

# Sustaining Change



*...a better way to manage*

the  
happy  
manager

Published by Apex Leadership Ltd.

# HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

## Leading for the Future Following Change

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# How to be a Better Manager...

**Sustaining Change** is one of a series of practical, thought-provoking guides, designed to help you deal with a wide range of management ideas, activities and situations. Whether you are a new manager, or one who wants to hone or develop existing skills, we're sure you'll find something valuable in any of these guides.

This series of e-guides is published by Apex Leadership Ltd. The guides have been developed by a team of professional managers, consultants and educators. The full range of titles is available from [Apex Leadership Ltd](#), or from [the Happy Manager.com](#). Use these guides to benefit from our wealth of management expertise. Let us help you find: **a better way to manage...**"

Phil Higson & Anthony Sturgess  
Directors, Apex Leadership Ltd

## Using the guides

Each guide contains information, insight and inspiration on essential management topics. The best way to use the guides is to read through each section in turn, ensuring you pause for reflection wherever you see the "Consider..." points. Be sure to answer any questions posed, wherever they appear - they are there for a reason!

A rectangular button with a light blue border and a light green gradient background. The text "Consider ..." is centered in bold black font.A rectangular button with a light blue border and a light grey gradient background. The text "Tools ..." is centered in bold black font.

After you've worked through the guide, work through the tools. These have been designed to help you use and develop the advice given in the guide.

- Click on the tool buttons where they appear for an in-text hyperlink to the actual tool.
- At the end of each tool you can simply click on the "return" link to get back to your place in the guide.

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### Leading for the future following change

Making transitions to different ways of working and organising requires commitment and energy. Leading and managing your service and team, so that you realise the benefits of changes made, is a vital leadership role. But so is balancing current performance with changes to achieve future performance.

Many books on change management deal with preparation for change. Assessing the need for change, planning for it, implementing that plan are all important. However, so is preparing people for the changes they will face, and leading them through the process.

What is often overlooked is support for leaders dealing with change *after the event*. Arguably, dealing with the fall-out from change is one of the most difficult aspects of change management. Overcoming any negative responses, re-focusing such reactions on positive outcomes, then achieving new goals is a real test for any leader.

This guide firstly addresses some of the leadership techniques needed to maintain performance, whilst transitioning to different ways of working.

Secondly, it will help you to cope effectively with the new situation following a change process, especially during difficult change.

Thirdly, we will consider how to sustain positive change and a focus on improvement.

The guide will:

- ✓ Explain the consequences of 'survivor syndrome'.
- ✓ Describe the significance of communication in developing effective knowledge management in service areas.
- ✓ Help you maintain performance through transition.
- ✓ Enable you to review flexible structures to implement change

### Change readiness

One of the most important management skills of the future will be the ability to manage change by being change-ready.

This means:

- Being adaptable to change yourself.
- Being proactive in ensuring it can be managed in others.

Everybody responds differently to change. There can be a mixture of emotions from:

- Relief to frustration.
- Resignation to hope.

Effective leadership and management requires the ability to deal with individual responses to change. This can be difficult at the best of times but it's extremely important to help people cope during periods of difficult or significant change.

Being change-ready is critical to managing change. This means putting approaches in place to better position us to *lead and shape* change.

Given the scale of change facing many managers, this proactive approach is much better than dealing with change by reacting to, or simply accepting it.

#### Consider ...

"those unable to change themselves cannot change those around them."

Reg Revans

Of course, the first place to start is in ensuring you yourself are change-ready. Use tool 1 for some tips on being change-ready.

[Tool 1](#)

Whilst the reason for change may be out of our control, how we respond to change isn't. The next section offers some advice on holding the tension of change.

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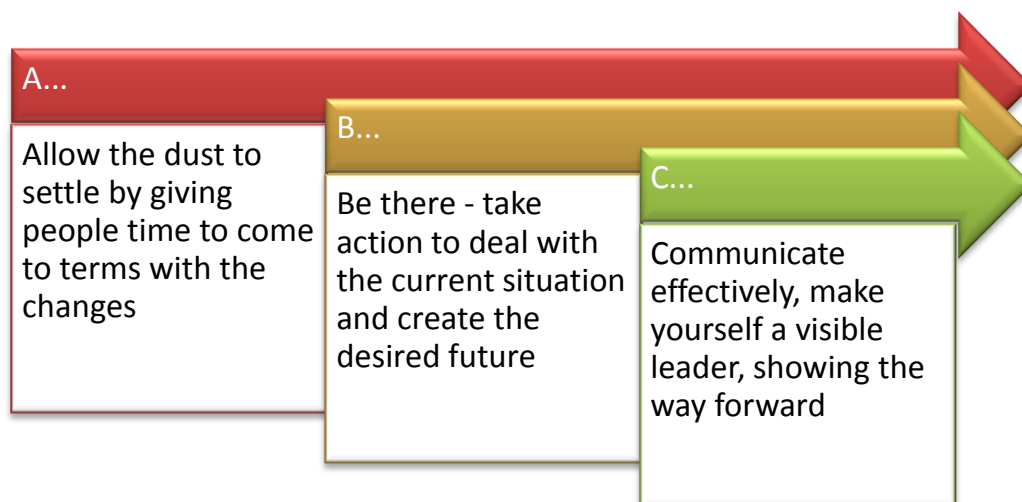
### Surviving survivor syndrome

It's highly likely that change resulting in job losses only occurs after difficult decisions have been made. These will probably have been caused by organisational or environmental difficulties. Overcoming such challenges will only be possible by effectively managing survival syndrome in those left behind to do the work. Re-forging a responsive and positive workforce will require proactive, positive leadership.

#### Progression of actions

The leader's main task in dealing with survivor syndrome is to work to renew the psychological contract with those left behind. This will require efforts to renew confidence where employment security has been reduced or undermined. It will certainly require a focus on the positive outcomes which the future can bring, albeit delivered in a sensitive, empathic manner.

In order to re-build after a major change, you might find it useful to try the A B C approach as a starting point.



Using these basic building blocks you can begin the process of reconstruction following the change. Next you will need to focus on addressing specific impacts from that change. Use tool 2 to help you identify and deal with some of the detailed issues which underpin survivor syndrome.

[Tool 2](#)

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### Demand side innovation

The problem with a supply side focus to improvement is that eventually there comes a time where the scale of improvement slows. This may be especially problematic if the improvement strategy is largely based on efficiency savings. True innovation in the private and public services needs to consider how we view the demand side.

One area that is gaining particular prominence in both public and private sectors is learning to think differently about your customers.

#### Consider ...

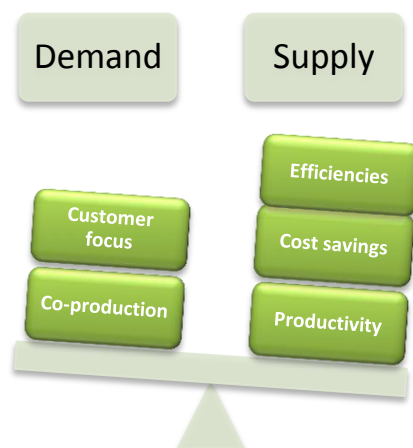
Customer advantage: sees the customer as "co-creator of value".

Learning to think differently about customers means thinking of them as:

- **A productive resource** - a crucial part of ensuring the delivery of the service is effective (co-production), with valuable time, expertise and finance that they may be willing to contribute.
- **A contributor to quality** - the extent to which they engage can be a key factor in determining the success of the service outcomes.
- **A competitor** to the service organization.
- **An innovator** – with knowledge about the service that perhaps professionals don't have.
- **A collaborator** - with other staff, other customers and the wider community.

### Balancing Supply and Demand

Although this approach has dominated over recent years, seeking innovative process and management practices from the supply side can only be one side of the improvement equation. The challenge of the future is to seek innovation in demand side strategies and lead with a balanced approach.



Use tool 4 to help you develop your balanced approach to supply and demand.

[Tool 4](#)

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### Tool 4: Balancing supply and demand

The challenge of the future is to seek innovation in both supply and demand side strategies, and to lead with a balanced approach. Use this tool to think about the balance of strategies in your area. Make notes about how you might address any imbalance.



Demand strategies	Supply strategies

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## HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

### Updates

For more information on the content of this e-guide, and other related topics, visit: [www.the-happy-manager.com](http://www.the-happy-manager.com)

Join the community: subscribe to the Happy Manager Newsletter for regular updates and advice on better ways to manage.

Join the conversation: bookmark the Happy Manager blog.

([www.the-happy-manager/blog](http://www.the-happy-manager/blog)) Leave any comments, suggestions or examples of your own experiences for the benefit of other readers.

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