Personality Type + Change



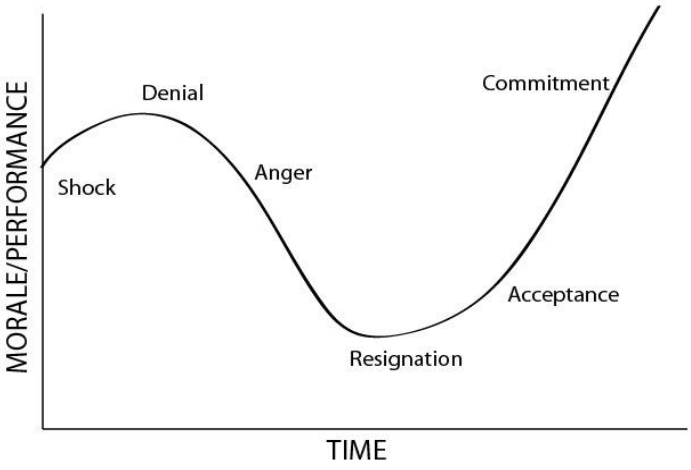
Understanding Change Management

Change is inevitable and all around us. It can trigger a variety of emotions and reactions. There are people who eagerly embrace change and others who are very resistant to it. Regardless of personality type, there is a process that everyone will move through as they experience change. Understanding this process—and overlaying how your personality type will likely approach change and what signs to look for if your needs aren't met during times of change—will help you to better manage change as you experience it.

Psychology of Change: The Kubler Ross Transition Curve

Understanding How People Experience Change

Change is universal. Whether it's a new system, a new team structure, or a shift in how we work, everyone experiences a similar emotional journey when facing moments of unfamiliarity or uncertainty.



The **Transition Curve** is a simple model that shows the emotional stages people naturally move through when experiencing change. It is comprised of four stages.

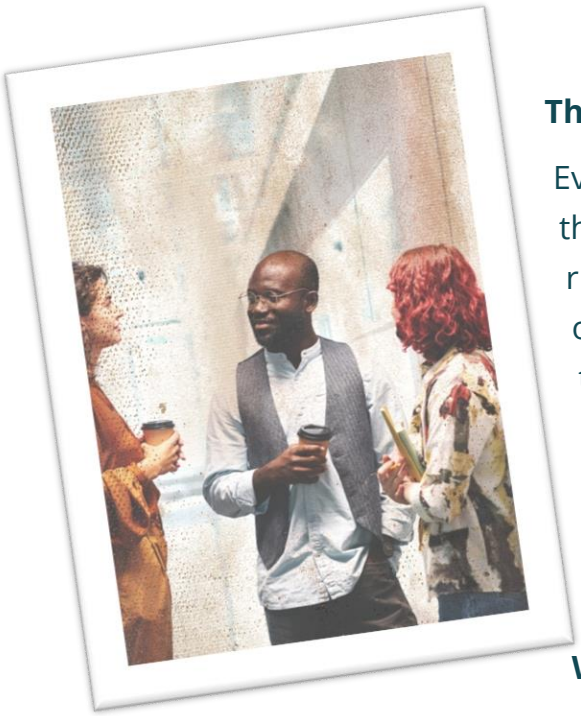
Stage 1: Shock/Denial When change is first announced or encountered, people often feel surprised or in disbelief. "This won't really happen" or "This doesn't affect me." This is a normal protective response.

Stage 2: Resistance As the reality of change sets in, people often feel frustrated, anxious, or even angry. "Why are we doing this?" "This won't work." "I liked the old way." These feelings are valid—people are grieving what they're losing.

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Stage 3: Exploration Gradually, people begin to experiment and learn. Curiosity emerges. "How does this actually work?" "What are the benefits?" Energy starts to shift toward understanding and trying new approaches.

Stage 4: Commitment Over time, people adapt, become more competent, and begin to see the value in the change. They move from "I have to do this" to "I can do this" to "This makes sense."



The Key Insight

Everyone moves through these stages, albeit not at the same pace or in the same way. Some people rush through; others need more time. Some focus on what they're losing; others focus on what they're gaining. Understanding where someone is in this journey—and what they need—helps us support them more effectively.

Why This Matters

The transition curve explains why people react differently to the same change. It's not about being resistant or difficult—it's about being human. In the next section, we'll explore how personality type influences where people get stuck, what they need most, and how leaders can better support them through change.



Personality Influences

- How we typically approach and respond to change
- Our needs during times of change
- Our preferred methods for adapting to change

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Personality Type and Change

The first two letters of your MBTI® type can influence your approach to change, what you need during times of change, and what typically happens if those needs aren't met. As a reminder, the first two preferences are Extraversion/Introversion (E–I) and Sensing/Intuition (S–N), which play the following roles:

- How and when we want to be involved in discussions (E–I)
- How quickly we want to engage in action (E–I)
- Amount of time we want to spend in reflection (E–I)
- The kind of information that helps people deal with change positively (S–N)
- The way in which we share our ideas (S–N)
- The kind of information we trust (S–N)
- Our primary focus when faced with upcoming change (S–N)

Approach to Change

IS – INTROVERSION & SENSING - Change as little as possible - Conserve what is good from the past - Prefer continuous improvement to complete change **"If it isn't broken, don't fix it."**	**IN – INTROVERSION & INTUITITION** - Like idea of change, but need time to think it through - Need to understand underlying concepts - Change programs need to link to each other or they will fail **"Let's think about it differently."**
ES – EXTRAVERSION & SENSING - Change things that clearly aren't working - Change needs to have practical results - Theorizing wastes time when we could be getting on with it **"Let's just do it."**	**EN – EXTRAVERSION & INTUITITION** - All change is good - If change is unsuccessful, then change it again - Change is exciting - Even if it's working well, we could do it differently **"A change is as good as a rest."**

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Supporting Through Change

IS – INTROVERSION & SENSING	IN – INTROVERSION & INTUITITION
- Give them data to show necessity of change - Cleary define the change and their role in it - Change things step by step - Give them time to think about it - Leave them with some written documentation	- Present change as a complete re-think - Link the change with the company's vision - Give them a broad-brush overview - Give them time to think about it - Involve them in writing the mission statement for the change
ES – EXTRAVERSION & SENSING	**EN – EXTRAVERSION & INTUITITION**
- Present the change as a practical improvement - Explain what's not working now - Show them a realistic plan of how the change will be achieved - Let them start as soon as possible	- Present the change as a new initiative - Let them brainstorm the issues - Let them try out the change - Involve them in motivating others - Hold meetings for them to talk about the change

Stress Reactions

IS – INTROVERSION & SENSING	IN – INTROVERSION & INTUITITION
- Become bogged down in the detail - Fixate on one unimportant detail at the expense of other details - Become withdrawn and sullen - Reject any change before even hearing about it	- Overcomplicate the connections - Procrastinate endlessly by dwelling too long on the vision - Fail to express their thoughts to others - Suggest grandiose and impractical solutions to simple problems
ES – EXTRAVERSION & SENSING	**EN – EXTRAVERSION & INTUITITION**
- Excessive focus on the here and now - Focus on one aspect of immediate change - Doesn't put things into perspective - Lose sight of the long-term goals	- Enthusiasm becomes manic activity - Overlook important details - Become distracted; lose focus - Take on unrealistic amounts and fail to deliver

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