

8 steps

TO ACCELERATE CHANGE IN YOUR ORGANIZATION



JOHN KOTTER'S **LEADING CHANGE** IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED AS
THE SEMINAL WORK IN THE FIELD OF ORGANIZATIONAL
CHANGE.

IT INTRODUCED THE 8-STEP PROCESS FOR LEADING CHANGE
WITH A BOLD MESSAGE TO READERS:

you can lead change — here's how to do it.



**NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT,
DISRUPTIVE FORCES CONTINUE TO
ACCELERATE THE PACE OF CHANGE**

faster.

HEADLINES REFLECT WHAT WE EXPERIENCE **EVERY DAY**

Rapid AI Advancements Highlight Critical Global Tech Skills Shortage

FORBES

New Disruptions, Geopolitics Hang Over Supply Chains

WALL STREET JOURNAL

The High Cost of Misaligned Business and Analytics Goals During Economic Uncertainty

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW

→ *things aren't slowing down*

**BUT OUR
ABILITY TO KEEP
UP HASN'T
KEPT PACE.**



WHAT HASN'T CHANGED?

There are two fundamental goals underscoring most transformations:

1

Increase revenue/profits or decrease costs

2

Become more effective or efficient

or both.

At Kotter, we continue to evolve our thinking, informed by our work

— and have enhanced our 8-step process

to give organizations additional capabilities to lead change under the particular conditions of today's warp-speed world. First introduced in *Accelerate*, published by Harvard Business Review Press in 2014, we have broadened the scope of the 8-Step Process from its original version, giving it reach and potency today and beyond.

BOTH VERSIONS ARE RELEVANT AND EFFECTIVE TODAY, YET ARE DESIGNED FOR **DIFFERENT** CONTEXTS + OBJECTIVES

leading change

8-STEP PROCESS (1996)

Respond to or affect episodic change in finite and sequential ways.

Drive change with a small, powerful core group.

Function within a traditional hierarchy.

Focus on doing one thing very well in a linear fashion over time.

accelerate

8-STEP PROCESS (2014)

Run the steps concurrently and continuously.

Form a large volunteer army from up, down, and across the organization to be the change engine.

Function with network-like flexibility and agility outside of, but in conjunction with, a traditional hierarchy.

Constantly seek opportunities, identify initiatives to capitalize on them, and complete them quickly.

The purpose of this eBook is to introduce you to the *enhanced* 8 Steps (now known as the 8 Accelerators) and the 4 Change Principles to set your organization up for success. As you read through this eBook, you'll see the 8 Accelerators by number and the Change Principles woven throughout.



THE 4 PRINCIPLES

SELECT FEW + DIVERSE MANY

More people need to be able to make change happen—not just carry out someone else's directives. Done right, this uncovers leaders at all levels of an organization; ones you never knew you had.



HAVE TO + WANT TO

Those who feel included in a meaningful opportunity will help create change in addition to their normal responsibilities. Existing team members can provide the energy if you invite them.



HEAD + HEART

Most people aren't inspired by logic alone, but rather by the fundamental desire to contribute to a larger case. If you can give greater meaning and purpose to your effort, extraordinary results are possible.



MANAGEMENT + LEADERSHIP

In order to capitalize on windows of opportunity, leadership must be paramount—and not just from one executive. It's about vision, action, innovation, and celebration, as well as essential managerial processes.



As you read through this eBook, you'll see the 8 Accelerators by their number and the Change Principles woven throughout.

CREATE A SENSE OF URGENCY

it all starts here...

Your top leaders must describe an opportunity that will appeal to individuals' heads + hearts, and use this statement to raise a large, urgent army of volunteers.

Over many decades, Dr. Kotter's (and others') research has shown that most transformation efforts fail. A consistent factor behind those failed transformations is that a sense of urgency was not generated and sustained.

Building urgency is all about concentrating on a window of opportunity that is open today but may close tomorrow. Such an opportunity brings people together, aligning them around a commonality, and clarifying where energy should be directed.

results —

YOU HAVE A BREADTH OF FOCUSED READINESS ACROSS THE WORKFORCE THAT IS UNPRECEDENTED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION.

1

CREATE A SENSE OF URGENCY

What is *your* Big Opportunity?

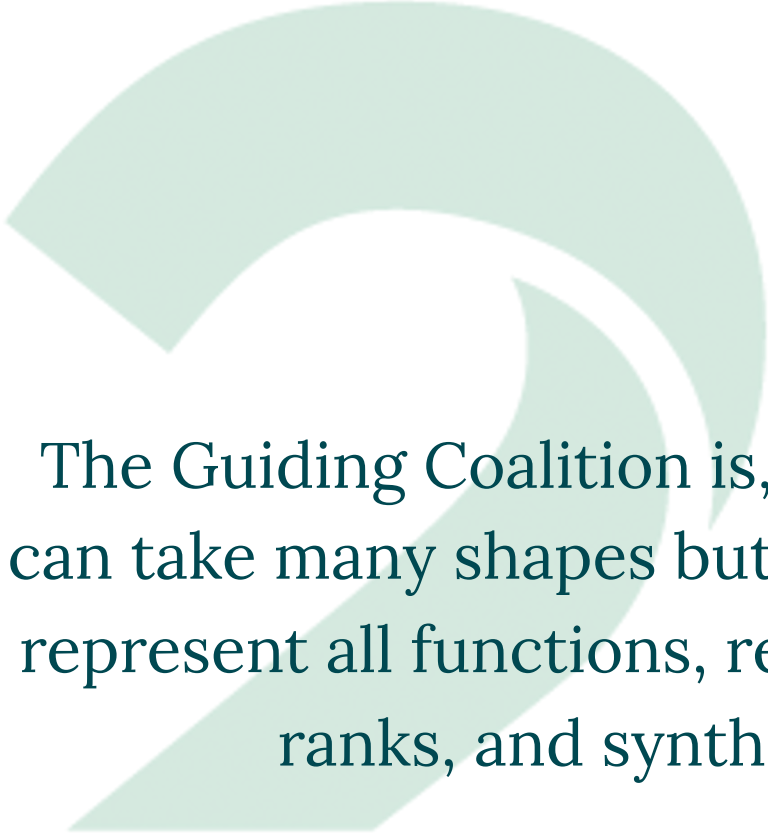
- ◆ Do you see a Big Opportunity that could ignite the hearts + minds of your people?
- ◆ Do you know how to identify, articulate and communicate it?
- ◆ Are you able to connect an external change factor with a special capability of your organization?
- ◆ What are the stakes if you succeed? What are the consequences if you fail?

**WINDOWS OF
OPPORTUNITY ARE
APPEARING MORE QUICKLY
THAN EVER.**

**THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY
AN OPPORTUNITY QUICKLY,
AND MOBILIZE URGENCY
AROUND IT, IS BECOMING
THE KEY TO BEATING
COMPETITORS.**

disrupt or be disrupted





BUILD A GUIDING COALITION

The Guiding Coalition is, in many ways, the nerve center of the 8-Step Process. It can take many shapes but must consist of members from all layers of the hierarchy, represent all functions, receive information about the organization at all levels and ranks, and synthesize that information into new ways of working.

Without a Guiding Coalition, the organization will continue to rely on traditional, hierarchical ways of operating, which will not serve it over the long term.

results —

THE LINCHPIN OF YOUR ENTIRE TRANSFORMATION IS IN PLACE: AN ACCOUNTABLE, DIVERSE GROUP BOUND BY OPPORTUNITY, STRATEGY AND ACTION.



**THE GUIDING COALITION
IS THE FIRST
OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE
BEYOND THE “USUAL
SUSPECTS” IN YOUR
ORGANIZATION. YOU NEED
MORE EYES TO SEE, MORE
BRAINS TO THINK, AND
MORE LEGS TO ACT IN
ORDER TO ACCELERATE
YOUR CHANGE EFFORTS.**

**KOTTER CHANGE PRINCIPLES
SELECT FEW + DIVERSE MANY**

select few + diverse many



BUILD A GUIDING COALITION

What makes a *great* Guiding Coalition?

- ◆ Diversity of the team in terms of level, function, geographic location, tenure, gender and ideas.
- ◆ An ability and a willingness to work across the hierarchy while also working with people across all levels and functions... with respect and energy.
- ◆ A commitment to the change initiative at hand.

FORM A STRATEGIC VISION AND INITIATIVES

Dr. Kotter defines strategic initiatives as targeted and coordinated activities that, if designed and executed fast enough and well enough, will make your vision a reality.

Characteristics of a terrific strategic vision

◆ Communicable ◆ Desirable ◆ Creates a Verbal Picture ◆ Flexible ◆ Feasible ◆ Imaginable ◆ Simple

results —

YOUR FOCUS IS ON ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES – CRAFTED BY A DIVERSE SET OF EMPLOYEES, VALIDATED BY SENIOR LEADERS – THAT WILL ADVANCE YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

**YOU CAN'T APPEAL
TO PEOPLE WITH
DATA AND FACTS
ALONE. YOU MUST
ALSO ACCOUNT FOR
HOW PEOPLE FEEL. IF
YOU CAN PROVIDE
GREATER MEANING
AND PURPOSE TO
THEIR, AMAZING
EFFORTS THINGS ARE
POSSIBLE.**

head + heart



FORM A STRATEGIC VISION AND INITIATIVES

What makes a *great* Strategic Vision?

- ◆ Motivates people to take action.
- ◆ Coordinates and aligns their actions.
- ◆ Without it, strategies can struggle to get activity behind them.
- ◆ Clarifies how the future will be different from the past, and how that future will become a reality.
- ◆ Ties directly to The Big Opportunity.

ENLIST A VOLUNTEER ARMY

Large-scale change can only occur when very significant numbers of employees amass under a common opportunity and drive in the same direction.

Accelerate explains that "history has demonstrated that it is possible to find many change agents ... but only if people are given a choice, and feel they truly have permission to step forward and act." You must build excitement around the Big Opportunity and develop a feeling that one "wants to" (vs. "has to") contribute.

results —

YOU HAVE A SIZABLE BODY OF EMPLOYEES EXCITED AND ABLE TO TAKE ACTION ON CRITICALLY IMPORTANT INITIATIVES LINKED TO YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGY.

**KOTTER CHANGE PRINCIPLES
HAVE TO + WANT TO**

**TO BUILD A VOLUNTEER
ARMY, YOU NEED TO
GIVE PEOPLE A CHOICE
TO PARTICIPATE AND
TRUE PERMISSION TO
STEP UP AND ACT. THE
VOLUNTEER ARMY
DOESN'T NEED TO
INVOLVE OUTSIDERS.
YOUR EXISTING PEOPLE
HOLD THE ENERGY.**

have to + want to

4

ENLIST A VOLUNTEER ARMY

How do you *build* a successful Volunteer Army?

- ◆ Give people a reason and motivation to join the movement. A strong vision goes a long way.
- ◆ Don't boil the ocean – while you reach “stickiness” once you surpass 50%, about 15% of your organization is enough to build material momentum toward change.
- ◆ Recognize the effort of existing volunteers to keep them engaged and to recruit more.



ENABLE ACTION BY REMOVING BARRIERS

By removing barriers such as inefficient processes and archaic norms, leaders provide the freedom necessary for employees to work across boundaries and create real impact.

Many leaders agree that even their own management practices are too bureaucratic and are a nuisance, yet remnants of the past can have tremendous staying power.

results —

YOU HAVE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF EMPLOYEE INNOVATIONS STEMMING FROM COLLAPSED SILOS AND NEW WAYS OF WORKING TOGETHER.



INNOVATION IS LESS ABOUT GENERATING BRAND NEW IDEAS
AND MORE ABOUT **KNOCKING DOWN BARRIERS**
TO MAKING THOSE IDEAS A REALITY.

— john Kotter, accelerate





How to *remove* barriers

- In order to remove barriers, you must identify them. Think about why past initiatives have failed. At what stage? Did they get off the ground at all? Stall mid-way? Get completed but then abandoned?
- Barriers can be commonly stated and accepted statements that, while appearing helpful, can deter attempts to get past legacy obstacles. These are statements like, "It's just not done that way," or "We tried that before – it didn't work."
- Common barriers include: silos, parochialism, pressure to hit numbers, complacency, legacy rules or procedures, and limited access to key stakeholders and leaders.

GENERATE SHORT-TERM WINS

Wins are the molecules of results. They must be collected, categorized and communicated – early and often – to track progress and energize your volunteers to drive change.

A win is anything – big or small – that helps you move toward your opportunity. They may take the shape of actions taken, a lesson learned, a process improved, a new behavior demonstrated, etc.

results



A BODY OF DATA THAT TELLS THE STORY OF YOUR TRANSFORMATION IN VALIDATED, QUANTIFIABLE AND QUALIFIABLE TERMS.



Characteristics of an *effective* Win

- ◆ Relevant in light of the opportunity before you.
- ◆ Meaningful to others. People beyond the winner or winners care about the win, be it members of your team, another team, customers, stakeholders, etc.
- ◆ Unambiguous, visible and tangible such that people can replicate or adapt it. Wins have the most impact when they scale across organizations.

SUSTAIN ACCELERATION

Press harder after the first successes. Your increasing credibility can improve systems, structures, and policies. Be relentless with initiating change after change until the vision is a reality.

So, you've had a few wins. It can be easy to lift your foot off the gas pedal after experiencing some success. Instead, this is the time to press harder and use those wins as momentum to further fuel the change.

results —

YOU HAVE CONFIRMATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL FITNESS AND STAMINA. THIS ENABLES THE REINVIGORATION OF YOUR MISSION, AND HELPS YOUR TEAM STAY THE COURSE OF CHANGE OVER TIME.



IF URGENCY DROPS
SUFFICIENTLY AND
MOMENTUM IS LOST,
PUSHING
COMPLACENCY
AWAY A SECOND
TIME CAN BE MUCH
MORE DIFFICULT
THAN IT WAS THE
FIRST.

John Kotter



Tips to *sustain* Acceleration

- ◆ Revisit urgency after generating some significant wins. It is so easy to lose sight of the ultimate goal, which is to move the initiatives into the culture and sustain them. It may be necessary to revisit some of the urgency raising activities incorporated at the start.
- ◆ Get more and more people involved, always looking for ways to expand the volunteer army.
- ◆ With new volunteers and fresh eyes, you'll find more barriers in need of knocking down. Remove them, too!

To ensure new behaviors are repeated over the long term, it's important that you define and communicate the connections between those behaviors and the organization's success.

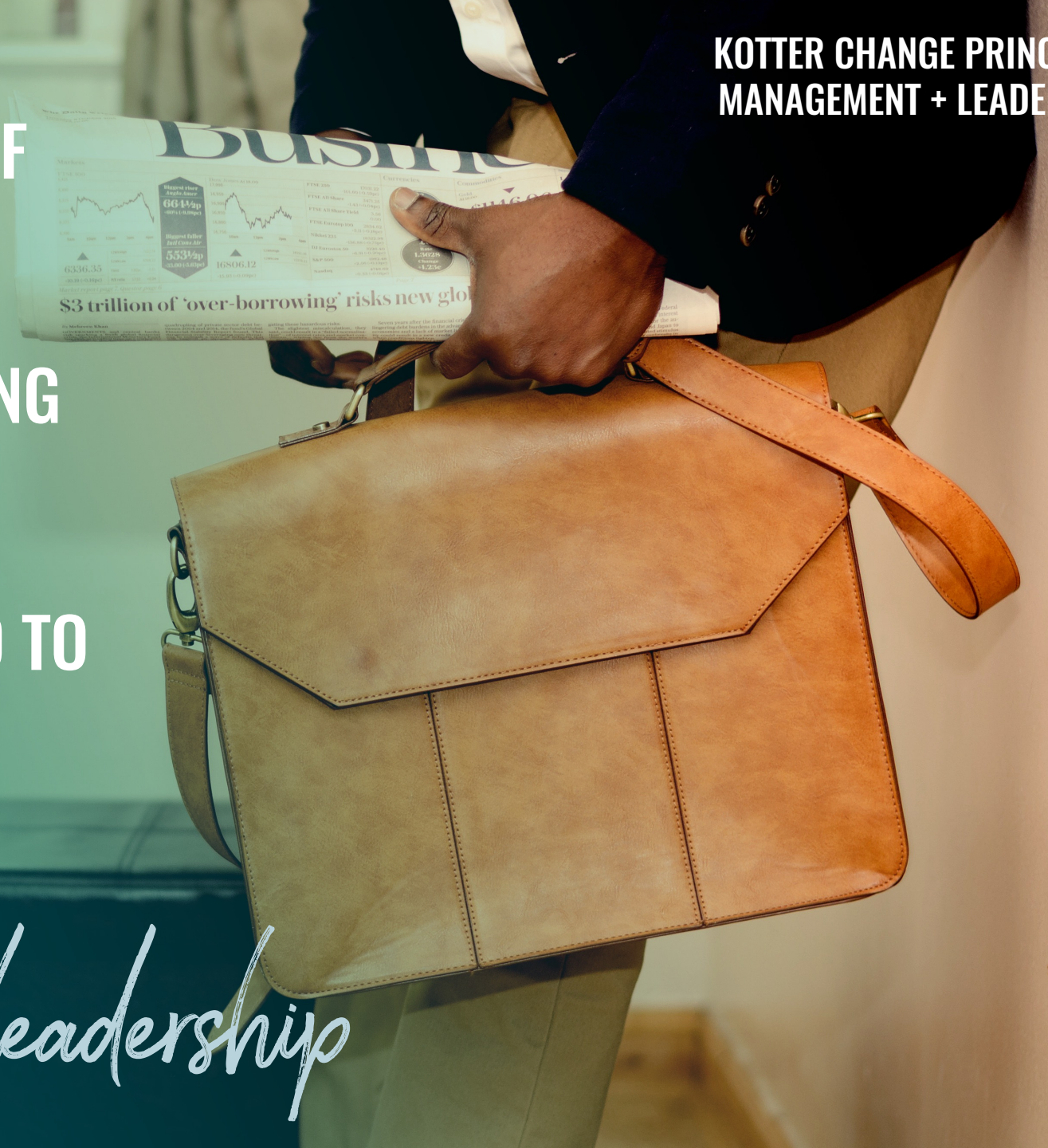
Years of a different kind of experience are often needed to create lasting change. That is why cultural changes come once you are deep into a transformation, not at the beginning. You first have to build the muscle and track record of antithetical experiences. Culture changes after you have successfully altered people's actions, connecting the dots between new behaviors and better performance.

results —

YOU HAVE COLLECTIVE RECOGNITION THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION HAS A NEW WAY OF WORKING WITH SPEED, AGILITY AND INNOVATION THAT DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTES TO STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT BUSINESS RESULTS.

AS NEW WAYS OF WORKING
BECOME PART OF THE FABRIC OF
YOUR ORGANIZATION, THE NEED
FOR MANAGEMENT **AND**
LEADERSHIP IS CRITICAL. STRONG
MANAGEMENT IS NEEDED TO
HANDLE THE DAY-TO-DAY, AND
STRONG LEADERSHIP IS NEEDED TO
CAPITALIZE ON UNPREDICTABLE
WINDS OF OPPORTUNITY.

management + leadership





Making it *stick*

- ◆ Accelerators 1-7 are all about building new muscles, new behaviors and new ways of working. Accelerator 8 is about sustaining it long into the future.
- ◆ New practices must be deeply rooted and anchored to replace the old ways.
- ◆ There must be clear communication and synchronization between the traditional hierarchical structure and the innovative network of volunteers.
- ◆ A key challenge is grafting the new practices onto roots that may be old but still effective, while killing off the inconsistent pieces.

At the end of a transformation, your org chart might look a little different. Your hierarchy will still be in place, as it's critical for day-to-day operations. But, in addition, you'll now have a *network* constantly innovating and poised to jump at the next opportunity.

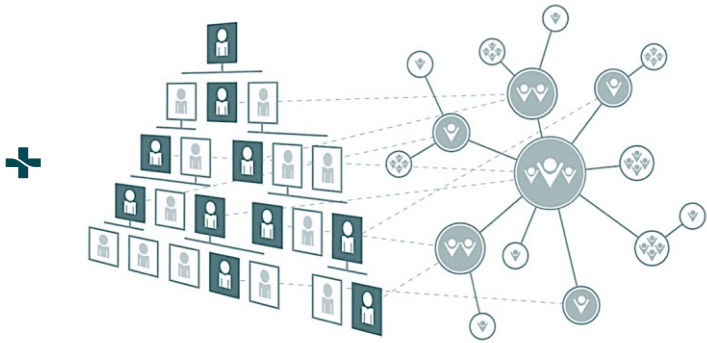


CHANGE PROCESS

THE 4 PRINCIPLES

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CHANGE PRINCIPLES



NETWORK



Ready to learn more and apply Kotter's 8 Accelerators and 4 Change Principles in your own work? Visit: [Kotter Training](https://www.kotterinc.com)

Need help transforming your organization? Visit: www.kotterinc.com

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