



Video Transcript

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Accepting Change.

Session takeaways for Accepting Change are acknowledge, argue, and accept. These are the three phases that we will walk through when examining accepting change and the change process. When we discuss acknowledge, that is going to be our level of understanding of what the change is, why it needs to happen, why is it occurring? The second component is arguing, or unmasking, our feelings and thoughts and processes surrounding the change process. That's going to be a fun one. And third, accepting change, unlocking the key to success is to accept change. Yet you can only do that after you go through the other two processes.

So, what is change for managers? Change shows up in so many different forms, and three particular forms are physical, human nature, and content. When looking at the physical form, this is observable. Observable transformations, where you notice change in someone's appearance, change in the texture, change in work teams, physical work teams, change in geography, did your office location move? This particular component of change is observable and tangible in a physical form.

The second is in human nature. This too is observable, yet more innate. You may see a change in a person's characteristics, in their viewpoints, their perspective on an item. There are different catalysts that will trigger change in a human nature perspective. So this is another one that we want to pay close attention to. The third is changing content, which is probably the easier one to observe, because content changes usually come to you by way of a policy, a procedure, an email notification, addressing change when perhaps your company evaluates their core values, that's usually in a written format, and the organizational vision and mission and goals, those are all content matters that, when changed, are a little bit more observable, because we're going to usually see them, and those are going to be delivered to us.

Accepting change explores three phases, the three that we just previously mentioned, and their corresponding models that managers can utilize to address change, not only for themselves, but for their teams as well. When we talk about those three, we begin with acknowledgement, and they do go in order. So, the first acknowledgement phase really is about understanding the necessary tools and resources required for a successful change process. Woe unto us, as managers, to go into a change process without fully understanding and wrapping our arms and our minds around what exactly is needed to make that change a success. Improper planning leads to disaster, especially when it comes to the change process. So, the acknowledgement phase is really a key phase, and foundational phase, for us to get started with the change process on the right foot.

The second phase is arguing, unmasking our feelings, our intellectual capital surrounding change. It addresses them authentically and from a place of transparency, regarding the change process. Now, as a manager, this part of arguing change has to be accompanied with the appropriate environment, the right climate, the right culture, right? What that means is that you have to give your team members the space to feel safe and comfortable with sharing their authentic feelings surrounding the change process. If you want to allow them an opportunity to argue why this change, or why not this way, or why is it that way? Give them the space to do that without feeling that there're going to be repercussions. That is so important for us to set that tone, that environment for that. Because that, ultimately, is going to lead to that team member, or even that other manager, accepting the change process. A lot of times, if you're like me, the extrovert, the [Eve 00:00:05:07], the type A, everything happens in my head and I need to understand it, really, before I can wholly embrace it.

If we're moving forward and the train has left the station, and I really don't have a good understanding, it makes it so hard for me to walk confidently in that acceptance space. So, having the ability to allow my mindset to go through that process to get to acceptance really means that acceptance is going to take hold and stay with me long term, and become a part of my ideal about the culture, and that the organization and myself are on the same page. So, accepting change, unlocking what our roles are in that process, what position we're in and the feelings surrounding that process, is really going to be critical in keeping that change process held together tightly.

I love this, this model, this diagram by John Wallace, and it is the Transformational and Servant Leadership Innovation Cycle. It takes us through, really, what some of the resources are. When we go back to step one, to acknowledgment; this is, again, where we're understanding the necessary tools and resources required for a successful change process. I love this model, again, because it shares what some of those tools and resources look like. We have altruistic integrity, starting everything off with integrity. The engagement, how do you plan to announce the change? How do you plan to engage your team members or other managers? Do you have your script all lined out, scene by scene, of how it can play out? Your plan A, B, and C. The engagement process is critical.

Building trust is another component of this cycle. That is critical as well, because when you build trust, which really, and ideally, is done ahead of time, right? Your entire relationship should have had breadcrumbs spread throughout with trust, and the investment that you put in for trust. That really means that your team members can receive information from you, and accept it from you, knowing that it is for their best interest, because they trust your decisions, they trust your care for them.

Another component is relationships; that all ties in with engagement and trust. To have established relationships, to nurture them, to develop them and keep them ongoing is key. Because when we talk about relationships, we're really talking about the bank account, right, where I have made deposits into our relationship. When it comes time for me to maybe discuss something with you that may be challenging, or if you're not a person that handles change very well, we can make a little withdrawal from the bank because we've deposited so much. We can do that because the relationship has been built on a great deal of investment into that person, into their care, into doing what's best for them.

You also want to make certain that you have a culture of learning, a learning culture. That is also a very vital item in the change process, and acknowledging it. Because change is constant, it is forever, always going, never going to end. And so the more we build a culture surrounding that premise, the better the process will go. Adaptability and flexibility. I can't say enough about that. If you build a learning culture, establish the relationship of trust, and engage often, adaptability and flexibility will be there, because you have sent message after message to your team, and to other managers, that you have to remain adaptable and flexible always. We have to pivot instantly, that is the world. That's how you remain relevant. That is so key to this whole process; staying in that framework of remaining adaptable and flexible. When you are, change comes so much easier.

And innovation. Innovation is near and dear to my heart. If I acknowledge change and how it ties, connects to innovation, and to our remaining in what's called the first mover position as an organization, where we stay ahead of everyone else in our industry, where we are creating something and someone else is following us or modeling us, that gives you such a great feeling about being a part of the team and the organization that you are [part of]. The acknowledging change process embraces that as well. I hope you can now see why this diagram really captures all of the components of assisting us with recognizing the necessary tools and resources required for a successful change.

The second component is arguing. My parents, oh my goodness, have said to me five million times, when I was coming up as a kid, "You should have been a lawyer, you should've been a lawyer." Because, I tell you, I debate everything. It's in my head, I have to understand it. So, I'm going to ask the why behind the why behind the why. So, allow space to argue the change process. Why are we making this change again? Why are we doing this now? Help me understand how this is going to be beneficial to us and to the client. How does this connect back to our core values? Allow those types of questions to resonate, because then you can make the choice to not be stuck in arguing for why we shouldn't change, you get unstuck and you say, "Okay, I can do this, we can move forward."

Arguing change also prevents you from just going along to get along. That is really not you embracing it; you're just doing it for the sake of peace, or for the sake of not being that one that always has the questions, or that always is the last one to join the bandwagon. Arguing change removes that go along to get along. It allows you to express, or your team members to express, and get out all their questions and help them get to a place where they are genuinely accepting the process, and they become your biggest cheerleaders for the process. They become the change agents and they forge the whole process forward. They end up bringing all the other team members along. So, arguing the change process is healthy. It is healthy.

We're not talking about the kind of arguing where you're screaming at the top of your lungs, you have to go take 10 minutes. Not that kind, but very healthy, just general conversations. When you argue change you look at what's wrong with it and you look at what's right with it. When you look at what's wrong with it, it's like there's fear and resistance, "Can I do this?" Sometimes we just don't think we're capable. And sometimes change means stretching. When we talk about being able to pivot, that may require us to stretch. So, there may be a confidence level that we need to address with a team member. It's the unknown and that I'm not in control. Helping someone to get comfortable with that and change in a climate, in my comfort zone. Any change that happens, that moves us just a little wee bit out of our comfort zone, can become a change that we end up arguing with ourselves.

Well, what's right with it? It's new, it will revive us, it pushes us toward potential. Growing means that sometimes a level of discomfort comes with that. But if you just can look in your past at all the different times when you've been required to change, and you look at what good it did and how you grew as a result of it, you begin to be okay with pushing for that potential. And it is right to change in a climate and come out of your comfort zone because it means growth, it means team participation, it means increased productivity.

When you look at arguing change, you have to look at it. The more you resist, the more painful the change experience. Look at it on the good side, arguing change results, you're embracing the change experience authentically. It makes all the difference in you accepting that change process. As we move into our last and third component of acceptance, this is really where we unlock our role, our position and feelings of the change experience. We've acknowledged that it must occur and why. We've argued the pros and cons, and now we're at a place where we can really assess our role and our positions about it all, and really just enhance that acceptance process.

There's another diagram that says it all. This is The Cycle of Personal Change, by Jerry Solfanelli. In this process there's three components. This level of excitement, right, all bundled up with fear as well, about engaging in this new way of things, this new process. Well, then you move into where, "Okay, I acknowledge it, I'm excited, kind of. I'm scared too. But I also want to have the courage to do it, right? So we practice that, we practice what that change looks like. We start dipping our little toe into the water, and then we dive and jump right in. Then,

now we're in it, we're part of it, that synergy is working in us and we're actually doing it. This is also where we were processing it, we may tarry between the argument piece of why and why not. But then we can reflect on, that this is the right thing to do, that we've already argued that. Now we can accept it, now we can walk in it, now we can remain in this place.

So keep being curious, and exploring all three phases of the change process, because that does nothing but make us better, makes us so much better. Anytime you think about, and ask yourself, "Why is accepting change so important, again?" Just remember, because it creates a positive outlook on a normal life experience. It's internal to our growth, we need this. It helps us, remember, with innovation, with technological advancement. It helps us with innovation and progress, you have to have innovation and progress, you have to have change to have progress. And so it is a part of the normal life experience. Why not make it a positive one?

Why should I remember these models? It's because they offer great frameworks for understanding and accepting change, hence, increasing the odds of success. The more we process something, and we have to do it quickly, we can't process long because, when change happens, oftentimes we don't have all day to dilly-dally and ponder about it. We really have to learn how to process through these three phases fairly quickly, and that does come with practice, and it comes with mentoring and good coaching environments. It will come for you. It will be like nothing you [inaudible 00:17:20] have to think about, it's going to happen naturally. You want to refer back to these frameworks to help understand it, to help ensure your success. That's why you want to remember the process.

Change is inevitable. How you feel about it and approach it is vital. Practice projecting a personal and organizational presence that links positive change to the organization's vision and mission and goals. Just keep referring back to it, your core values. Change affects this core value, change speaks to that core value. Just keep linking it back, keep linking it back because that helps with the argument phase, and it helps us to get to that acceptance place and stay there. The key is getting there and staying there.

What is the key to positive and successful change? It's you. It is your attitude. It's how you look at this. It's how you process this. And I know that you can do it, that you can go through the acknowledgement and the argument and the acceptance phase and have the best attitude ever about a change culture, about embracing it and about becoming your organization's largest and biggest cheerleader for it. You're the one that's rallying everybody along, you're the one that's being able to tie it back to the core value. You're the change agent that forges forward, that's you. Thank you so much for walking with me today through the accepting change process.