



Change you can trust

How to lead change when trust is low

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New Public Programmes are available in the USA: 5-7th May

Changefirst is offering you reduced fees for all our public programmes so you can invest for a better 2009. Receive a 25% discount on a second person attending with you during March and June 2009.

Change you can trust – How to lead change when trust is low

I have just been reading the recent Edelman Trust Barometer report. (Edelman Trust Barometer report available on www.edelman.com). Edelman report every year on trends on how people trust organisations, government and the media. The findings are predictably alarming. **An amazing 62% of adults aged 25 to 65 years old trust organisations less than they did a year ago.** It gets worse for the media with only 28% of people in the UK now trusting the media. **And, only 29% of people find information from CEOs credible.** In fact trust as a precious commodity is definitely a bear market rather than a bull in 2009. It's down in almost every region and information source.

What you can do to build trust in change in difficult times?

Trust is a critical element in what we try to achieve in our organisations. For example, in difficult times you are far more likely to buy a product from a company you trust. But what are the implications for us as change agents? What can we do to implement change when trust is low? If trust is at an all time low in your organisation then it's unlikely that you, as a change agent, will make much of a difference organisationally but there are ways to implement your project which can help mitigate low trust issues.

1. Leaders have to be honest and clear about what they are trying to achieve.

This is not a time for ambiguity or poor clarity. Executive sponsors need to be out working with employees on the changes. Employees will look to leaders to 'do as they say'. They will not trust people who bring empty rhetoric and break promises. Get your executive sponsors to think about what employees will see and feel. Try and dissuade them from motivational speeches with low substance. While this is still time to have fun, we would advise laying off the printed 'change' t-shirts for a couple of years!

2. Messages need to be repeated to get acted upon

We have been saying this for a long time that messages need to be repeated to build trust in the change. Edelman's work just reinforces this. Their survey said that the majority of people (60%) need to hear messages 3-5 times to believe it.

Public Workshop Dates

(held at Roffey Park, Horsham, Sussex)

[PCI Accreditation](#)

Prepares managers to plan and implement major change initiatives
31st March – 2nd April 2009
9th – 11th June

*"Insightful, practical and credible."
Programme Director*

For further information on our all the Public Workshops that we run, please [go to our website](#), or contact Debbie West on +44(0)1444 450777.

Upcoming Free Webinars

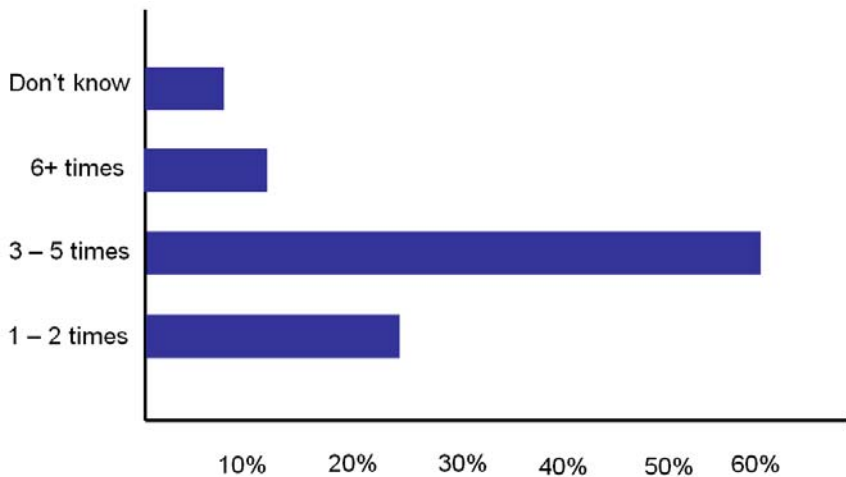
(Click on the titles for descriptions)

[PCI Tools Online](#)
25th February – Part 2 @ 09.30 or 15.00 (GMT, London, UK)

[Click here to register now](#) or contact **Clare** by email on clare.hayward@changefirst.com with the Webinar name, date and time. *Each webinar runs twice on each day, for one hour, starting at 09:30 GMT & 15:00 GMT (London, UK).*

Will you be able to access the Webinar?

Follow the link below to check. If you do not already have access to WebEx it may involve downloading some items to your computer. [Take me to WebEx's online system check](#)



Change agents need to find interesting ways to keep repeating the same messages. Certainly sponsors need to be repeating the same messages in all their communications. But you should look at involvement and learning as other ways to communicate messages. Other forms of web based communication are looking promising. For example, social networking, Wikis etc. These are probably insufficient, on their own, but provide good ways to reinforce important messages.

3. Those messages need to come from a variety of people

The evidence seems to point to the fact that people trust their peers more than anyone else. Then next in the pecking order comes their direct boss. The challenge, for change agents, is to find ways to orchestrate these messages. The concept of cascading the change is still important but we need to think carefully about how we engage with key influencers in the organisation. In a later newsletter we'll talk about the impact of social networking on change and one of the conclusions from that is that once you move past two degrees of separation trust drops off rapidly. One degree of separation is people you know, two degrees are the people they know. So you need to find ways to close down gaps in influence. If you draw a Change Network Map and the key people who need to change are three degrees of separation it becomes critical that you identify ways to close those gaps. You could identify different types of influencers you need to work with:

- Advocates – who talk to others about the benefits of change
- Connectors – who help others network and meet other people
- Controllers – who control access to people and/or information
- Experts – who are recognised by other people as being technically credible by others in the organisation.

Clearly, the way you access and influence these types of people will dictate your speed of change.

4. Engage people through front-line and middle sponsors

Some recent research from the Engage Group (www.engagegroup.co.uk) suggests that middle and front-line managers are more successful at this than we sometimes give them credit for. In a recent survey of over 23,000 people in the UK **53% of employees said that their manager involved them in every day decisions or deciding how they will be implemented.** The employees - who report that they feel involved - report far higher levels of feeling engaged to perform than those that don't. The problem in some organisations is that change agents treat everyone the same. Often, for example, middle managers are communicated to at the same time as front-line workers. It gives no time to build the commitment of those managers to the change effort so they can then help their people change. The messages are clear if you don't build the support of your middle managers you will be running a significantly higher probability of change failure than if you do.

5. Use authentic verbal communication wherever possible.

To read more about Changefirst please go to our [website](#), or to [read our articles](#) and [previous editions of our newsletters](#).

One thing you can take away from the Edelman barometer is that if, in this environment, you drive change by corporate communications then you are going to have a problem building trust. Messages from senior executives are generally not trusted at the moment. Often nothing to do with the people involved - all to do with the distance and separation. We are more willing to trust people who talk to us and engage us. So, as change agents try and use meetings, one-to-ones and group events to get senior officers out in front of people. Encourage them to communicate authentically and by conversation. The best place, at the moment, for the powerpoints and the emails are in the bin.

Summary

The Changefirst PCI model tells us quite a lot about what to do to build trust.



We need to focus at the local level. We need to build trust and engagement locally and change will happen. Ignore this factor and changes will stall or slow.

For more information about learning and licensing PCI (a process for implementing change) contact jane.mellor@changefirst.com



Agents of Change

This is the second in a new series that will feature change executives sharing their experience with you. Tony Stanway from BOC, a member of The Linde Group, is a practitioner of the People-Centred Implementation methodology.

Tony Stanway

What are the 4 most important pieces of advice you would give other change agents for them to be successful?

1. It was surprising to me that although most people know that change can cause disruption and anxiety, many managers did not appreciate that there is a process that can be followed. My first tip would be to remember that using the change process can be a change to some people's way of working. Once the sponsors see the benefit of using a professional process they typically lead the way with its use.
2. Once the initiating and reinforcing sponsors are onboard, remember that it is these people, as line managers, who make the change happen. Therefore, my second tip would be to never be tempted to communicate a change to anybody other than your direct reports. Line managers lose the ownership and the process is compromised.
3. My third tip would be to look for the positives and celebrate the successes. If an assessment shows a high risk for security or worries about cultural differences then accept that this is normal and address appropriately. However, if the same assessment shows a low risk for willingness then make sure this is used – willingness to change will have an impact on other risk factors.
4. There may be a number of change initiatives in your company and some will impact on yours. Therefore, my last tip would be to draw a map of all the change projects that are interlinked and manage the connections. If a number of your reinforcing sponsors leave the company because of another change initiative, then you need to be adaptable and be prepared to reinforce your change or 'change the change'.

What are the key issues you will be working on in 2009?

There are a number of major change projects at various stages within the Linde Group and I hope to be playing a leading role in the formation of the Pan-European-Hub. This project will concentrate on providing logistics, planning, sourcing and continuous improvement focus within the Special and Electronic Special Gases business in Continental Europe. The Linde Group is on the road to becoming a High Performance Organisation (HPO) and this project is just one of many that is taking the best from the Legacy BOC and Legacy Linde to achieve this goal.

The Life of Tony Stanway

- **Current Job:** European Operations Manager - Electronics
- **Status:** Engaged with two children
- **Lives:** Ipswich, Suffolk, U.K.
- **University:** Plymouth, graduated with HND in Electronic Engineering; The Open University, graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Managing: Manufacturing and Technology
- **First Job:** ICI, Winnington Works in Cheshire as an electrical apprentice
- **Favourite Business Book:** All Change. A Project Leaders Secret Handbook by Eddie Obeng. This one is actually good bedtime reading.
- **Favourite Business Gadget:** I don't really have any business gadgets although my mobile does have a camera.