

# Changing the Way We Change

The challenges of change with diverse groups including working with different; cultures, nationalities, ages, genders, religious beliefs, social classes and work experience.

Whitepaper

By: Eileen Dowse Ph.D.

Change is the shift in consciousness that allows you to explore new ways to meet your needs.

The Situation	The Analysis	The Solution
<p>Why is it that most organizations struggle tremendously to make real change? Whether consolidating a merger, re-engineering business processes, restructuring, changing value propositions, introducing new IT systems, or even relocating. All too often the change process is derailed by the resistance of employees. Additionally, the challenge of change increases when the group is diverse and incorporates many cultures, nationalities, ages, genders religious, beliefs, social classes and work experiences.</p> <p><b>The fundamental component for achieving change behavior rests on the individual.</b></p>	<p>When there is change, often there is resistance.</p> <p>The most common reasons people resist change are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A desire not to lose something of value.</li><li>2. A misunderstanding of the change and its implications.</li><li>3. A low tolerance for change.</li><li>4. Different perspectives on the costs and benefits of the change.</li><li>5. To save face.</li><li>6. A belief that the change does not make sense for the organization.</li></ol> 	<p>Addressing the issue of change behavior within organizations means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>When in denial → Provide info</li><li>When there is resistance → Listen</li><li>When in exploration → Innovate</li><li>When there is commitment → Celebrate</li></ul> 

## The Reality Is Not a Pretty Picture.

During one change process, one staff member began to wear sunglasses to every meeting. He was angry about the situation being changed and decided to make a visual statement that he was not going to be engaged nor collaborate. Another person in another organization, during a change process, started to wear more casual clothes and looked less professional, indicating he also did not care anymore.



Resistance to change, created a challenge for leaders because it is one of the most powerful drivers of human behavior.

As a leader you cannot impose change - people and teams need to believe their solutions and responses to challenges are valued and therefore become part of the solution.

Most organizations make two fatal mistakes when it comes to dealing with resistance to change.

1. They underestimate how important, deeply rooted cultures, behaviors and thinking styles play in the change process.
2. They underestimate what is required to change behaviors and thinking styles to ensure the change is not interpreted as a threat.

## How can an organization successfully change with so many differences and so much resistance?

In reality if you don't convince people that change is beneficial, they may initially comply yet consciously or subconsciously become saboteurs to the change effort. (because their old established behaviors and thinking patterns are rooted in a belief that says 'this is how I've survived around here so why change?' comfortable than the new ones).

No matter what culture you are from, people resist change because people:

- i) Like to do what is familiar.
- ii) Respond to threats of survival by resisting or fighting.
- iii) Respond first with emotion then with logic.



The biggest leadership challenge is determining how to create buy-in, collaboration and engagement in a multi-cultural and often multi-lingual environment.

# Change Quiz for Ensuring Organizational Change Works?

Give your weighted response to the ten questions below and discover how prepared you are to 'change the way you change.'



**1. There is a solid foundation for change.**

This requires clear and honest answers to the questions:

- Why is this change necessary?
- What is at stake if we don't change or are unsuccessful in our attempts? and,
- Where are we going?

Foundation is unstable

Foundation is very solid

**2. Communication is both excessive and effective.**

Communication during a major change must be frequent, timely and consistent, involving face-to-face contact between immediate bosses and their direct reports, rather than one-way emails, top-down announcements or long periods without any information. This requires clear and honest answers to the questions:

Communication is inadequate

Communication is effective

**3. Significant attention is given to transition management**

A detailed transition plan supplements the strategic and change plans and includes ways of helping people let go of the old ways, get through and capitalize on the chaos and confusion, and ensure the new way becomes fully integrated throughout the organization.

No attention to transition

Tangible transition support

**4. Middle and lower management levels are truly engaged.**

Middle managers, team leaders and front line supervisors are the most critical levels to have fully committed and acting on their responsibilities to ensure the success of the change.

Middle levels not engaged

Strong ownership by middle levels

**5. Senior leaders are pulling together.**

All members of the senior executive group are visibly supporting the change and moving in the same direction in a clearly united front throughout the organization.

Leaders headed in

Leaders pulling together differing directions

**6. No 'old guard' factor exists.**

The *old guard* may be either specific groups or key individuals that have a vested interest in keeping things as they were, and they need help to get on board with the change or be dealt with directly, as early in the process as possible.

Strong 'old guard' present

Everyone is on board

**7. The change plan is clear and understandable.**

An effective change plan must clearly spell out time lines, accountabilities, budgets, resources required, progress reports, feedback loops, etc. so that everyone in the organization trusts that there really is a good plan in place for the change.

Plan is very murky

Plan both clear and understandable

**8. People know what is expected of them.**

There is a clear and definite link between the changes at the organizational level and what each person in the organization needs to do at the individual level to make the change successful.

People have no clue what to do

People have no clue what to do

**9. All the changes are coordinated and prioritized.**

When there are a number of changes happening at the same time throughout the organization, it is critical they are grouped together and prioritized so they fit together in a coherent pattern and everyone knows what change is urgent this week.

Onslaught with no priority

Clear pattern with definite priorities

**10. Old habits are not getting in the way.**

The organization is very intentional about not making the same kind of mistakes it has with past unsuccessful changes that are based on their collective "culture", "character" or 'the way we do things around here'.

'Here we go again'

Strong ability to learn

Author: Barbara Bartlein - clinical psychotherapist and former VP of Columbia-St. Mary's Hospital System

As you can deduce, having a high score relates to your ability for ensuring your change will work well.

## A Change Tool for the Real World

In 2003 The Evans & Peck Organizational Development team of Barry Brewster and Jeremy Kidner were working in the field of Organizational Development and needed a tool for organizational change initiatives. They wanted a tool to aid communication across cultures, values and languages. Brewster and Kidner worked with cartoonist, Gavin Coates to create the Cartaphor process in Hong Kong. The process, in part, involves building buy-in by facilitating collaborative planning sessions to map out the "Desired Future State" of the organization. The concepts created from those discussions, are turned into metaphors and the metaphors are turned into pictures in the form of a cartoon. Hence the name Cartaphor (a metaphor drawn in the style of a cartoon) was created.



When an organization knows they need to change but are not sure how to do it, drawing a picture to depict where you want to go is often more helpful than getting bogged down with words.

During the development of a Cartaphor, employees of the organization gather together in a room and begin talking about what they would like their future to hold. They come up with some words and concepts and then they are given the challenge to draw a picture to depict their thoughts. An enormous explosion of ideas begins to happen when you shift from words to pictures. People move away from word-smithing and head towards more symbolism.

When you think about it, symbols tend to have a longer shelf life in a person's memory than words do. People think in images and will often use metaphors to better understand a situation. For example you might have heard people say, "In our firm we are a sinking ship" or someone might say, "They are a diamond in the rough" or on a particularly bad day someone might say "I feel like I was just hit by a truck." When people use these terms they are talking in metaphors and replacing "normal" words in order to help others understand or enjoy our message.

When cartoons and metaphors are combined together in business to impact change, the Cartaphor can help organizations extract knowledge and wisdom from staff and collaboratively use it to develop the final product. When you are dealing with resistance to change, creating this type of visual representation of the situation let's all employees begin to believe their issues are addressed and they see hope for the future through positive.

Cartaphors increase clarity of the situation and serve as an excellent tool for communicating with all people of all cultures who may speak in different languages and live in different geographic locations.

A story about developing a Cartaphor for a company begins with an organization that had a mega project, building one of the largest civil engineering structures in the world, the Venetian Casino in Macau (Special Administrative Region of China). There were many challenges the organization had to face including pushing people to change some of their current thinking and develop new "relationship management" initiatives with all stakeholders.

As you might know Macau is in the middle of a massive explosion in gaming venues. In just 5 years, since the end of the monopoly license agreement with Stanley Ho's Society the Venetian Casino in Macau the company is generating revenues in excess of the entire Las Vegas strip. This frenetic growth of more than 25 new casinos built over a 12 year period will be employing 20,000 people working on one site during two 12 hour shifts.

This time focused construction project's success, relied on dozens of contractors working corporately in unison. This was not a change in the way they were used to operating. The group not only needed good Corporate Governance during this project, they needed a way to foresee and resolve issues quickly as they arose.

The benefit in using the Cartaphor technology with this group was to get the undiscussables to be discussed, amongst this multi-faceted multi-cultural group.

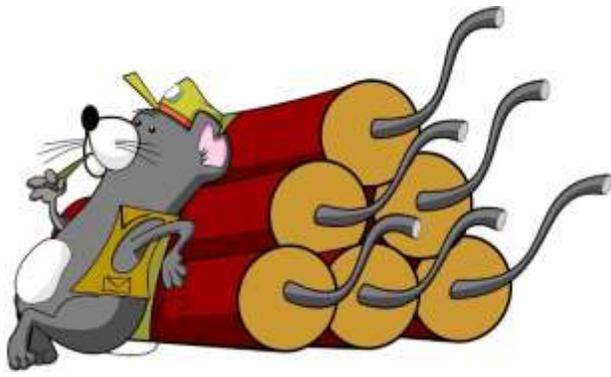
The Cartaphor shown below was developed during a collaborative exercise with the client as a way to reflect specific learning objectives for consideration as this project moved forward and create a process to ensure minimal delays. Through questioning and the use of metaphors, we were able to surface potential and existing issues.

This Cartaphor allowed a multi-cultural group to discuss their ideal outcome in a way that was comfortable and relevant to them. An agreement on what "working in harmony" means to all stakeholders and the group created a pledge which bonded the stakeholders together in their quest for success.

**The benefit of using Cartaphors to 'change the way we change' is the opportunity you have to create a safe environment to discuss topics and begin to engage people in the process of moving forward.**

It has been found that Cartaphors can be used in many situations requiring the analysis of a situation, the engaging of dialogue and the building of commitment.

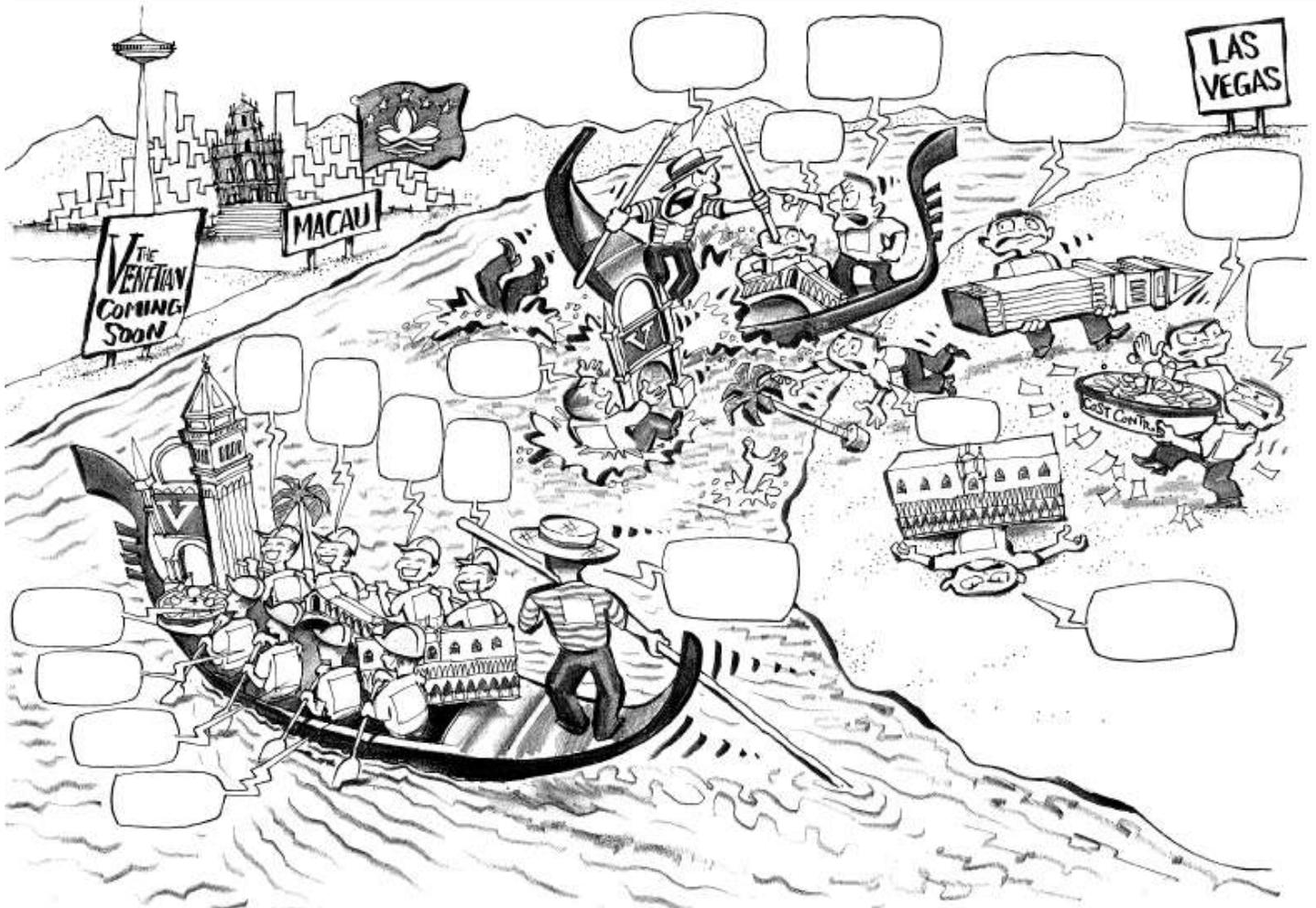
The final product, the Cartaphor, provides a visual representation along with a narrative towards changing to reach our 'Desired Future State'.



Even reading this white paper, you can benefit from a Cartaphor. For example, if the Cartaphor below represented your organization, how would you answer the following questions?

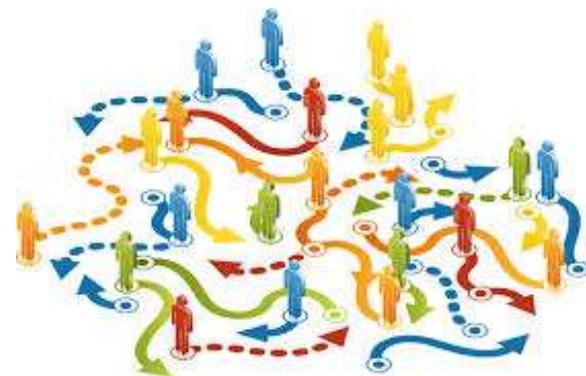
1. Where do you see yourself and your organization in this picture?
2. Why do you fit into this picture? Why? What role are you playing during the change?
3. What does this picture tell you about how your organization can change and improve?
4. If you asked your subordinate the questions above, what would they say?

One of the many roles a leader plays is as a facilitator in the organization. When a leader is facilitating a discussion within the protection of a metaphor "undiscussables" become "discussable"!



### Tactics for Reducing Resistance?

- Step 1:** The Strategy- decide the new strategy
- Step 2:** The Message- strategy is announced and ask for support
- Step 3:** Enrollment- people get on board
- Step 4:** Training- learn how to perform the required new skills and behaviors
- Step 5:** Reinforcing- people and systems to support new behaviors
- Step 6:** Monitoring- Encourage feedback



**In short:** Resistance can be overcome by dealing with the fears and needs

If you are having trouble keeping your head above water, you probably aren't on your toes." Liguorian

## Leading Through Change

Since leaders have a responsibility to facilitate, communicate and enable change they can benefit from processes that will generate commitment, participation and help cross the boundaries of language and culture to ensure results are achieved. It is up to the leader to use processes that create the opportunity for releasing huge potential for issue resolution, future achievements and positive change.

In Asia in particular, people are generally reluctant to speak up or give feedback to senior people. People who have used the “protection” of the Cartaphor, notice that people are more comfortable to become engaged in the metaphor, imagine themselves part of it and provide comments that are meaningful where in the past they might have avoided the discussion.

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When people have extreme positions that require departure from a standard course of action sometimes passions are inflamed, anxieties rise and insecurities heighten. It is said that the only person that likes change is a wet baby, and even they resist the process. So how can you deal with the reality of resistance? The most intriguing aspect of using Cartaphors to help change the way we change is its power in reinforcing the age old adage, ‘When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at



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