

# Training Best Practices: CHANGE MANAGEMENT



## Introduction

Change is happening faster than we could have imagined just a few years ago. Remember when the first cell phones were introduced? They were expensive, and very few places had service. Ten years later, the first smart phone was introduced and today the cell phone has become the way most people communicate. This type of high-speed change continues to occur in innovative organizations.

Within immunization programs, new vaccines, distribution methods, and other initiatives are introduced with regularity. But how does an EPI program ensure that innovations become common practice? Whether it is a small change involving just a group of individuals or a transformational change involving the entire program, how the change is managed can determine how successful the initiative ultimately is.

Without an intentional effort to manage change, you may find that the change itself fails to take root. For example, simply introducing a new idea in a workshop may spark interest, but once participants return to their day-to-day habits, the ideas fade, people return to their routines, and nothing changes.

Change can be driven by internal or external pressures. Either way, it should be managed to help move the organization forward. Organizations can foster change and innovation by:

- Accepting change as an important part of growth.
- Practicing openness by establishing open-door policies and a willingness to listen.
- Soliciting input and feedback.
- Providing training early and often to ensure individuals feel confident in their skills.
- Accepting and recognizing the accomplishments as well as any failures of the new initiative. Remember failure is an opportunity to learn.

Change management has become a generic term that covers all approaches used to prepare and support an individual or a team as an organization changes in circumstance or perspective.

This guide will cover what change management is, how to recognize change behaviors, and what can be done to help individuals through the change curve.

## Where Does Change Come From?

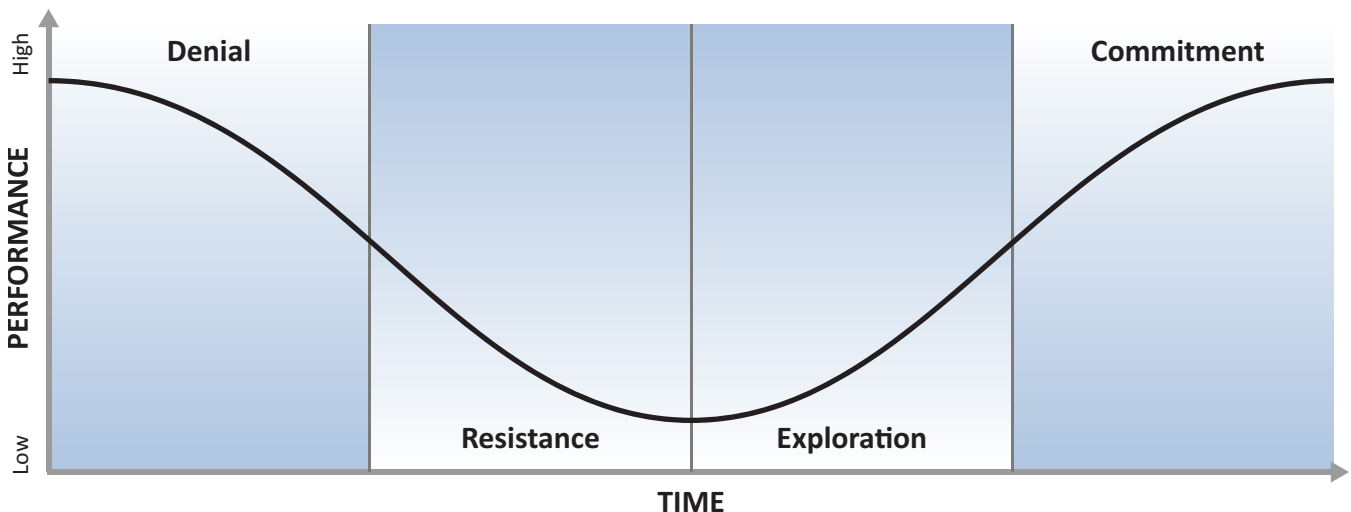
A change initiative may come from the top down, or from the bottom up. Top-down change initiatives come from a leader or organization. They are typically related to a large implementation, such as a change in the distribution model for vaccines or rolling out a new vaccine. Most take months if not years of planning, developing, and implementing. They involve the investment of time and money.

On the other hand, there are small changes individuals can make from the bottom up. Typically, bottom-up initiatives are smaller and do not require much in the way of investments. They can come from an individual finding a better way to do something, like organizing a storage room, or from a mid-manager attending a workshop and sharing what they learned with others.

No matter where it comes from, all those involved in a change will experience similar feelings about the initiative, which can be mapped to a Change Curve.

## What Is the Change Curve?

In the late 1960s, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross developed a theory that explained the stages an individual goes through when dealing with grief. Since then, others have applied her theory to explain how individuals handle change in an organization. The curve can be used to identify where an individual is and the type of support they need to move to the next stage.



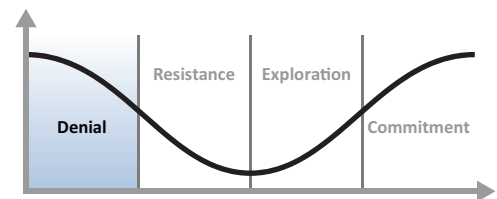
In the Change Curve, the vertical axis indicates an individual's morale, performance, or confidence. The exact naming of the axis varies, but it should describe how someone feels about the change. The horizontal axis is time. Individuals will move along the curve at different rates, so this axis does not represent a specific time span.

The curve is fluid, meaning that, as individuals move through it, there may be small setbacks. Someone who is in Exploration may revert to Resistance as they learn more details. Once the person has had time to process the new information, they will likely move back to Exploration.

Most managers and leaders wish that individuals would arrive immediately at Commitment. However, all individuals need time to experience feelings and process the change. Feelings of denial, resistance, exploration, and commitment are all responsible for igniting an individual’s passion for innovation and creativity. So, without the complex feelings change arouses, there would be no innovation.

## Denial

The first stage of a Change Curve is Denial. This is when most people will be hearing about the change for the first time. In some situations, there might be formal communication; in others, there might be rumors or rumblings. Either way, this stage begins when there is an awareness that a change will be occurring.



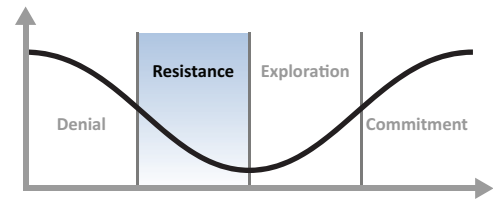
Recognizing feelings of denial can be difficult, especially in one’s self. Individuals in denial are protecting themselves from the disruption of change. They appear calm and collected, because they do not believe it will happen. In some cases, they may even seem excited. Because individuals are unique, the behaviors they exhibit will vary. People handle change in many different ways.

**Among the types of responses you might observe, here are some of the common ones you might see and hear:**

INDIVIDUALS WILL:	INDIVIDUALS WILL SAY:	HOW TO HELP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid talking about the change.</li> <li>• Start to blame others for the need to change.</li> <li>• Question the need for change.</li> <li>• Appear unconcerned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This change does not affect me. I am not going to worry.”</li> <li>• “They never follow through on these things.”</li> <li>• “This will blow over soon.”</li> <li>• “I am not going to waste time learning something we will never use.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize where they are on the Change Curve.</li> <li>• Give individuals time to process the change.</li> <li>• Let them know denial is a natural feeling.</li> </ul>

## Resistance

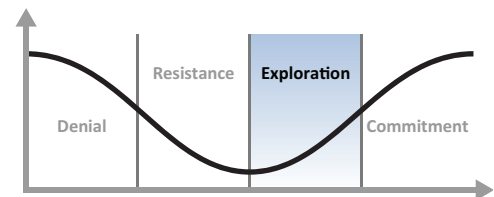
As they are coming to the end of the Denial stage, individuals might become reserved or confused as they begin to realize that change is coming. They start feeling upset and begin to disrupt performance or the morale of others. This is the Resistance stage. They may enter the “Valley of Despair” and show signs of being frustrated and anxious about the change. The dangerous part of being in the Valley of Despair is the lack of productivity in the workplace.



Individuals will:	Individuals will say:	How to help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show anger toward the organization or individuals.</li> <li>• Feel overwhelmed or depressed.</li> <li>• Refuse to accept the change.</li> <li>• Complain about everything, not just the change.</li> <li>• Not want to do their current work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This will never work!”</li> <li>• “It is unfair that I need to do this.”</li> <li>• “Why bother, it is going to happen with or without me.”</li> <li>• “We did this before and it never worked.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not take blame or anger personally.</li> <li>• Do not try to reason with an individual who is resistant.</li> <li>• Listen to and acknowledge what is said.</li> <li>• Support both the individual and the change initiative.</li> </ul>

## Exploration

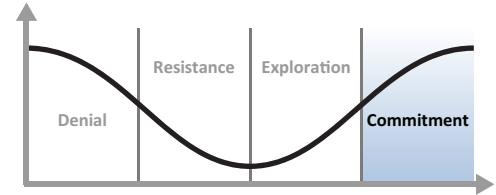
Individuals move into the third stage, Exploration, after they have worked through their frustration and accept that change will happen. The change no longer seems discouraging, and they begin to explore the possibilities. They shift from seeing the change as a threat to seeing it as an opportunity. They still may be unsure of what it means, but they are willing to give it a try. Their performance improves, and they start to have a better attitude about work in general.



Individuals will:	Individuals will say:	How to help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show more energy.</li> <li>• Ask questions and seek to learn more about the change.</li> <li>• Start talking about the future.</li> <li>• Want to be part of the solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What would happen if I did this?”</li> <li>• “Maybe I could do this.”</li> <li>• “I have an idea!”</li> <li>• “We could make this work if we did this...”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change Champions become facilitators.</li> <li>• Take an active role in helping others learn new skills.</li> </ul>

## Commitment

Individuals in the Commitment stage are ready and capable of working effectively with the new process or in the new environment. They have learned and embraced the new ways and are ready to help the organization, resulting in improved performance.



Individuals will:	Individuals will say:	How to help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show confidence in what they do.</li> <li>• Understand the change and why it was needed.</li> <li>• Work efficiently.</li> <li>• Focus on continual improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Why did we ever do it the other way?”</li> <li>• “This really is not that hard.”</li> <li>• “This has helped me learn some new skills.”</li> <li>• “I do not know why I was so worried about the change.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate commitment!</li> <li>• Capture “lessons learned”</li> <li>• Take a break – but not too long because new changes are right around the corner!</li> </ul>

## Understanding Individuals During Change

Individuals move through the Change Curve at their own pace, but they generally fall into four groups, in terms of their pacing.

**Pioneer:** A pioneer recognizes the need to change and works quickly through the Change Curve. They do not need much help in understanding the benefits of the change and can be helpful in moving others through the curve. Pioneers tend to be the innovators of an organization. It is important to keep their excitement tempered so they do not intimidate others or make others feel like they are doing something wrong because they are still working through the change.

**Early Adopter:** Early adopters are close to the pioneers in working through the change curve but need a little more time or help in the latter part of the curve. They want to change but are more cautious than the pioneers. Like the pioneers they can help others move through the curve. There tend to be more early adopters than pioneers.

**Follower:** This is a large population in most change initiatives. They may spend more time in the Valley of Despair than the pioneers and early adopters. They are waiting for the change to be accepted and tested by others.

**Resistor:** On the opposite end of the spectrum from the pioneers are the resisters. This is a smaller group of individuals who seem to be stuck in the Valley of Despair. They are adversaries of change and may never accept it.

Individuals will change groups depending on the change initiative and how closely it relates to their specific role in the organization. Someone may be a pioneer during one change and more of a follower in the next.

## Creating an Action Plan for Change

Change management is complex—it can involve many areas of an organization and it deals with individuals, their perceptions, and feelings. Even so, managers must create a plan to help move an organization through change. Here is a simple approach:

### Step 1: Identify the change that is going to occur.

- What is the change?
- How is it different from what individuals are currently doing?
- What resources will be available?
- When will the change happen?

### Step 2: Involve the individuals who are part of the change.

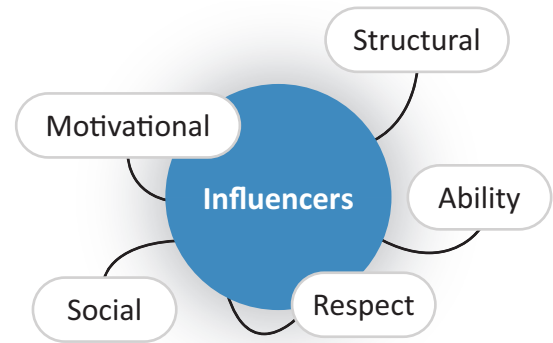
It will take more than yourself or those on your team to implement change. This is especially true for large-scale or transformational changes. Therefore, creating a network of change champions is essential, in addition to having strong leadership support. A change champion is an individual who understands the change, understands why it is important, endorses it, and is in the Commitment stage of the change. Some organizations may refer to a change champion as a change agent.

The size of the champion network may vary, depending on the level of change. For example, for some initiatives, you may need champions from the national level down to the health facility level. For other initiatives, you may take a more focused approach – leveraging regional managers as champions to influence lower levels of the system. More information on change champion will be shared later in this guide.

Not everyone who is in the Commitment stage is a good change champion. Here are a few characteristics to look for in a change champion:

**Good communicator:** A change champion is a good communicator who can create relevant messages to the impacted individuals or group.

**Influential:** A change champion can influence in different ways. When creating a change network, be sure to include all types of influencers.



**Structural Influencer:** Leaders and managers are able to influence their direct reports due to the organizational structure. People under them will change because the direction is coming from “the boss.”

**Motivational Influencer:** These individuals may not have the skills associated with a change but they do know how to get individuals motivated to change. Motivational influencers are good change agents because they get others to listen and give them a reason to change.

**Ability Influencer:** When an individual has a skill needed for a change, others tend to look to them as an example. They can influence the change by becoming the trainers or expert support.

**Respect Influencer:** Peers may influence one another out of mutual respect.

**Social Influencer:** Individuals who have a wide social network will be helpful in socializing the change. Leveraging who they know, these influencers can promote the change and guide others as they work through the Change Curve.

**Builder of relationships:** A change champion should be someone who works well with others. If the champion cannot establish good relationships with others, they will not be much help getting individuals to change.

**Self-manager:** Change champions are often left on their own to help move individuals along the Change Curve. They have the tools and support, but how it gets done is left to them. Look for a champion who can manage his or her own time and work through an implementation plan.

The champion may not possess all these skills, and that is okay. Some of these skills can be learned and mastered with practice.



**Follow these steps when establishing a change champion network:**



*Adapted from How to Launch a Network of Change Champion in Seven Steps. Murphy, Emma.*

Retrieved from <https://thechangesource.wordpress.com/2013/04/14/how-to-launch-a-network-of-change-champions-in-7-steps/>

### Step 3: Devise a communication plan to inform.

Communication is critical to any change initiative. Otherwise, the change will be difficult to control and manage. A clear communication plan should include what will be communicated, who will communicate, how the information will be shared, and when it will be shared, among other things.

Here is a simple template for planning communication:

Stakeholder	Key Interest	Desired Support	Barriers to Change	Message Needs	Communication Approach

The communication should be clear and include the WIIFM – What’s In It For Me? – for the target audience. The WIIFM establishes why the change is important to the individual, not just why it is important to the organization. It may be necessary to draft several statements, each focused on a different group, with a WIIFM for each group.

**Communication Example:**

FOCUSED ON THE ORGANIZATION	FOCUSED ON THE INDIVIDUAL
<p>Our EPI program will begin providing health facilities with tablets that will allow everyone to track program data better. The new tablets will make it easier for health workers to enter and report data daily, ensuring that health facilities, district managers, and subnational managers have up-to-the-moment information. This enables them to see problems more clearly and make better decisions about resource utilization – improving overall program performance.</p>	<p>Starting next month, we will be introducing a tablet that enables you to more easily enter and track your data. You will have access to all your current and past data. With a few taps, you can look at how things are changing in your area, where the biggest problems are, and which data may need your attention. That allows you to make good decisions about where to spend more time and resources, in order to immunize all the children in your area.</p>

See Annex 2 for a useful communications planning checklist.

## Step 4: Implement the change.

Implementation is the start of the change. Technical and moral support should be included, as well as training.

As you implement the change, you will need to help individuals through the change curve. Managers, leaders, and co-workers can help individuals at each stage of the Change Curve. Again, it is important to remember that everyone will go through the curve at different rates; in order to help individuals you must offer them the help that will get them to the next stage. Here are ideas for how, when, and where to help:

**Denial:** Everyone starts in Denial—even managers and leaders. Anticipate this stage and begin the change process early with change champions, so that they are prepared to help others. The most helpful thing managers or change champions can do during this stage is to give individuals time to process. Let them know that what they are experiencing is natural.

Time to process the change may include allowing open discussions during team meetings or setting time aside for individuals to come and talk one-on-one. Keep in mind the individual's communication preference and communicate the change through meetings, emails, or newsletters. The more ways you communicate the more likely it is the message will be heard. All of this should start as soon as the change is announced.

**Resistance:** Resistance is easier to recognize because individuals tend to be more vocal and outspoken. Receiving vocal resistance can feel intimidating to managers and leaders, who are often the brunt of the blame and the target of anger. Do not view this blame or anger personally, rather understand that this is part of the process. When an individual is questioning the change, remember not to try to reason them into changing their views. With enough support, they should get there on their own. Do not get defensive or angry with them, simply continue to listen, acknowledge what is being said, and finally be supportive of the change and the individuals.

Resistance can happen any time after a change has been announced, so be prepared. It might be helpful to deal with Resistance on an individual basis instead of in a group. People who have moved to Exploration may slip back into Resistance if they see the attention being given to those in Resistance. Consider holding a meeting dedicated to only the topic of the change and let individuals share their thoughts. It is up to the leader to determine the best way to handle resistance in their team.

**Exploration:** The change champions' role changes when individuals start moving through Exploration. At first, the champion is focused on the feelings of the individual. However, once the change has been accepted, the role changes to one of facilitation. Champions begin focusing their energy on finding solutions and helping others learn the new skills they will need for the change.

Exploration is a good time to start job mentoring. Start the training experience or mentoring so the individuals will have the skills needed to move on to Commitment. It is also important to keep

communicating about the change; just because they are in Exploration does not mean that people do not need to be kept informed. Set aside time during team meetings to review the change and any new information.

**Commitment:** Commitment is a time to celebrate! Leaders should take a step back, acknowledge the accomplishment, and evaluate what they learned. Some refer to this as capturing “lessons learned,” which can be shared with the core team. For some, change is exhausting, so allowing time to celebrate and rest helps everyone’s attitude and morale. But do not rest for too long, because the next change is right around the corner.

For large implementations, a large organizational celebration might be rewarding and also serve as encouragement for future change training. It is also important to recognize individuals for their change. Take time during a team meeting and/or at the celebration to recognize each individual in a special way.



**REMINDER:** Successes and failures are opportunities to learn and grow.

## Step 5: Inspect.

After the change has occurred, it is important to continue to monitor the Change Curve. There will be individuals who have not made it to the Commitment stage, so plan activities and communication after implementation to ensure everyone continues to move forward.

## Overcoming Roadblocks to Change

Along with the many personal issues that can complicate implementing change, each organization has its own cultural features that might impede change. This is true of every kind of institution the world over—in fact, according to the Harvard Business Review, in 2015 organizations around the world spent nearly \$356 billion globally on change management and training but found, for the most part, that the learning did not lead to better organizational performance because people soon reverted to their old ways of doing things.

In *Breaking Out of the Change Trap*, Ron Rosenberg offers these ideas for removing roadblocks at the organizational level.

### **Roadblock: Without support from leaders there can be no change**

When numerous levels of leadership are all partly responsible for change, each level might assume or hope that another level of people is taking responsibility for initiatives. Managers and supervisors not at senior levels might believe responsibility for shortcomings comes from higher up. And higher-ups might believe mid-level supervisors are responsible for failures.

Leadership occurs at many levels, and similarly, change can occur at many levels. Make sure responsibilities for leading specific changes are known and understood by all levels of the organization.

**Roadblock: Function versus process organization**

Many organizations are organized along silo-like functions, instead of along cross-functional lines. These groups are focused solely on their own functional area without any interaction with the groups that are upstream or downstream in the overall process. This prevents any particular group from playing a part in the end-to-end processes that directly affect the populations you serve. As you institute change, be sure to examine whether this kind of structure might affect how change is implemented at the organizational level.

**Roadblock: Rewards based on short-term performance**

At lower levels in an organization—the levels where the more noticeable work actually takes place—it is appropriate for performance to be measured on short-term accomplishment: improving record-keeping or efficiency, or completing a development project on time, etc. However, this can make for an extremely difficult environment in which to attempt change because many approaches to change and improvement require an ongoing investment of funds, resources and time. If we are too focused on short-term outcomes, it will be virtually impossible to gain the commitment necessary to make significant and lasting change.

**Note:** As for the *Harvard Business Review's* finding that trainees often revert back to previous behaviors over time, the Learning Transfer Best Practices guide offers specific strategies for countering that dynamic.

## Annex 1: Learning Transfer Strategies

Change curve stage	Individuals do	Individuals say	How to help
<b><i>Denial</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid talking about the change</li> <li>• Start to blame others for the need to change</li> <li>• Question the need for change</li> <li>• Appear unconcerned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This change does not affect me. I am not going to worry.”</li> <li>• “They never follow through on these things.”</li> <li>• “This will blow over soon.”</li> <li>• “I am not going to waste time learning something we will never use.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize where they are on the Change Curve.</li> <li>• Give individuals time to process the change.</li> <li>• Let them know denial is a natural feeling.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Resistance</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show anger toward the organization or individuals</li> <li>• Feel overwhelmed or depressed</li> <li>• Refuse to accept the change</li> <li>• Complain about everything, not just the change</li> <li>• Do not want to do their current work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This will never work!”</li> <li>• “It is unfair that I need to do this.”</li> <li>• “Why bother, it is going to happen with or without me.”</li> <li>• “We did this before and it never worked.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not take blame or anger personally.</li> <li>• Do not try to reason with an individual who is resistant.</li> <li>• Listen to and acknowledge what is said.</li> <li>• Support both the individual and the change initiative.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Exploration</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show more energy</li> <li>• Ask questions and seek to learn more about the change</li> <li>• Start talking about the future</li> <li>• Want to be part of the solution</li> <li>• Take a risk and try something</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What would happen if I did this?”</li> <li>• “Maybe I could do this.”</li> <li>• “I have an idea!”</li> <li>• “We could make this work if we did this...”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change Champions become facilitators.</li> <li>• Take an active role in helping others learn new skills.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Commitment</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show confidence in what they do</li> <li>• Understand the change and why it was needed</li> <li>• Work efficiently</li> <li>• Focus on continual improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Why did we ever do it the other way?”</li> <li>• “This really is not that hard.”</li> <li>• “This has helped me learn some new skills.”</li> <li>• “I do not know why I was so worried about the change.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate commitment!</li> <li>• Capture “lessons learned”</li> <li>• Take a break – but not too long because new changes are right around the corner!</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: Communications – an Effective Planning Checklist

- Who will deliver the communications in your organization?
- Who are the key influencers and how will you use them?
- How will you answer WHY this change is needed?
- What is in it for your audience?
- What are their barriers to this change?
- How will you overcome them?
- What are your key messages?
- How will you deliver the message? What will be most effective?
- Are your communicators prepared? Are your influencers on the same page?
- Are you resisting the urge to have the communication come only from the project lead?
- Will there be face-to-face communications? How will you create opportunities for two-way dialogue?
- How will you repeat the message at least eight times?
- How will you celebrate short-term wins? How will you reward performance longer term?
- Are reactions being gauged? Are you open to refinement?
- Are the results being measured?
- How will change be reinforced and rewarded over the long haul?

## Annex 3: Resources

Explore these resources for more information about change management.



### Mastering the Change Curve (Second Edition)

*Training Location Website*, by Dennis T. Jaffe and Cynthia D. Scott

Retrieved from <http://www.traininglocation.com/mastering-change-curve-theory.pdf>



### How Can an Organization Manage Change & Innovation in an Optimal Way?

*Small Business – Chron.com*, by Leigh Richards

Retrieved from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/can-organization-manage-change-innovation-optimal-way-729.html>



### Importance of Change Management

*Work Opportunity Unlimited Website*

Retrieved from <https://workopportunities.net/successes/company-news/the-importance-of-change-management/>



The  
People Development  
Network

### 10 Characteristics of a Change Champion

*The People Development Network Website*, by Julie Gordon

Retrieved from <https://peopledevelopmentmagazine.com/2015/10/12/10-characteristics-of-a-change-champion/>



### The 7 Emotional Phases Employees Go Through During Change

*LaMarsh Global Blog*

Retrieved from <https://lamarsh.com/the-7-emotional-phases-employees-go-through-during-change/>



### How to launch a network of change champions in 7 steps

*The Change Source: Change Management Insights from the UAE*, by Emma Murphy

Retrieved from <https://thechangesource.wordpress.com/2013/04/14/how-to-launch-a-network-of-change-champions-in-7-steps/>



### Change Management

Team Publications. Published by HRD Press. 2002

### Case study: Change Management and Motivation for Online Immunization Training

*Teach to Reach Summit*

Retrieved from [http://teachtoreachsummit.com/assets/T2R\\_CaseStudy\\_IEI\\_Motivation.pdf](http://teachtoreachsummit.com/assets/T2R_CaseStudy_IEI_Motivation.pdf)

### Checklist: Important Considerations for Change Management Planning in Training Implementation

*Teach to Reach Summit*

Retrieved from [http://teachtoreachsummit.com/assets/T2R\\_Key\\_Considerations\\_Checklist.pdf](http://teachtoreachsummit.com/assets/T2R_Key_Considerations_Checklist.pdf)