

BRITT DAMKJAER

INCL.
UNIQUE
TRANSFORMATION
FRAMEWORK

IT'S OUR CUSTOMER

THE INSIDER'S GUIDE

TO MASTERING THE CHANGE JOURNEY
WITH A COLLECTIVE MINDSET

PRAISE FOR *IT'S OUR CUSTOMER*

“To ensure authentic customer engagement and fast, reliable customer deliveries, a collective mindset about looking after joint customers is a prerequisite to effectively fulfilling a business transformation with new innovative customer programs. **It's OUR customer** is an excellent resource and pragmatic guidance to leaders seeking inspiration to involve employees in the process and succeed with change.”

*Tomas Gorrissen,
Founder and COO, Responsive A/S*

“**More relevant than ever.** We are all looking to comprehend the process more in-depth on how to lead our organization through change, and purposefully create joint customer ownership across teams to make employees collaborate more intelligently, generating more business value. **It's OUR customer** contributes with essential reading for anyone implementing and anchoring CRM or other customer-related change programs.”

*Ole Peter Mejer,
SVP, Shared Service Center, Atea A/S*

“Most business leaders understand how critical it is to transform the business fast to stay competitive in markets with high customer demands. Britt's book is an indispensable guide to help you succeed in doing just that. With a valuable framework and focus on essential success criteria along the change journey, you will be assisted every step on the way to accelerate CRM and customer programs that stick and achieve business value”

*Holger Reisinger,
SVP Large Enterprise Solutions, Jabra, GN Audio A/S*

“Excellent - I’m already using elements from the framework. The coherent models and overviews in the book make you understand the transformation process from new and different perspectives. They allow the reader to be better prepared with the right efforts and continuity to accelerate the adoption of new initiatives in the organization. The internal deliveries are enhanced and ultimately the customer experience increased. Well done!”

***Søren Boelsmand,
Sr. Product Management Lead, Global Marketing and
Product Management, Maersk Drilling A/S***

“Probably the most awaited in the last decade. This book is a CRM Manager’s guidebook for surviving whatever the project throws at you - keep a copy close at hand!”

***Morten Christensen,
Manager – 365 CE & PowerPlatform, NNIT A/S***

“An excellent reference book to all CRM Managers. Whether being in the middle of a CRM project or kickstarting a significant Member program, this book supports you in orchestrating the change journey while strengthening your ability to communicate and involve the teams to ensure faster anchoring of new initiatives.”

***John Holm,
CRM Manager, LB Group***

“Digital transformation becomes more vital than ever for all companies to ensure an active online presence without losing the personalized touch and unique experience. But business innovations programs involve many complexities and uncertainties that are important to know and address to master it effectively. **It's OUR customer** provides you with great models and a framework to lead an organization-wide transformation with success.”

***Kresten Finsen Wiingaard,
CEO & Co-owner, Adapt Group A/S***

“**A compelling guidebook!** Leaders who seek advice in navigating through a business transformation to succeed with accelerating the adoption of CRM and commercial excellence programs will significantly benefit from **It's OUR customer.**”

***Ole Grooss,
Commercial Excellence Manager,
ISS Facility Services A/S***

“**I am over the moon with joy!** This book helps us with substantial knowledge and concepts to obtain a comprehensive grasp on the journey of change we all are going through when working with innovative customer programs. It guides you with all the necessary steps to transform a business while managing profitable customer relationships. Most valuable for any level in the organization, and most honest about every step of the journey.”

***Line Højgaard Jensen,
Brand Manager, Marketing,
Communications & Partnerships, DGI-byen***

“Very inspirational reading! An excellent handbook with comprehensive expert knowledge and valuable industry experience that energizes you to boost the efforts in ensuring the adoption of new solutions and inspires you how to involve your teams in working in new ways.”

***Kenneth Holmfred,
Manager of Manufacturing Readiness, OTICON A/S***

“A must-have reference book that helps you optimize your efforts and pay attention to essential areas critical to succeed with high involvement of the workforce, stakeholders, and management, and making the right decisions when you initiate, develop, implement, and anchor CRM in your organization.”

***Christian Jeppesen,
Sr. CRM Business Manager, Jabra, GN Audio A/S***

“Change means different things to top management, managers, and employees. Thus, all leaders across the organization benefit from gaining a shared understanding of the transformation process to make the right decisions and lead employees effectively. Britt’s book provides just that. It further includes expert knowledge to comprehend and recognize different employee types, enabling a holistic approach of response to varying needs and behaviors; and provides insights on how to optimize communication, ensure early involvement and cohesion that make employees thrive with new ways of working to enhance the customer- and business value. Don’t hesitate to acquire this outstanding book.”

***Maria Balle,
Director, Change Management
& Communication, Aliaxis Group S.A. / N.V.***

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LEADING CHANGE



■ The golden yellow represents change. The color inspires thoughts and curiosity, encouraging creative and innovative thinking. The golden yellow connects optimism, enlightenment, and energy to new ways of doing things, that underlines the sense of opportunity for reaching a better future.

Any change to the current way of doing business has an impact on the organization and its performance one way or another, and time is an essential and precious asset to lead your employees through the change journey.

Prioritize time to establish a joint knowledge base and time to encourage, guide, and support the employees through the transformation process. And make sure that you find the time necessary for reflection both for you and your employees to succeed with the transition to new standards.

The initial preparation is the foundation for the change journey, which ensures organizational stability and mutual trust during the transformation process. Prevent insecurity and confusion with a clear purpose, strategy, and direction that leads the employees through the process despite tangled roads or bumps on the way.

It's essential to establish a fundament for the employees to build-up confidence and willingness to embrace and adopt new standards that will enhance their collaborative performance, to yield value to the customers, the business, and themselves.

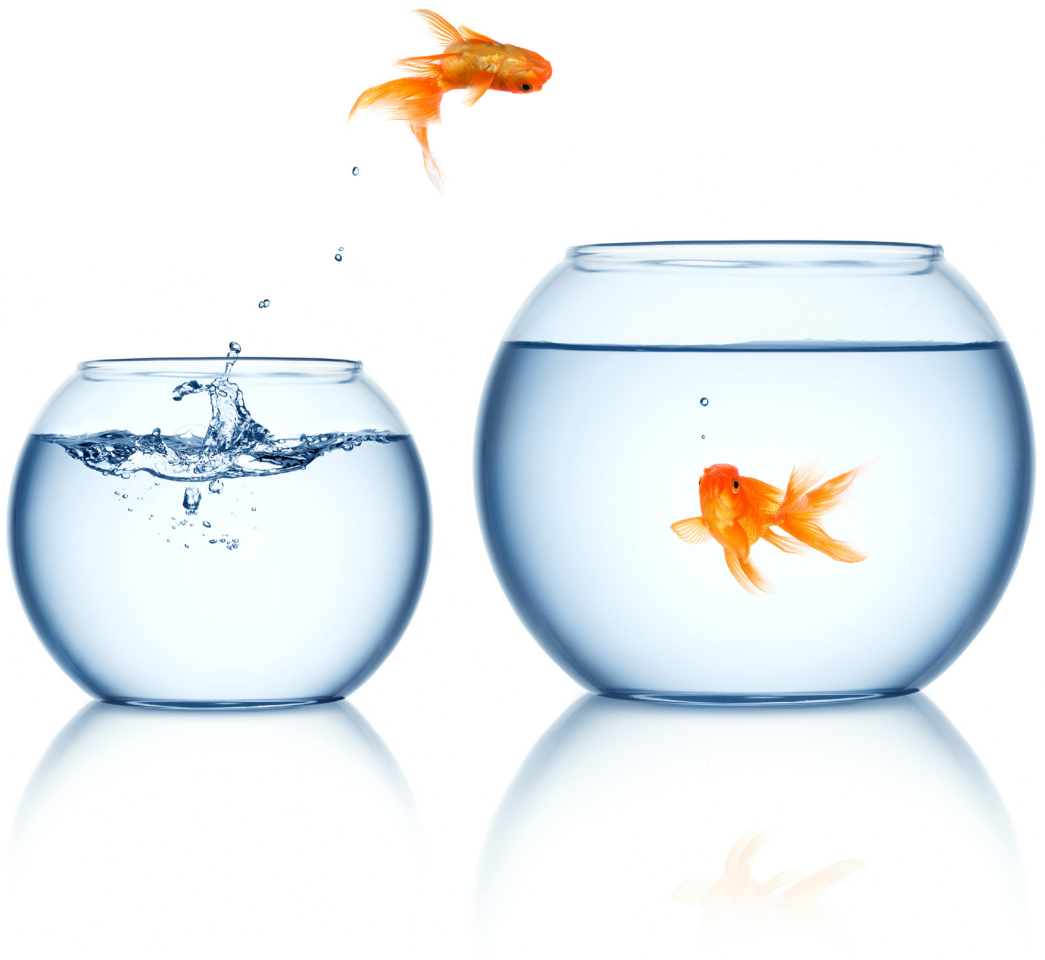
Strong, holistic leadership is vital in transforming business and requires an understanding of the various business parameters and focus points that interconnected between the four cornerstones of a change journey: Leading change, communicating effectively, guiding people, and building genuine collaboration. Improving the circumstances or optimizing the work conditions (that reflect the focus points), you release subsequent outcomes that help the employees to alter their work habits to adopt and anchor new standards, that to accomplish a successful change journey.

YOUR KEY TAKEAWAYS

Before initiating a change journey, it's essential to understand the transformation and get an overview of the employees' process to adapt to new standards. It helps you prepare and form all the relevant elements and tasks necessary to explain better the reason and the purpose of the change initiatives required and get buy-in and acceptance to transform the business, to make it survive.

- Be an authentic and active role model to your employees, who do the walk-the-talk, while you lead the change journey, and acknowledge that it's not a 'one-man' show - it makes a significant difference!
- Understand the various perspectives on change, and the transformation process to dedicate the right resources and use your capacity effectively to ensure the right leadership efforts, to succeed with the transition to new standards.
- Ensure to connect the transformation and its change program with the corporate vision and the business strategy, and guide the employees with a clear direction towards the new. It will help them comfortably concentrate on the transformation objectives while keeping a stable focus on customer deliveries.
- Pay attention to the different time perspectives during the change journey and the timing related to the process to achieve the expected outcome.

Remember that your entire organization is embarking on a maturity- and learning process, including the management, yourself, and the other leaders. The aim is to accomplish a faster and more involving business transformation that ensures commitment and loyalty to collaborate with standards that continuously will be changing. Besides, and most importantly, it is to make your employees thrive with change.



BE AN ACTIVE ROLE MODEL WHO 'WALKS THE TALK', WHILE LEADING THE BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

If your business is about to initiate a change journey or is considering revitalizing a current change program, active and involving leadership is an absolute prerequisite to succeed.

Your leadership is crucial to ensure substantial involvement of the organization and conduct a powerful and fast business transformation with its changes that is beneficial for the employees, the business, and the customers.

Being the sponsor or responsible for the transformation requires leading the organization in the right direction. If no visible front runner shows the way and guides the employees to go along that same direction as you do, you risk having a split organization, in which not necessarily everyone will follow you.

Procsi (2016), a leading expert within the field of change management, concluded in a study that strong leadership is a prerequisite to fulfilling well-managed change with a focus on people to gain business success.

Likewise, your organization needs a predominant driver of change, who should at all times be the active role model who 'walk the talk' to encourage, motivate and guide the employees to follow the same direction. Whether that is you or someone from the management team who are leading the business transformation, the focus should be to become the guiding star, in which the employees have confidence in reaching a new and better future together.

” It is crucial to have the management’s support and commitment to change, to fulfill the transition

We had a very engaged Board of directors encouraging strong customer engagement, so they supported the CRM initiative from the very beginning. Active management, support, and dedication are needed all way through the process; otherwise, it will not happen.

CRM Manager, LB Group

Distinguish yourself in such a way that you become a great source of inspiration for the employees to admire you and your efforts done to transform the business. Then they will use you as a personal reference and become eager to participate in the transformation process with the same level of commitment as you.

Remember, being a role model serves as a great example, not only to expressing positive attitudes associated with the change journey but to conduct and support the new work behavior while acting according to the corporate values. With your guidance and support, you can influence the employees' mindset and encourage them on how to refine the collaboration by altering their work habits.



Managers' positive behavior repeats similar conduct on the teams

When a manager is pragmatically focused working hands-on complying with collaborative work methods in managing customers, it has a positive influence on the employees. When the manager is a front runner, the conduct shows how to act, and build a foundation of sustainable work behavior to achieve business targets.

*Head of IT consultant department,
DGI, National Sport for all Organization*

Experiences indicate that leaders tend to neglect the importance of the 'walk the talk' in practice. Often, they say one thing, but do something else Monday morning, and don't act consistently with what they claim is going to happen, but instead, they convey empty promises.



Leaders need to walk the talk

Leaders need to behave as excellent examples and role models with a strong presence in supporting his/her team in adapting to new ways of working. However, they don't always live up to their own words..

CRM Lead, Global Manufacturer of Hearing Solutions

The focus should be to convince the employees that strategic promises regarding the business transformation will turn into reliable execution programs, including supporting them to adapt to new standards. Otherwise, you put the organization's credibility at risk and quickly will lose the employees' trust and their willingness to participate.

” Someone has to be the sponsor formally to inform the staff of the expected output

A sponsor of change is necessary to formally lead and guide the team of their roles and responsibilities to achieve the expected outcomes. It creates confusion and becomes inefficient when some colleagues in the organization continuously have to go back to gain confirmation by the management of what exactly they are supposed to proceed with to fulfill their responsibilities.

Business Consultant, University College Metropol

Consider the following:

- Share the strategy and focus areas with the employees. Visualize milestones, overviews and action plans regarding the transformation process, split into roles and responsibilities, levels of involvement within the organization, and how to convey and fulfill the execution, and the support of the various activities
- Practice what you preach. What you demand from your organization should be matching your work behavior. That is to behave and do the same, as you expect from your employees. For instance, if you expect the employees to accelerate their pace to practice new global ways of working within a short time frame, it's a contradicting leader behavior if you don't prioritize time for practice yourself to comply with those same methods.

It's essential to be conscious of the leadership style and tone as a role model. Are the work values and statements based on openness, trust, and empowerment of initiatives that you encourage from the bottom-up, or is it based on control, dominance, and commands executed with a top-down approach to the employees?

It has a considerable impact on how the employees will perceive your announcement of a business transformation, as well as it may affect the transition time of the employees, and the pace to achieve the expected outcome.

” The weakest link is if managers themselves don’t adopt to use the solution

It impacts the long-term anchoring of new standards seriously if the managers themselves don’t adapt to the new initiatives and comply with the latest rules and methods to work effectively with the new solution.

CRM Lead, Global Manufacturer of Hearing Solutions

Being a role model implies a great responsibility to lead the change journey. Consider, therefore, to share that responsibility with a team of active co-leaders who act as role models within their field of expertise and who have good network-based relations across the organization to positively influence employees from their extensive business knowledge.

When leaders act as leading role models and personal references, it becomes easier for employees to connect statements regarding the business transformation and its changes within their particular work field. And they are more likely to become inspired by the leaders’ engagement to participate and contribute themselves to the process.

Such central role models are indispensable for the overall effort to ensure strong adoption and anchoring of the changes across the organization. It’s beneficial for the pace of adaption of change, to have more leaders conveying the relevant messages of the transformation within different fields of expertise and leveraging their capacity to ensure a close dialogue with the employees, to achieve faster advancements.

” It’s paramount to have a CEO leading the change

When products and the overall customer solutions change continuously to meet market needs, it must be part of the organizational culture to stay dynamic and adapt to those needs. It requires a great deal of change management. Thus it’s paramount to have a CEO who leads the organization through the change journey.

*Director, Sales Excellence, and Business Sponsor of CRM,
Northern Europe’s market leader in IT infrastructure*

Remember, employees will stick to their current ways of working and leave the outcome to the present work situation if no direction or role model leads them to how they achieve a better future together

Acknowledge the change journey and the transformation objectives

Customer demand evolves step-by-step with curiosity, engagement, testing of products or services, as a prerequisite for committing to a buying decision and an actual purchase. Following satisfaction, customers recommend those products and services to friends and colleagues, and ultimately make them loyal to the products or services to consider a re-buy. With the preknowledge of the customer journey, leaders determine strategies and objectives, tactics, and plans for execution to fulfill those business objectives and achieve improved outcomes.

Having the preknowledge of the journey related to a business transformation will equally enable you to determine strategies and objectives, tactics, and plans for execution to fulfill the transformation objectives and achieve improved outcomes that connect with the overall corporate visions and strategies.

With inspirations from the most prominent Gurus of change, combined with classic go-to-market, and commercial thinking, expert knowledge has been consolidated into a change journey model as shown in figure 1. It provides you with valuable preknowledge and overview of the process an organization and its employees will go through during a business transformation.

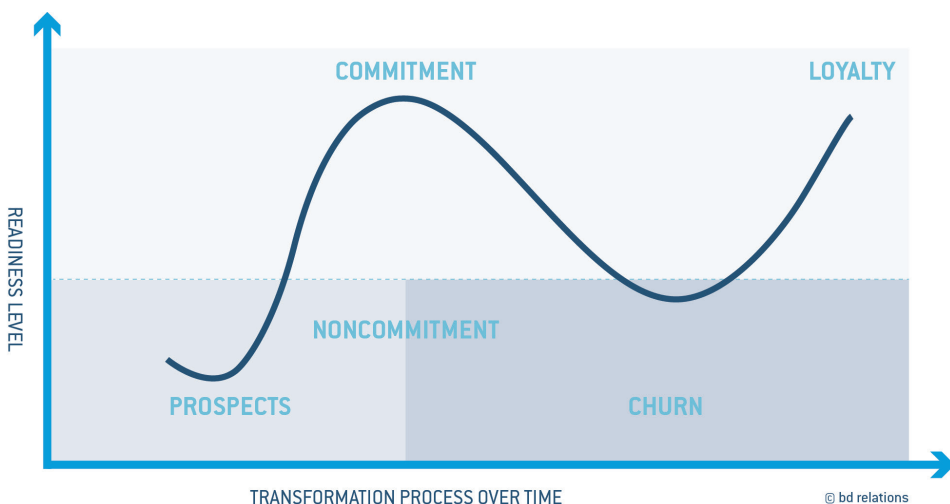


Figure 1: The change journey

Now, acknowledge the change journey and the employees' evolvement process as a similar step-by-step-process for the employees as internal customers, and you will experience that curiosity about the business transformation can turn into a similar buy-in from the employees evolving into high participation and acceptance by the employees to commit to change, and eventually build loyalty to the new standards.

You may likely have other objectives for your business transformation than those in figure 2. Nevertheless, for sure, a business transformation affects performance. So the primary focus should be to accelerate the adoption process by preventing uncertainty, sustain the momentum and organizational stability as much as possible, and not least recognize the value gained to transition to new standards fast - more about the transformation objectives on page 175.

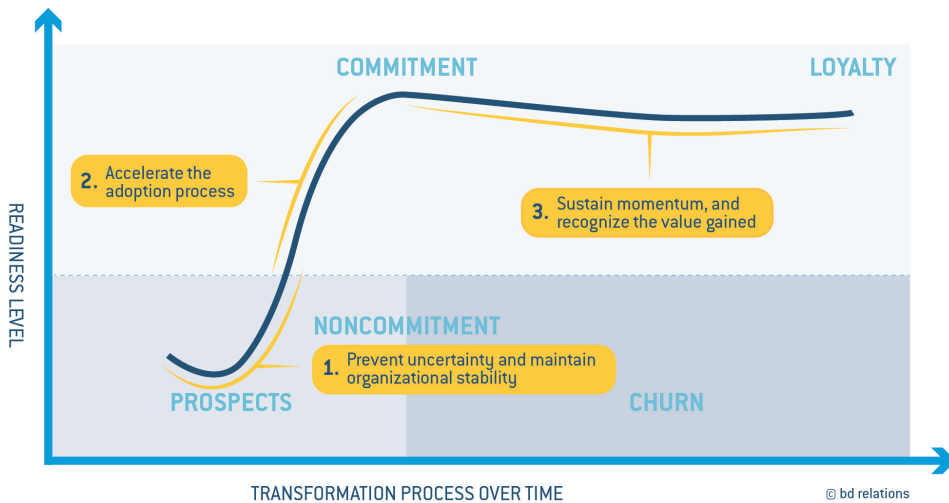


Figure 2: The transformation objectives

Optimize the transformation process with the essential leadership efforts (The 4 E's)

Sometimes it is hard to identify when exactly the transformation process starts. At some point, there is a recognition among the Board of Directors, the management, and yourself of emerging business needs for surviving market disruptions, solving increased business issues, or endorsing demands for increasing customer excellence. It demands to interconnect the corporate strategies and focus areas with new initiatives, and to mobilize it into the latest standards, involving significant changes.

It may be part of a 3-year strategy for the business, to validate or refine the current status quo, or a more urgent need to solve specific business issues. It turns into a

desire to transforming the business with expectations of a better future.

It may be a challenge, but the aim should be to mobilize such a transformation in a manner that makes the employees thrive with change. Make them embark on the change journey with an open mindset, so they engage in the process; Assist them to adapt to the new standards while they keep the appointed direction to achieve the expected targets faster.

It requires particular attention to four stages during the change journey, as shown in figure 3, to optimize the transformation, and acknowledge the active leadership engagement and the significant efforts necessary to lead the organization through change. The essential efforts (The 4 E's) are:

- Energize
- Engage
- Empower
- Excite

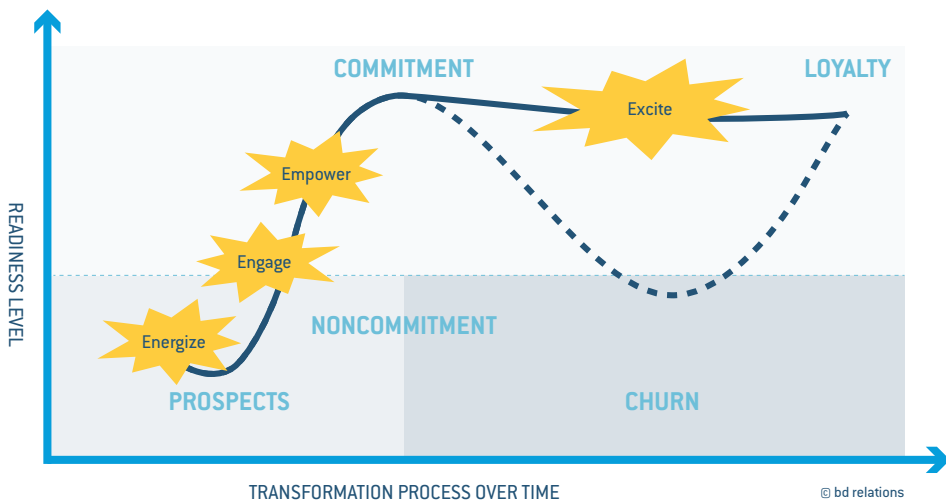


Figure 3: The essential leadership efforts (The 4 E's)

The 4 E's ensure that you accomplish early involvement; strengthens the employee engagement and willingness to participate in the process; provides the employees with new skillsets and the ability to carry out the new ways of working in due time, and ensure recognition of the employees' attempts to alter work habits. At the same, it makes you aware of the importance of celebration of quick wins to motivate the employees in the further adaption of the new work methods and to reward the long-term endeavors by the employees to better anchor the new ways of working.

Stage1: Energize

Before officially announcing the transformation initiative, there will always be employees in the organization who have cross-organizational relations, and others who become a member of the steering group or advisory board, and thus become the first ones to know about the forthcoming initiatives, and contributes to the shape of the process or the scope of the changes.

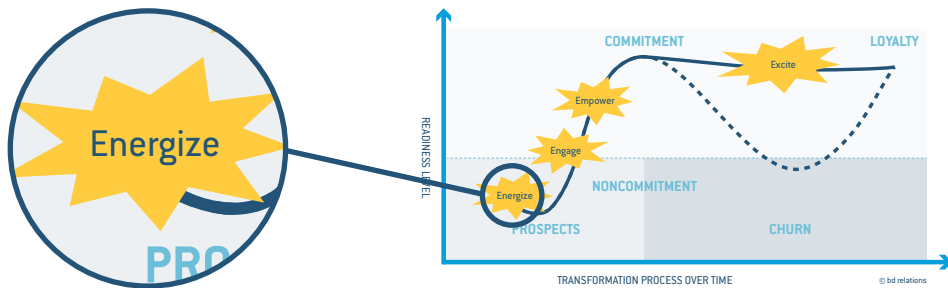


Figure 3 1/4: The essential leadership efforts (The 4 E's)

Early talks or news about the business transformation are often captured internally in 'the pipes' much quicker than anticipated. And surprisingly earlier than the timing of the official announcement to the entire organization. Approach the new knowledge as part of energizing the employees to foster curiosity and strengthen their desire to know more about the transformation process.

Focus on converting 'early gossip' that may spread like negative ripples in the water, or turns into insecurity by the employees, into a definite teaser promoting the potential of improved work conditions that will benefit everyone.

Prioritize providing the employees with the same starting point as early as possible to build up a joint knowledge base; it will energize the employees to the change journey and makes it more forceful when you release more information about the transformation at a later stage.

Already at an early stage, it's worthwhile sharing with the employees the reasons for the transformation related to the customer demands, the need for improving business processes, or the urgency for higher data quality and customer management connected to the customer journey. It will provide the employees with a preliminary business understanding to better accept the need for changes to make the business survive, as well as to acknowledge the endeavors necessary to sustain their jobs.

Energizing the employees should be positive, informative activities, which encourage them collectively to understand the reasons behind the business transformation, the purpose of the changes, and how they will enhance their collaboration with new ways of working to the benefits of themselves, the business, and the customers.

Consider the following:

- Create confidence amongst the employees to embark on the change journey, and proceed with changes that may affect the individual and the organizational work conditions.
- Create awareness about the transformation process and ensure that the employees pay attention to the joint knowledge base, and the educational activities to understand the mutual benefits along the change journey.
- Create interest and two-way dialogue by inviting into participation and contributions from teams and departments while listening to expectations, personal concerns, and individual perception of the transformation.

Stage2: Engage

The subsequent effort is about fostering positive willingness to become involved in various types of activities and motivate the employees for proactive participation to support the process. Engaging communication and educational activities are the essential foundation for fast adoption and successful anchoring of the new standards.

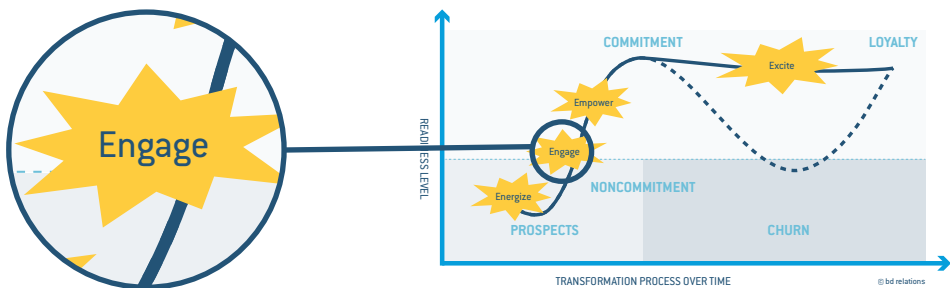


Figure 3 2/4: The essential leadership efforts (The 4 E's)

Not necessarily everyone is going to welcome the business transformation, nor will they accept new standards straight away, although it may potentially sound like a good idea. Often, the departments and teams concentrate more on their daily operations to achieve personal- and group performance targets than to focus on new challenges and tasks related to future changes.

You may face the tough challenge that it requires substantial efforts and time to make the employees absorb the facts about the transformation, to get them out of their comfort zones, and then welcome news of changing standards, that request them to alter work habits, as part of committing to the new direction. Several change experts argue that motivation is the focal point for success, and without motivating the employees, they will not help or support the transformation, with the subsequent risk that the intended changes will not occur.

Focus in particular on converting the initial interest and curiosity by the employees into motivation on how they participate in the process to faster adopt the changes, and how they motivate themselves and their colleagues in one or more educational activities during the change journey.

And be prepared to assess the readiness by the employees for change. Baseline assessments and surveys will be instrumental in adjusting the employees' endeavors and capture those employees who may need to get assured on guidance and support throughout the entire change journey, to continue the process.

Consider the following:

- Invite for participation during the process and encourage contribution via team competitions and other incentives for obtaining collective rewards.
- Provide a two-way dialogue and feedback portals as early as possible to listen to feedback and provide relevant responses to build up momentum
- Communicate about the process and share the progress by recognizing the results within forums or at staff meetings to show the attained value contributed by the teams.

Stage3: Empower

During the process, you may awaken some employees' uncertainty, which stimulates various types of reactions, some more negative than others. If the employees are left on their own to handle personal concerns and how to cope with the new, they tend to develop more severe resistance against the transformation and its changes.

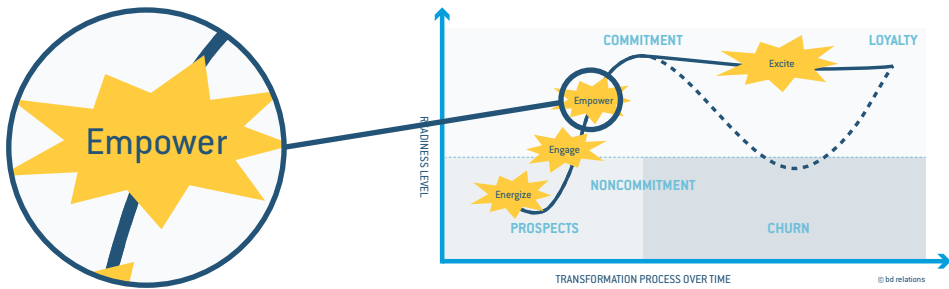


Figure 3 3/4: The essential leadership efforts (The 4 E's)

The efforts should focus on acknowledging personal as well as work-related barriers and how to remove obstacles to ensure further progress with the adoption process. It's essential to empower the employees' attempts to advance with their learning process and to get acquainted with new ways of working, rather than elude the new standards, with the belief that new rules bring more hassle than benefits to their work area.

It's about building confidence in the employees, and to empower them in leaving the current comfort zone while handling a new status quo, with guidance and support. It strengthens their belief in coping with barriers that may occur related to learning new ways of collaborating.

It's essential listening to the employees and recognize their individual needs in addition to provide educational support. Any employee may feel individual needs for support to progress with their learning process and to collaborate in new ways. Therefore, a close dialogue with the employees is a prerequisite to accommodate their request for support to proceed with their training, as well as to capture emerging needs for mitigation actions to ensure an optimal transition to new standards.

Consider the following:

- Listening to the employees' concerns and observe their behavior to help them in their process to handle personal or work-related barriers
- Ensure to build confidence in the employees, and make them ready for the changes by early acquaintance and practice with new ways of working
- Acknowledge the individual- and team needs for educational support and coaching to gain new skills and abilities to learn new ways of working.

unsolved issues or obstacles not yet removed, to mitigate with actions preventing contradicting reactions and negative responses from the employees.

It's essential to sustain the momentum of the collaborative effort to encourage the employees to learn together and support each other in anchoring the new ways of collaboration, especially before they embark on yet new changes as part over-all change program. Otherwise, you risk forming the Skeptics who never become convinced that the changes will turn into daily business. And worse is that those employees will evolve a kind of 'Teflon skin,' and continuously reject the potential commitment to the change journey.

It's about fostering a feeling of cohesion and make employees sense being part of a winning team when they benefit from collaboration with new standards, and progressively gain increased team performance along the change journey. Consider the following:

- Take care of your employees in a time where they may feel extra pressure to succeed with unlearning current work methods, while they get used to working with new ones.
- Ensure to sustain the recognition of the employees, in particular during the period after implementation. The employees benefit from sharing intermediate results between each other, which strengthens the motivation to continue the progress of their endeavors.
- Remember to celebrate the quick wins, the intermediate benefits, and the exceptional endeavors that contribute to long-term value gains for the collaboration across teams and departments.

The essential leadership efforts interlink with the ability to communicate effectively, which you can read more about on page 123.

Leading a change journey isn't a one-man show

When mobilizing a change journey, with substantial organizational size, a transformation isn't a 'one-man show.' It demands co-sponsors and leaders who assist in conducting the change journey and guide the entire organization through the process.

The change management expert John P. Kotter (1996) argued that change isn't something done by a CEO or a leading person alone, it has to be performed by numerous people from various management layers, including stakeholders from different departments and team functions.