

Introduction

Here is a simple recipe for leading change. First, pour a truckload of evidence into an ungreased container. Stir in a crock full of inspirational rhetoric. Add two heaping portions of administrative imperatives. Finally, dump into the mix precisely one ton of fear. Bring to a boil.

If this recipe were effective, then change leadership would not be the single greatest challenge for organizations around the world—not only in education, but also in business, government, professional practices, and nonprofit organizations. Deutschman (2007) demonstrates that the typical combination of evidence, authority, and fear is insufficient to lead the vast majority of people to make decisions that will save their own lives, gain years with their loved ones, and avoid painful and debilitating illness and eventual death. The fear of pain and death is not, for many people, greater than their unwillingness to change. In the business world, the results of failed change efforts have “been appalling, with wasted resources and burned-out, scared, or frustrated employees” (Kotter, 2006, p. 4). Despite the potential cataclysmic effects of global warming, the current wave of environmentalism is best represented by rock stars addressing conferences on climate change, transported to the affair by private jet and a Hummer limousine. It is little wonder

Figure 2.1 | Personal Change Readiness Assessment

Directions: For each change, enter a score of 1 to 10 in each column, with 1 representing no evidence of the characteristic described, and 10 representing an exceptional reflection of that characteristic.

Personal Change	Planning I planned in advance the steps I would take and knew clearly how to make the change.	Sense of Urgency I knew that the price of failing to change was much greater than the price of changing.	Personal Support My family and friends knew I was making a change and supported me.	Personal Focus I devoted time to initiating and maintaining the change despite my busy schedule.	Effect on Results I can measure the results of the change, and they are clear and significant.
1.					
2.					
3.					

Myth #7: The Leader Is the Perfect Composite of Every Trait

We return to the bookstore section on Leadership, populated not only by volumes about barbarians and faux histories of monarchs, but also by thoughtful reviews of exceptional women and men who were extraordinary leaders. Although we can certainly learn from the lives of Harriet Tubman and George Washington, Martin Luther King Jr. and Simón Bolívar, Abraham Lincoln and Susan B. Anthony, we are poorly advised to compare our leadership efforts to these historical ideals. In fact, for every historical biography of a great leader, there are thousands of untold stories of unnamed team members, colleagues, friends, and family who contributed to the successes of those whose pictures adorn the covers of even the best leadership studies. The myth is not that these people led lives worthy of study, but rather that our greatest lesson should be the formation of a singular leadership composite. The complexities of change leadership require not the perfect composite of every trait, but rather a team that exhibits leadership traits and exercises leadership responsibilities in a way that no individual leader, past or present, possibly could.



By considering leadership myths, our purpose is not to criticize and destroy, but to create constructive alternatives. We can develop leaders whose focus and vision prevent them from believing that plans are a substitute for action. We can nurture leaders who understand that deep implementation, not a timid incremental approach, is essential for systemic change. We can protect leaders from the seductive allure of those whose enthusiasm for change extends only to others but never to themselves. We can provide time, patience, and support for leaders to

The Teacher's Perspective

Imagine that you are a teacher attempting to do the right thing for students by faithfully implementing the required reading curriculum, but you receive different corrective feedback from building administrators, district administrators, curriculum experts, and professional developers. Your mentors and colleagues down the hall offer a different set of advice. It would not be surprising if, eventually, you conclude that you will have to resolve the conflicting information and create methods of reading instruction that, to the best of your ability, represent a sound approach to reading. Add to this challenge the reality that veteran reading teachers may be more experienced and expert than many new administrators in the nuances of reading instruction, and you have a formula for poor morale and, most important, inconsistent opportunities for students.

It is essential to note that there is no malice here. In observations of thousands of teachers, I have yet to meet one whose heart's desire was poor instruction. Even when teachers are engaging in practices that are discredited by research and contrary to clear instructions from the district leadership, the reasons are sometimes found not in willful insubordination but in conflicting instructions from multiple authorities and conflicting demands from advocates of different academic disciplines. Each time literacy instruction is interrupted by administrative announcements or the “nonnegotiable” time allocated to literacy is reduced to make way for the priority of the day, teachers recognize that the gulf between leaders' words and actions is wide indeed.

The Leadership Challenge

Effective instruction is a profoundly important variable for improving student achievement and educational equity (Marzano, Pickering, &

Change Readiness Continuum Rubric

Domain	Ready	Intermediate	Not Ready
History	Views previous changes as positive and generally successful.	Has no experience with previous change. Views previous change as having insignificant effect on group.	Views previous change as generally unsuccessful. Has negative experience.
Need for Change	Recognizes that present conditions are unacceptable and that change is required at this time if progress is to be made.	Realizes that things could be better but is not completely dissatisfied with things as they are.	Does not view present condition as so negative or troublesome that this change is required. May see need for others to change but not self.
Willingness to Change	Is willing to make difficult choices (personal and group) to bring about change. Is willing to accept that change will be difficult, possibly with a long period of discomfort.	Will change if the change does not require a significant inconvenience to group.	Sees no need to change. Is resistant to doing anything significantly different that may create discomfort for group.
Faith in Leadership	Believes that the current leaders have the ability to accomplish the change.	Has no strong opinions toward leadership either positive or negative due to past experience or lack of knowledge.	Is negative toward current leaders' capabilities and/or motives in general. Doesn't believe leaders can accomplish the change.
Change Plan	Has a good understanding of the vision for the future associated with the change plan. Believes that the change plan, as presented, has the potential to achieve the goal(s).	Does not have a clear understanding of the vision for the future associated with the change plan. Has doubts about major components of the change plan as the right approach to achieve the goal(s).	Does not agree with the vision of the future after the change. Does not believe the change plan, as presented, is necessary or has the potential to achieve the goal(s).
Skills Necessary to Implement	Believes the group represented has the knowledge and/or skills necessary to implement the plan.	Believes the group has some of the knowledge and/or skills necessary to implement the plan and believes that many of those who do not will be able to acquire the knowledge and/or skills.	Has serious doubts that the group represented has the knowledge and/or skills necessary to successfully implement the plan and doubts that most members of the group can acquire the knowledge and/or skills.