



# SORDILL CONSULTING

*Organizational Training & Development*

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## *Effective Strategies for Change Management*

We live in a time marked by a significant amount of change. Whether it's change we've initiated ourselves or change imposed on us, there are strategies and practices that can help make the transition smoother, more successful, and more positive.

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide you with some tools and strategies for initiating or introducing change to others, and responding effectively when change is introduced to you.

There will always be some differences between changes we decide upon ourselves, those decided upon by others and those that occur as a result of a life event. Obviously, the more you have to do with initiating change, the more receptive you will be to the change itself.

When change is made by others, people often feel surprised or unprepared by the idea of change. There may be a sense of loss, having less control, and an increased potential for resistance.

If you are planning to introduce change to others the following guidelines can help ***reduce resistance and increase support, ownership and a positive response to change:***

1. **Clearly define reasons for change.** What is motivating this change?
2. **Identify stakeholders in the change.** Who will be affected by the change? How will they be affected?
3. **Involve stakeholders** when you first start thinking about the change.
4. **Communicate early and often** to all who have a stake or interest in the change. Ensure communication is two way – ask questions, listen to input, and incorporate ideas in the change process.
5. **Identify resources** for managing the process of change. Who has expertise, knowledge, decision making authority, interest in the change?
6. **Involve appropriate resources** in the process of change.
7. **Identify reasons why the individuals involved would want to make the changes** you are proposing. What's in it for them? These must be reasons *they* see as valid.
8. **Identify consequences** that the individuals involved would care about if the changes fail or are not carried out. (Again, these must be consequences *they* care about.)
9. **Continue to work with the group** – involve stakeholders and resources in all phases and steps in this process.
10. **Set clear SMART goals** for accomplishing desired changes. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed. They are assessed and revised as necessary to stay the course or respond to other changes that may affect the goal.
11. **Establish ground rules** for how the group will work together.

12. **Clarify roles** for participants in the process.
13. **Identify a process** for working through the change.
14. Work together through the process using **project management techniques**.
15. Identify and **work through all issues** that arise during the process.
16. **Learn from the experience** and apply the learning to subsequent phases of this change or future changes.
17. **Continue to communicate** status of the change.
18. **Ask for and remain open to input** from others. Consider their ideas, suggestions and concerns.
19. **Respond to input from others** whether you intend to use their ideas or not. If you don't plan to implement their ideas, tell them why not and what you intend to do instead.
20. **Reward and recognize** stakeholders and resources for contributions to the process.

*When change is imposed on you by life events or by other people*, it is important to have some tools for moving through the process as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Change is a Process which includes **Endings, Transitions and Beginnings**. You cannot move through one without going through the others.

**To Work Through Change, Ask:**

- What's Happening?
- How is This Affecting Me?
- What Can I Do?

*Ideas for implementing changes decided on by others*

→ **Determine Why the Change is Being Made**

Ask questions to understand what's behind the decision to make the change. What are the benefits of this change? What will happen if the change is not made? What caused the decision to change to be made?

- **Clarify How the Change will Affect You** Ask questions to understand what the change will mean to you. What will be expected of you as a result of this change? What will be different and what will remain the same?
- **Identify What You Have to Do Differently** Find out if you need to learn new skills or change the way you have been doing things. Ask questions and clarify what the change will mean in terms of how you will do things in the new environment.
- **Outline Steps for Transition** – Decide what you need to do to successfully make the changes required. List actions you will need to take and put them in sequential order. Prioritize those actions that will be most important to your success in making the change. Identify your first next step to begin making the transition.
- **Get the Training, Support, Resources and Tools Necessary for Successful Transition** Identify areas in which you need to learn new skills or need support to make the transition. Ask for the training or support you will need. Work together with others to learn new skills or acquire tools necessary to do the job.
- **Take Steps to Make the Change** – Take action. The more quickly you begin moving forward by implementing the steps you've identified, the more quickly you will move through transition and achieve success.
- **Assess Progress** – Check in at regular intervals to evaluate the change process. If you are achieving desired results and meeting your goals for transition, continue on the path you've outlined. If you are running into obstacles, identify new strategies for moving through the change and ask for help or ideas for making the transition.
- **Fine Tune for a Successful Transition** – Always look for better ways to do what you are doing. As you apply new skills or change methods for doing your job, identify ways to do it faster, for less cost, with less effort or to overcome difficulties while retaining the highest quality and quantity outcomes. Think of it as an ongoing process of improvement.

- **Provide Feedback and Suggestions for Improving the Transition Process** – When you notice that things are working well, provide positive, specific feedback to the people involved. When you notice that things are not working well, provide suggestions for how to improve or fix what ever is wrong. Take an active role in respectfully letting people know what you are thinking and contribute to solutions as an active participant.
- **Share Information and Knowledge** – When you've identified a method that will save time, money or effort on the part of others, pass it along. Help others to benefit from your expertise and experience.
- **Contribute to Positive Morale for Yourself and Others** – Look for what is right about the change, talk about the things that are good for everyone, focus on the positive side. Choose not to participate in negative gossip or the fears of others. Instead focus on getting accurate, factual information and understanding the benefits of the changes being made. Where you have concerns, address them through problem solving and participation. Choose to be a supporter of change and company goals. Understand the benefits to yourself and others of making the change successful.

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