FREE PACK · INSIGHTS

Leading through change: the stage chart

The four stages of transition, what you will see at each, what people need from you, and a plan for the dip.

Stage	What you will see	What helps
Denial Needs: information	The announcement has landed, but the work carries on exactly as before. People talk about the change as something for other teams, or for later. Few questions get asked, briefings are politely attended, and tasks linked to the change slide without comment. Some people throw themselves into the old way of doing things.	Make it concrete: what changes, for whom and from when. Repeat the essentials more often than feels necessary, and in more than one setting. Give people a small task that only makes sense if the change is real. Share what you know as you learn it, say plainly what you do not yet know, and avoid reassurances you cannot guarantee. Expect a reaction, and make time for it.
Resistance Needs: a hearing	The feelings arrive: anger, anxiety, sadness or cynicism. Complaints are as much about how the decision was made as about the decision. Mistakes, short tempers and time off can rise, and output wobbles. Some people argue; others go quiet and do the minimum. “We tried this before” is heard a lot.	Listen without trying to fix the feeling. Ask what people will miss, and mark the ending of the old way. Be clear about what is decided and what is still open, and ask for views on the open part. Hold the decision steady while you respect the reaction. Watch for anyone who is stuck for weeks rather than days, and offer them more support.
Exploration Needs: focus	Energy comes back, often in bursts. Questions turn to the detail of how the new way will work. Ideas arrive, some half-formed; people volunteer for pilots and compare notes. There is also confusion: too many things started at once, false starts, and frustration when an idea does not work first time.	Help people choose. Agree two or three priorities and short deadlines with something to show at the end. Provide the training and information they need to make good choices. Make it safe to try things and get some of them wrong. Get people sharing what is working, and say so when something lands.
Commitment Needs: room	People describe the new way as “how we do things”. They set their own goals within it, solve problems without escalating them and help colleagues who are finding it harder. Roles feel settled again, and attention turns to the next improvement.	Set longer-term goals with them rather than for them, and hand over ownership. Recognise what they contributed, in front of others. Ask them to support colleagues who are still earlier on. Review together what you would do differently next time, because there will be a next time. And watch for fatigue: the people who carried the change may need a lighter patch.

Stages after Cynthia Scott and Dennis Jaffe (1988). Descriptions written by great{with}talent.

Planning for the dip

1. **Talk more than feels necessary.** Short, frequent, two-way. A standing slot where anything can be asked beats a polished FAQ.
2. **Give people something to finish.** Short goals that can be completed and seen, and let the team choose some of them.
3. **Treat objections as information.** Hear them properly, your own leadership team's included, and say which ones changed the plan.

My next fortnight

Person or team	Stage I think they are at, and why	Two things I will do	How I will check my reading

Does any of this sound familiar?

The organisations we work with rarely come to us asking for a survey. They come with something that is costing them money, time or people. These are the ones we hear most often.

MAKING MONEY

"We hire well on paper and still get it wrong in the role."
Personality, leadership and competency assessment matched to the job, so interviews test what matters and offers go to people who will perform. (FindingPotential)

"Our best people leave and we only find out why afterwards."
Exit intelligence in the leaver's final weeks: what was avoidable, who would come back, and what to change first. (LastOpinion)

"Leaders get feedback once a year and nothing changes."
Forward-looking 360 feedback that lands as development rather than judgement, with the actions built in. (FeedForward)

SAVING MONEY

"Too many new starters are gone inside a year."
New-starter surveys at the points the first-year leak opens, so you act at three months instead of reading about it at exit. (OnBoarder)

"References take weeks and tell us nothing."
Automated referencing with questions that predict, most returned within 48 hours. (ReferenceExpert)

"We run an engagement survey and the results sit in a drawer."
Engagement reporting down to team level in plain English, with the three moves each team's own people chose. (WinningFormula)

SOLVING PROBLEMS

"The board wants evidence on culture, conduct and speaking up."
A confidential always-on channel and a harassment-prevention audit that give you the evidence before a regulator asks for it. (SafeSpace)

"We publish an inclusion statement and cannot show whether it is true."
Inclusion measured at every stage from hire to exit, so you can see where the experience differs and act on it. (ED&I)

"We have the data and cannot turn it into a decision."
Twenty years of UK benchmark data and analysts who turn results into a board paper, not a dashboard. (Workforce intelligence)

Who we are

great{with}talent is a UK workforce-intelligence consultancy, founded in 2003. We help organisations hire better, keep people longer, improve leadership, strengthen inclusion and reduce workplace risk, with a connected set of tools that turn employee data into clear, fast action across the whole employee lifecycle. Independent, GDPR-compliant and Cyber Essentials certified, hosted on Microsoft Azure.

Not on the list? It will not always be. If you are working on something you think we might be able to help with, drop us a note describing what you are trying to do and we will come back to you.

On the list or not, let's talk.

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