greater. She highlights areas for development, even as the rate of participation in professional associations declines.

Colin Storey is a highly respected university librarian, recently retired. His perspective in Chapter 8 on the challenges facing current library management is very readable and nuanced. Colin has worked his way through all these disruptive changes, and at the same time engaged with Chinese cultures in Hong Kong and mainland China. Colin introduces us to ten pieces of advice for a satisfying and successful managerial career in libraries. His chapter is well worth reading.

Finally, in Chapter 9 Steve O'Connor discusses the meaning and impact of 'disruption', as defined by Christenson,¹ in the context of libraries and publishing. Having extensive library management, publishing and leadership experience, he makes the point that it is important to think outside the library literature and project your planning horizons into the world of what could be. This will help to shape future scenarios in the library environment.

I have had a great opportunity, as the editor of *Library Management*, to observe debates and developments in the broad world of library management. For me as a journal editor working with an experienced, senior and global editorial advisory board, the 'helicopter view' is privileged and equally global. Such a perspective sharpens one's awareness of the issues facing this sector of the profession. The subject focus of articles received from different areas of the globe ebbs and flows, depending on needs and developments in different arenas, and has changed quite significantly as libraries in Western countries come under increased financial and purposive pressures.

This volume gathers together a group of authors who, as library managers, operate in the maelstrom of change. I offer them my grateful thanks for writing for this volume. Each one has written with commitment and eloquence. As to you, the reader, I hope that you will profit from the variety of perspectives and advice within these pages and learn from them

as you need. You may not agree with all that you read here, but it is hoped that a clearer articulation of your own position will emerge.

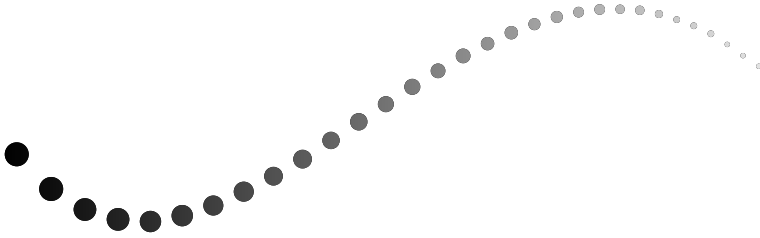
Steve O'Connor

Note

- 1 The most popular of Christenson's works is *The Innovator's Dilemma*, Harvard Business School Press, 1997.

Leading change: knowledge for success

Ian Smith



Introduction

Library Management in Disruptive Times, the title of this book, brings to mind the (probably apocryphal) curse ‘May you live in interesting times!’ For libraries and librarians the current times, and those of the past several decades, have indeed been interesting and challenging. The advent and rapid growth of the internet has brought fundamental changes in information-seeking behaviours and has revolutionized the way in which libraries operate. As recently as the mid-1990s, libraries and librarians were the primary gateways and gatekeepers to information. Now they operate in circumstances where, if they are to remain relevant and viable, they have to embrace major change. Not to do so risks shrinking relevance – even redundancy. A conference held in 2006 in Hong Kong captured well the reality of this dynamic, posing the question: ‘Are libraries and librarians like a dinosaur, or a phoenix? Will they die or will they fly?’

For managers of libraries to survive and prosper in disruptive times the capacity to lead, and to manage change is critical. If libraries are to be phoenix-like, to ‘fly’, they need to join into the flow of the massive disruptions brought about by new information technologies and changes in the information-seeking behaviours of library clients. They must be able to change. Survival will require innovation, diversification, flexibility and the capacity to keep on changing. Change can bring

reinvention and new relevance. Failure to implement effective change carries the risk of, at best, mediocrity; more likely, a lingering decline into irrelevance. Failure to change, to remain relevant and valued by their clients, translates to a very real risk of redundancy, and the fate of the dinosaurs.

To survive and prosper, library managers need to know how to change. They need to recognize when change is needed, to be able to lead and sustain change, and to keep change alive and ongoing. The statistics on the effectiveness of change initiatives can, however, be disheartening. Estimates of the failure rate of organizational change initiatives, failure in full or in part, are as high as 70% (Kotter, 1995). However, despite those gloomy statistics, effective change *can* be achieved. Organizational change, led and managed well, provides an opportunity for growth, renewal and improved organizational capability. Change done well, that persists and leads to further innovation and improvement, can be revitalizing – for organizations and for those working in them. Conversely, change handled badly can create major and long-lasting organizational damage. People can be left disheartened, demoralized and cynical: people who, next time a ‘change’ initiative comes around, may well be wary – or, worse, obstructive. There is a lot at stake with change. There are strong reasons to manage change well; strong reasons to not get it wrong.

While there is no magic answer or solution to achieving change, there is much useful knowledge and guidance available. The discussion in this chapter considers several key aspects in the dynamics of change, providing a thought-starter for managers faced with the need to make change, and pointers to sources of more detailed advice and knowledge.

The discussion is arranged around five themes:

- Change: it’s all about people
- Change: a step-by-step process, or a cycle?
- Communication and engagement: keys to effective change
- Resistance to change: opportunity or threat?
- Keeping change alive: avoiding organizational homeostasis.

The chapter concludes with a reflection: is achieving change about managing, or leading? Or a mix of both?

Change: it's all about people

Transformation is impossible unless ... people are willing to help, often to the point of making short-term sacrifices. Employees will not make sacrifices if they are happy with the status quo, unless they believe that useful change is possible.

(Kotter, 1995)

Organizations are made up of people. It is the people who either will embrace change and carry it forward or will block and undermine change. The way in which people are led and managed during change is key in determining the path to success or to failure of any initiative for change.

For some, change is hugely exciting. For others, deeply frightening. To make change happen it is essential to engage people in the change. Other than in an emergency, simply directing change to occur and imposing change rarely succeeds. It may appear on the surface that the change has worked. Indeed some of the change may stick. Change that is simply imposed without real engagement and buy-in from the people involved is, however, at best, likely to be seriously compromised. At worst, it may leave major organizational damage, eroding, even destroying, trust in the organization's leadership. This can lead to a worsening of already poor circumstances – making future change even harder to achieve. Establishing a solid support base for organizational changes and undertaking ongoing active enlistment to the change effort is vital. As John Kotter says, capturing the hearts and minds of the people who make up the organization is key to achieving successful and enduring change.

Philosopher Jonathan Haidt (2006) has a good analogy for human behaviour when faced with change. He says that our emotional side is an elephant and our rational side is its rider. Perched atop the elephant, the rider holds the reins, appearing to be the leader and directing the elephant where to go. However, the reality is that the rider's control is precarious. The rider is very small relative to the elephant. The analytical, logical rider may decide on the way to go and direct that action. However, the reality is that in any disagreement over where to go, the rider is very likely to lose. So it is with organizational change. Organizations can be like very large and wilful 'elephants'. If they do not want to change, or to change in the way directed by the rider (the leader/manager), then real change is

very unlikely. No matter how much the rider shouts and prods, in a contest of wills the elephant is very likely to be the ultimate winner. What is required is a more nuanced approach, whispering to achieve change rather than directing change through a megaphone.

Chip and Dan Heath (2010) take Haidt's analogy and expand the concept in their best-selling and insightful analysis of the task of achieving change: *Switch: how to change things when change is hard*. Using the image of the rider on the elephant, the Heaths argue that achieving change is about doing three things well:

- directing the rider – not the elephant
- motivating the elephant to change – rather than simply directing it to change
- shaping the path – to make change easier for the elephant.

If you can do all three of these at the same time, then, say the Heaths, dramatic change can happen.

The Heaths' concepts provide simple but powerful tools to apply to the task of achieving organizational change, achieving change with and through people. To briefly expand on the Heaths' model (read the book if you want to know more), the three steps involve the elements described here.

Direct the rider (not the elephant)

Follow the bright spots in an organization. Instead of starting from scratch, find out what's working, find the points of common ground (both good and bad). Investigate what is working well and clone it. Search out the negatives – those things that are not working well – and use those as hooks to engage people in working for improvement.

Script critical moves in the change. Don't simply think and articulate the big picture. That is important, but in order to connect with people and to make their part in the change real and tangible it is necessary to think in terms of specific behaviours and actions. So explain these to people, and engage them in the action.

Point to the destination. It is much easier for people to embrace change if they know where they are going. Do this in a way that makes sense to them and their role in the organization. People will accept

and join in with change when they know where it is taking them, and why it's worth it to go there.

Motivate the elephant

Find and work with people's feelings in the change. Simply knowing the logic of the change is generally not enough to cause people to change. The key to change is finding a way to get people to feel something about the change. So, instead of an approach of analyse/think/change, try approaching change from a standpoint of see/feel/change.

Shrink the change. It is easier for people to make a change if the change seems doable, rather than insurmountable. Break down the change until it no longer spooks the elephant. Look for quick wins in making change, which can then build momentum towards more change.

Grow people. Cultivate a sense of identity in people and instil a change mind-set. The Heaths argue that most people have a pre-existing inclination towards the 'bright spots'. This is despite the fact that it is a frequent human tendency to focus more on what is bad than on what is good. People will generally respond well to a challenge to find what is working well and to do more of it. Focusing on what is working well (the bright spots) is more motivating than a focus on what is not working well (even though the latter has the intent of improvement). So, get people to start thinking that change really is possible and that it is worthwhile. Get them to make a small change and to see the results. They can then think of themselves as people who *can* change, rather than people who are limited by habit, peer pressure etc. and who cannot change.

Shape the path

Tweak the environment. Adjusting and aligning the environment to make the desired changes easier does just that – it makes the changes easier. It also makes going against the changes a harder option. The elephant will take the easiest path, and will likely balk at a harder path – even if it is directed to take that path. So make the path of change that you want to be followed as easy and as smooth as you can.

Build habits. When behaviour is habitual, it is easy to just keep following the same path. People tend to be habitual, and following the easy and known path does not tax the rider. Look for ways to set and embed habits that fit with and encourage the change. Look for ways to discourage habits that run counter to the desired change.

Rally the herd. Behaviour is contagious. People watch other people, and they copy and follow behaviours that they see – good or bad. So, to foster change and help it spread, rally the proponents and the exemplars of change and allow them to shine – showing others what can be and is being achieved. Pretty soon more and more people will join in and the momentum for change will build.

The Heaths' analysis, which is at heart about the behaviours of people when faced with change, offers a powerful but simple model for working to achieve change. Their book finishes with a reflection on keeping change going. This may sound easy, but it is not. This topic will be considered further, later in this chapter.

Change: a step-by-step process, or a cycle?

John P. Kotter, of the Harvard Business School, has been a highly influential observer and analyst of organizational change over many years. His classic analysis of the sequence of effective change is essentially that of a series of steps – each critical to effective change, and each of which must be done in sequence. Kotter's seminal analysis (1995) was drawn from his observation of over a hundred companies, large and small, attempting to reinvent themselves, with varying degrees of success. Done well, Kotter says, these eight steps provide the path to success. If done badly, or not done at all, he says, they can be the root cause of change failure.

In outline, Kotter's approach to achieving successful change is as follows.

- **Establish a sense of urgency about the need to achieve change.**

People will not change if they cannot see the need to do so.

- **Create a guiding coalition.**

Assemble a group with power, energy and influence in the organization to lead the change.

- **Develop a vision and strategy.**
Create a vision of what the change is about; tell people why the change is needed and how it will be achieved.
- **Communicate the change vision.**
Tell people, in every possible way and at every opportunity, about the why, what and how of the changes.
- **Empower broad-based action.**
Involve people in the change effort; get people to think about the changes and how to achieve them rather than thinking about why they do not like the changes and how to stop them.
- **Generate short-term wins.**
Seeing the changes happening, and working and recognizing the work being done by people towards achieving the change, is critical.
- **Consolidate gains and produce more change.**
Create momentum for change by building on successes in the change; invigorate people through the changes; develop people as change agents.
- **Anchor new approaches in the corporate culture.**
This is critical to long-term success and institutionalizing the changes. Failure to do so may mean that changes achieved through hard work and effort slip away with people's tendency to revert to the old and comfortable ways of doing things.

Contrasting with Kotter's step-wise model of the dynamics of change is Bob Doppelt's (2003) analysis of change, drawn from wide-ranging and long-term observation of a mix of private and public sector organizations. Differing from Kotter's linear-step analysis, Doppelt views the process of change as a cycle or a 'wheel of change' (Figure 1.1).

Doppelt sees change as a messy and far from linear process. He articulates seven cycle points at which interventions may be made, or leverage applied, to effect change. Significantly, Doppelt's analysis is that, provided that all steps are ultimately carried through, interventions may be made at any point or in any sequence in the change cycle, and with varying degrees of attention or action. In Doppelt's observation, multiple and non-sequential interventions and actions build momentum for change. The seven intervention or leverage points in Doppelt's 'wheel of change' are explained below in more detail.

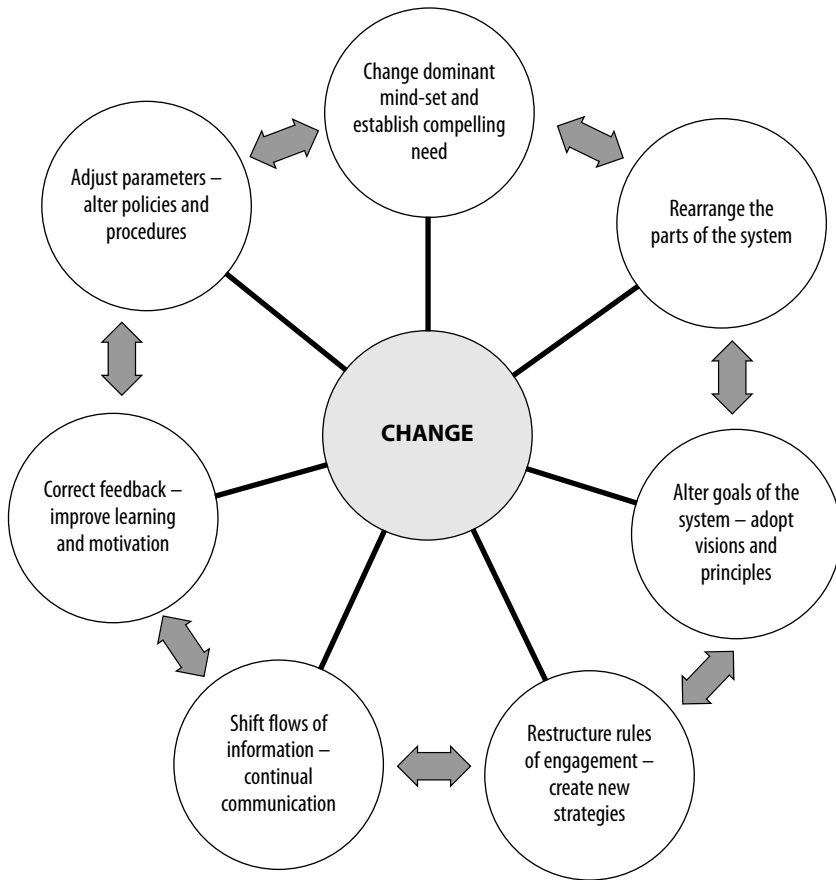


Figure 1.1 Doppel's 'wheel of change' (Doppel, 2003)

- *Disrupt and change the dominant mind-set – establish a compelling need for achieving change.*
 Disrupting an organization's controlling mental models is, in Doppel's view, the first and most important step toward developing new ways of operating. Little change will occur if this step is unsuccessful.
- *Rearrange the parts of the system by organizing transition teams.*
 Having challenged and disrupted 'business-as-usual' thinking, rearrange the parts of the current system. Involve – in analysis, planning and implementation – people from as many functions, departments and levels of the organization as possible, along with

key external stakeholders. Shaking-up the organization is important in achieving change. People, from planners and decision makers to operational staff, tend to handle problems in the same way time after time. Loosening the constraints imposed by prevailing and dominant cultural paradigms encourages new ideas and action to emerge, at all levels of an organization.

■ *Alter the goals of the system – create an ideal vision.*

Changing organizational goals, and clearly articulating a vision of the ends the organization seeks to achieve, can change the first-order principles that guide decision making. This can enable different kinds of decisions and outcomes.

■ *Restructure the rules of engagement – adopt new strategies.*

The rules determining how work gets done must be altered after the organization has adopted and articulated revised purposes and goals. This may involve new tactics, and implementation plans. These changes need to occur at both operational and policy/governance levels.

This stage, and the stage of altering the goals (above), requires organizations to consider:

- what is the current state?
- how and where does the organization want to be in the future?
- how does the organization get there?
- how do we measure progress?

■ *Shift the flows of information – communicate vision, strategies and actions.*

This is important in ensuring understanding and buy-in to change from staff and other stakeholders. Even when all other interventions have been successful, progress may stall without consistent exchange of clear information about the purpose, strategies and benefits of the change effort. Transparent communication opens the door to honest understanding and sharing.

■ *Correct feedback loops in the organization – encourage and reward learning and innovation.*

Improving feedback and learning mechanisms is key. Employees and stakeholders should be encouraged and enabled to continually expand their skills, knowledge and understanding. Changing that aspect of organizational functioning meshes with moving away from traditional feedback systems – typically oriented toward

maintaining the status quo – and towards mechanisms that foster innovation, experimentation and risk taking.

■ *Adjust and align the parameters of the system.*

Align internal systems, structures, policies and procedures with organizational goals in order to constantly reaffirm all of the required actions and behaviours.

Although Kotter and Doppelt differ in their view of the importance of sequential action, they both emphasize common core themes:

- Establish a sense of urgency about the need to change.
- Disrupt set ways of working and business-as-usual mind-sets.
- Create a vision of the ideal future state and then engage people in the organization with that change agenda and with actions to achieve the change.
- Communicate that change vision widely and consistently, and do so at all levels of the organization.
- Empower people in the organization to think and act differently, to take risks, to explore new ways of working and to overcome barriers to innovation and individual/organizational learning.
- Enable feedback loops in the organization, recognizing success in achieving change, which in turn encourages more change. This establishes an exponential and dynamic cycle that builds on success.
- Institutionalize new and changed approaches to working – embedding change and making it stick.

An overriding common view from both writers is that change processes take time – years of work – to achieve success. In Kotter's words, it is important to avoid the 'illusion of speed'. The key difference between them is that Kotter asserts the primacy of each step occurring in strict sequence, whereas Doppelt's view is that, while there is a strong element of logical flow in these change interventions, most situations allow for interventions to occur in a variety of sequences and with varying emphases. The Kotter and the Doppelt analyses of the dynamics of change both provide strong understanding of the complexities of the task of working to achieve change. A situational response that melds elements of both of these approaches may be the path to success.

Communication and engagement: keys to effective change

In all of the discussion above, in the analyses of Haidt, the Heaths, Kotter and Doppelt, the common element is the importance of the people who staff organizations and their behaviours in circumstances of change. A critical element in working with people and change is communication. Effective communication – honest, credible, agile and interactive communication – sits at the very core of good change management. It can be the critical enabler in moving beyond middling (or even failed) attempts at change, to a change strategy that is truly transformative and becomes embedded in the organization.

Good communication about change, while it may appear to be easy, is actually one of the hardest things to get right. The key to getting it right is, again, people. Engaging with people, understanding different audiences, communicating with them, enlisting them in the change – these are critical success factors. Engaging people, rather than simply talking at them or directing and imposing change, is essential. Yet the game plan for organizational change so often ignores this truth.

There are some basics of good change communication. Barbara LeTourneau – a health-care professional – developed a communication model that has much to recommend it for use in organizational change (LeTourneau, 2004). Her change communication ‘prescription’ has four key elements:

- engage
- empathize
- educate
- enlist.

Engage

Other than in an emergency, real change cannot be simply imposed. Genuine and thorough engagement with employees and stakeholders is required to achieve deeply embedded change. This should begin early in any change initiative and continue alongside change progress and not be seen as an afterthought, just as the change is about to be launched. Engaging employees and stakeholders early introduces and socializes the notion of change, actively generates interest and discussion about the changes and provokes responses to the change proposals. Responses will most likely cover the full range from positivity and enthusiasm for change

to deep anxiety and resistance. And, unfortunately, a too-common managerial response to change resistance is to ignore, dismiss or squash such comment. While listening and responding to resistance may seem counter-intuitive, it is actually a powerful means of engagement. People rarely resist change simply for the sake of resisting; there is usually a deeper imperative. It is inevitable that negativity about at least some aspects of a change proposal will emerge. As much as it is important to listen to positive and supportive comment, and to encourage and cultivate support, it is equally important to listen to and engage with the anxiety and the resistance. The role of leaders and managers is to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to air their reactions and sentiments openly, and to do so sooner rather than later. (The issue of dealing with change resistance is discussed further, later in this chapter.)

Good engagement requires honest and straightforward explanations of the why and the how of the change. A mix of communication methods is important: large-scale ‘big picture’ messages from the organization’s leaders play an important role, as do practical, grass-roots explanations of how change may impact on individuals and work groups. Consistent change messages must be developed and agreed – and team leaders and line managers need to be part of this consistent change message from the outset of the engagement phase. Change champions – those employees who will, from whatever position they occupy in the organization, develop (and encourage in others) ideas, energy and enthusiasm about change – often emerge during the engagement phase and they can become powerful ongoing advocates for change.

Empathize

Genuine and responsive listening is key to empathetic change communication. Acknowledgement, engagement with and due consideration of the issues and concerns raised is key. Some concerns may seem small in the scale of whole-of-organization change plans. However, they will be meaningful to whoever has raised them. On examination they may have wider relevance and importance – or they may not. While not all concerns can be solved to the satisfaction of those who raised them, what is important is listening to and considering what is said.

Legitimate concerns should be acted on wherever possible, and due credit should be given to those raising them. If people feel confident about

making comments and raising concerns, and feel that they are being listened to and their comments are being considered, they are more likely to accept change, even if that change goes contrary to their ideas. Through genuine listening and empathy, change leaders can build confidence in the capacity of the organization to find and implement the right solutions to organizational challenges.

Educate

Educating people about a programme of changes is key and has to be done broadly and often. Simply because a leader has said that a change is to happen, it cannot be assumed that that is it. Leaders need to restate the change message, explaining the why and the how, again and again, in different venues, in different modes and with different people.

Leaders need to develop their own strategic approach to change communication that suits both their personal style and their organization's needs. Anyone can develop a PowerPoint presentation, plan a talk for a 'town hall' or small group meeting, or write an update bulletin or all-staff e-mail. But only a few do it well. Even fewer do it with effective strategic intent and impact. What looks easy is not. Tactics live and die in the shadow of strategy. Communication should include big-picture briefings by change leaders; interactive town-hall-style meetings of staff; team and group meetings; one-to-one meetings; and formal and informal exchanges, written, verbal and in all media. As stated above, communication and education about change must be a two-way process. Information should be imparted about the reasons for, and the nature of, change and there should be genuine exchange of questions, responses, reactions. This is the path to insights for all parties to the change.

As with engagement, education about change should begin early. Managers often think they should hold back on providing information about change until their ideas are more concrete. They may be concerned that releasing early and unformed information may stir worries and galvanize opposition to change. But the reality is that there is no perfect moment to announce a change. While judgement is required to avoid unsettlement by floating vague and unrealized ideas, unsettlement will happen whenever change plans are announced. And, equally, there will be excitement about the change on the part of many.

Open and early discussion about changes, education about the need for

change and inviting reactions, ideas and responses to proposals for change can yield multiple benefits. Allowing worries and negative reactions to be aired and to run their course early in the change process means that these matters can be identified early and brought out into the open. Group attention can be applied to addressing such matters. Honesty and genuine engagement on the part of change managers develops trust and confidence on the part of employees. That trust is critical to developing and sustaining a strong support base for achieving enduring change.

Enlist

Enlisting people to the change effort develops the support base for change. To cite John Kotter once again:

Without credible communication, and a lot of it, the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured.

(Kotter, 2002)

Effective communication by the change leaders and managers works at all points on the response continuum. It engages the energy of the early adopters who want to know how, where and when. It gives time to the cautious employees who need space to gather insights and accurate information in order to work through their questions and concerns. With all of these people, communication – persistent and consistent – is vital in the (often drawn out) process of enlisting support. All points on the spectrum will be present in any organization – from those who can barely wait for change to start, to the residual cynics and chronic change resisters. They all need to be engaged – and credible, authentic communication is the key to engagement.

Communication – honest, open and two-way – is always an important element in the management of people. During times of organizational change, when employees are exposed to the upheaval of the old order and a change to the new, effective communication is even more important. And yet it is so often an afterthought. Authentic communication guided by simple principles of engagement, empathy, education and enlistment can go a long way to improving efforts to achieve change. Thinking change? Think communication – authentic, early and often.

Resistance to change: opportunity or threat?

People don't resist change. They resist being changed.

(Senge et al., 1999)

Resistance to change is normal. It should be expected as part of any change programme. Just as some people will embrace change, others will react differently and will resist change in varying degrees and ways. Resistance may be loud, active and open, or passive, quiet and undermining. The latter is the 'resistance which does not resist'. Although less obvious, passive resistance can be the most difficult to counter. Quiet rebuilding of organizational 'silos'; passively avoiding recognition and action on changes in structures, roles and reporting relationships; encouraging 'them and us' thinking; reversion to old ways of working; simple non-engagement with new ways of working – all are examples of passive or low-key resistance to change. Whatever form it takes, resistance can act as a powerful drag on momentum towards achieving change. Resistance should be expected, planned for and actively responded to. Just *how* to respond is the question. Should people resisting change be removed, ignored or engaged? Views differ on this point. As with any aspect of working with change, a situational and flexible response is most likely to succeed.

At one end of the response spectrum is the view that those resisting change are in essence a negative force and potentially powerful in influencing others against change. This analysis views change resisters as blockers. To allow these people attention and audience, so the argument goes, is not only a waste of time but dangerous. Allowing them to express their opposition risks the opposers gathering people to their cause and undermining the change effort. The solution: remove them; get rid of them from the organization, as they will never change. While removing them may result in short-term organizational damage, such as increased fear of and negativity towards the managers responsible for their removal, any damage will be short lived and the benefits will outweigh the negatives.

A less extreme version of that philosophy argues for simply ignoring those who oppose change. Ignore them and they will become marginalized and not listened to. Their opposition will become irrelevant, leaving them to either join the change or leave of their own volition.

Another option, one which may initially seem counter-intuitive, comes from a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of change. In this

analysis, resistance to change is seen as a significant opportunity. Manifest resistance to change shows that people *do* think and *do* care about how things are run in the organization. That care may seem to be misdirected, but it is better than apathy. There is much to be learned from giving resisters enough – but not too much – air time. Engaging with resistance provides the opportunity and the possibility to learn from that resistance; opportunity, potentially, to change the resistance into support. Understanding and considering the reasons for resistance may point to unseen flaws in the change proposals. In following this path when dealing with resistance, the questions ‘why’ and ‘how’ become powerful tools. Asking ‘Why do you oppose this change?’ and ‘How would you do it differently?’, engaging with resistance and concern about changes, can yield powerful knowledge for leaders and managers, and an understanding of where and why the resistance exists. Engaging with resistance also shows that leaders and managers *do* listen and *do* consider legitimate those views about the changes. Change resisters can be influential in bringing others over to their view. They can be even more powerful if they are seen to be being listened to and considered, being given a voice and input to determine both the direction and the strategy of change. A resister who becomes a change advocate can be a powerful ally in the change initiative.

This latter view of and approach to dealing with resistance to change is seated in a psycho-social understanding of organizational management, in trying to understand opposition to change, rather than in simply seeking to overcome it. This approach fits in with the Heaths’ model of the nuanced direction of the rider. The ‘get rid of the opposition’ mind-set, while it may seem attractive as a quick fix, risks falling into the trap of directing the elephant – only to have the elephant become even more stubborn, and presenting a bigger problem further along the path to change. While it may take longer to engage and understand resistance to change, this approach can yield significantly better organizational outcomes. A nuanced, rather than a simply blunt, response to resistance offers the potential for a healthier organizational outcome in the long term.

All of that said, sometimes strong action will be required in dealing with resistance. While it is important to listen to critics and gainsayers, if the energy directed towards this becomes excessive, it may come at the expense of moving ahead and working with those people who are eager to progress change. While it is important to take the resistance seriously,

engage with it and argue the case for change, leaders and managers should not waste time in trying to change the unchangeable. Some resistance and resisters to change will never go away. There comes a time when the correct response, after having engaged with and listened to resistance and resisters, is to move on with the change. To do otherwise is to risk sending a message to the resisters that if they just keep up the resistance they will get their way. Firm and honest action by managers to listen to and consider concerns, and then to decide on a way forward, engenders confidence in the willingness and ability of the managers to manage. Conversely, a weak or confused response can seriously compromise a change initiative.

As Peter Senge says, people don't resist change. What they resist is *being* changed. Wherever possible, try to engage and involve – don't just steam-roll the change. But be prepared for tough action in the face of resistance, if and when that is required.

Keeping change alive: avoiding organizational homeostasis

Imagine a balloon filled with air. When you press your finger into the side of the balloon the shape changes. When you remove your finger the balloon reverts to the original shape. In physics this is known as homeostasis – the tendency of a system to remain stable and, if changed, to return to the stable (pre-change) state. Organizations can be like a balloon: as soon as the pressure to change backs off, there is a risk that the organization will revert to the pre-change state. Getting change to stick and take root can be even harder than the original work to make the change happen.

Organizational culture eats strategy for breakfast – and for lunch and dinner too! The best laid plans and strategies for change can come to nothing if organizational culture – the norms, practices and shared values that influence the way in which the organization operates – does not mesh with and support the changes. Changes, especially if they run counter to the established organizational culture, can be very difficult to engrain and embed. The tendency to homeostasis can be a strong force.

To return to the earlier discussion and the analyses of John Kotter and Bob Doppelt, both argue that action to disrupt dominating mind-sets and ways of thinking and doing is critical. Doppelt (2003) says that the change effort never actually ends, that change is iterative and that the cycle of change needs to be kept in perpetual motion. In his view, the process of

generating new knowledge, by both individual employees and the organization as a whole, leads to constantly new ways of thinking and acting. In this analysis key elements of organizational practice interact to achieve continuous reinforcement and strengthening of new ways of working. Kotter (1995) observes that cultural change comes out of, and not as a precursor to, effective change. True and lasting cultural change cannot be simply directed by the change leaders – no matter how strongly they try. In the Heaths' terms, the rider cannot simply direct the elephant to adopt a new organizational culture, mind-set and way of working. That has to be drawn out of the organization, reinforced, embedded and kept alive and nimble – lest the new culture become stale, lacking the capacity for critical review.

Borrowing from both Kotter and Doppelt, here are some useful general rules for making change stick and establishing a culture for sustained and persisting organizational change:

- Understand that cultural change comes last in the process of change – not first.
- Recognize that not everyone will come along with the changes, nor all at the same rate.
- Show and prove that new ways of doing things are better than the old ways.
- Make success visible and prominent; strengthen the new ways of working.
- Reinforce new norms, celebrate achievement and encourage a mind-set of continual critical review and improvement.
- Above all, keep the change alive and ongoing; avoid the 'balloon effect'.

Leading change or managing change? Whatever the case, make change happen!

Organizational behaviour guru Charles Handy has this to say about change:

To 'manage change' is wishful thinking, implying as it does that one not only knows where to go and how to get there, but can persuade everyone else to travel there.

To 'cultivate change' is something different, suggesting an attitude of growth, of channelling rather than controlling, of learning not instruction. A changing organisation is one that uses differences to grow better.

(Handy, 1996)

Handy describes the dynamics of change well. Change does not happen by itself – nor is the process simple. While there is a strong element of management involved in managing the process and the stages of change, achieving successful change is a lot about guiding and steering, cultivating and leading change.

This chapter began by reflecting on the challenge that faces librarians and libraries: either to recognize and adapt to the need to change or to stick with tried and tested ways and, in doing so, risk ultimate irrelevance. For managers of libraries in disruptive times, change and adaptation is an imperative, not a choice. The imperative is to recognize the need for change, to establish a compelling story for change, and to show the pathway to change.

At the same Hong Kong conference noted at the start of this chapter, one speaker quoted a Chinese proverb, the essence of which is that no matter how sweet the soup is, if the road to the kitchen serving the soup is too long or bumpy, customers will go elsewhere. So it is for libraries. Libraries and librarians must learn to change, and to keep on changing, in response to the needs of their customers. Without effective change they risk irrelevance and redundancy. Without change, their customers will go elsewhere and be their customers no more. Learn to achieve successful change and be a phoenix. Fail in that learning, and a dinosaur's fate beckons.

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Further reading

There is a large literature on change management. The references above and the list below are by no means exhaustive. Rather, they are sources that the author has found useful and that may provide a starting point for managers wishing to explore further the challenges of undertaking organizational change.

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