



## **GOT ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE? 8 ACTIONS TO BOOST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & ADOPTION**

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Relentless change is the new normal across organizations large and small. Responding to new technologies; rapidly-evolving competitive pressures; mergers & acquisitions; and leadership turnover often cause complexity, confusion and loss of focus. Inherently disruptive, organizational change can be reinvigorating and a source of renewal, enabling the enterprise to thrive. Too often, however, organizational change is highly chaotic, causing a downward spiral in employee engagement and productivity. A pivotal difference between successful change efforts and those that fail: effective change management.

To put your organization on a path to productive change, here are 8 actions that leaders can deploy to accelerate change adoption and engage employees.

1. **Plan for Change Management from Day 1.** If change management is an afterthought, initiated once it is evident that employees are not connected to the change, productivity likely has already taken a nosedive. Consider the people implications of any change you are contemplating right from start to harness the energy that a positive beginning can provide.
2. **Communicate the change in context.** The business reasons for the change — the “why” - should be communicated in consistent and clear messaging that follows a planned cadence. Moreover, as organizations often are undergoing multiple changes simultaneously, it is important to explain the relationships between overlapping changes – whether interrelated or disconnected.
3. **Assess readiness.** With so much concurrent change, it is imperative to gauge the degree to which the organization can embrace or even absorb additional changes. Whenever possible, time the roll-out of change to demonstrate that leaders have a clear vision and plan. When change initiatives appear capricious or arbitrary, employee buy-in will be non-existent.

4. **Understand how key stakeholders will be affected and plan accordingly.**

Define “change personas” and map what their change journey will look like — this will enable key interventions (including communications, training, rewards and recognition and new roles) to be delivered holistically, rather than sequentially, avoid conflicting messages, and create a more seamless experience.

5. **Use multiple channels to communicate and engage employees.** Messaging should follow a planned cascade, including both broad venues such as town halls where everyone gets the same message at the same time, as well as personalized, one-on-one communications. Change Ambassadors and open-source change help to encourage high levels of involvement up, down and across the organization. Consider simulations to allow employees to fully understand the change.

6. **Set employees up for success.** Equip individuals, teams and functions with the will and skill to execute in the new environment. This may involve training, job aids, new role orientations and use cases that provide employees with clarity about changed expectations.

7. **Establish tracking mechanisms and calibrate as needed.** Formal surveys, as well as informal pulse touchpoints, enables leaders to understand reactions to change in real time and respond as needed. Connect metrics to the intended results, using both leading and lagging indicators so change management approaches can shift with agility.

8. **Celebrate quick wins to build positive momentum.** Change is messy and uncomfortable. Take time to celebrate when progress is demonstrated, even when limited. Employees will be more motivated when there is evidence that extra effort is producing a payoff. This can take the shape of employee success stories, marketplace feedback or other indicators, but they should be identified and shared along the way on the change journey.

In today’s times of rapid, accelerating change, change management is a core organizational and leadership capability. With the proper planning, sponsorship and investment, change management will lead to more successful outcomes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<https://www.valeocon.com/right-sizing-change-management/>

<https://www.valeocon.com/podcast-analytics-at-the-speed-of-business/>

<https://www.valeocon.com/agile-approach-to-business-transformation/>

<https://www.valeocon.com/tapping-the-reservoir-of-continuous-improvement-potential-your-employees/>



**Marjorie Derven** is a Director at Valeocon Management Consulting. She has 20+ years of experience helping some of the world's best companies to optimize people performance through learning, leadership development and change management. A frequent speaker at global conferences, Marjorie has written dozens of articles and blogs and has served as Senior Fellow at The Conference Board, Chair at ATD Editorial Board and on the Editorial Board of the OD Practitioner.