



How Do You Sustain the Change?

At CONSULTEK we recognise that the biggest challenge any company faces that is trying to introduce a beneficial change to their business is not the change itself, as if that wasn't big enough, but how to sustain and properly embed the transformation.

Our experience tells us 7 facts are vital to achieving long lasting advantageous and profitable change.

1. **Foundation** - The foundation of any change must be dissatisfaction with the status quo, a really important key stakeholder must be unhappy with the current state of affairs
2. **Top Level Support** - There has to be 'buy-in' and 100% support from the top level all the way down, saying "this is what's going to be done", it's "get in line or get out of the way". The senior management team must not just approve of the change or even advocate it for true sustainability. They must own it and lead it, becoming the **change-driver** themselves.
3. **Shared Vision** – Business transformation of any kind only makes sense with a clear strategic vision that is well communicated as an attractive and achievable future, too often changes are initiated by senior company executives hunting down 'brownie-points' amongst their own peers or within large company groups, but they are muddled, ill conceived and poorly communicated and of course ultimately fail.

Unfortunately the price paid for this is confusion and cynicism amongst the very staff that were supposed to be the beneficiaries of the process in the first place.

4. **Strategic Alliance** – It is vital that the transformation strategy addresses the operational demands on managers and staff, the 'day-job' still has to be done alongside the change process, get this wrong and the result will be mixed messages, confusion and disaffection.

5. **Identify the Informal Leaders** – To engage the informal leaders in a business is critical, you have to find out who that are and connect with them. These are people who staff go to behind the scenes and ask “is all this really worth it”?

The answers, especially if they are positive and encouraging are priceless, if that person is promoting behind the scenes, telling other staff members to be patient with something new then miraculous things can happen.

6. **Project Indigestion** – Don't attempt to implement everything in one massive campaign, identify the part of the new business process that could bring the most benefit to the end user and get that up and running.

Identify the two or three activities that will make staff lives easier, particularly if they are '**Informal Leaders**', then they will come to you and ask for more.

7. **People, People, People** – At CONSULTEK we have heard it said that business change is “like being suspended between two swings on a trapeze”, it is critical that staff are well communicated with regarding the skills, attitudes and knowledge that will be required to achieve the end result.

It is equally vital that they can see a well thought out and proactive HR system in place that is going to address such issues as *recruitment, performance management, training and development* and *succession planning* focussed on building new core competencies.

Business process change follows “*what's in it for me*”? This is much more than £s in a pay packet, it means getting to the root of why people come to work and behave as they do.

Finally, the **change-driver** will need to hold daily 'help-calls' with staff to answer questions that may have arisen over the previous 24 hours, do this in a face-to-face environment, it is far more powerful than the dreaded email.

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