



The Energy of Change

5 Leadership Behaviors to Drive
Collective Action in a Fluid Landscape

FranklinCovey

A skilled leader can turn disruption into an opportunity for innovation and growth, helping everyone on their team prepare for, persist through, and gain a new perspective from change, leading to better processes and outcomes.

Contents

Disruption Comes in All Shapes and Sizes 3

- Embracing the Great Reshuffle 4
- Prioritizing inclusion as a cornerstone of workplace culture 4
- Upskilling—not only required but demanded 5
- Smoothing out the wrinkles of flexible work 6
- Investing in employee health for organizational health 6

Better Change Management Builds Better Culture 7

- Have a plan that's tailored to your people and organizational culture 8
- Understand reactions to change both as a human and a leader 9
- Cultivate persistence 10
- Think bigger than your usual processes 10
- Dialogue instead of dictate 11

Change is Untapped Potential 12

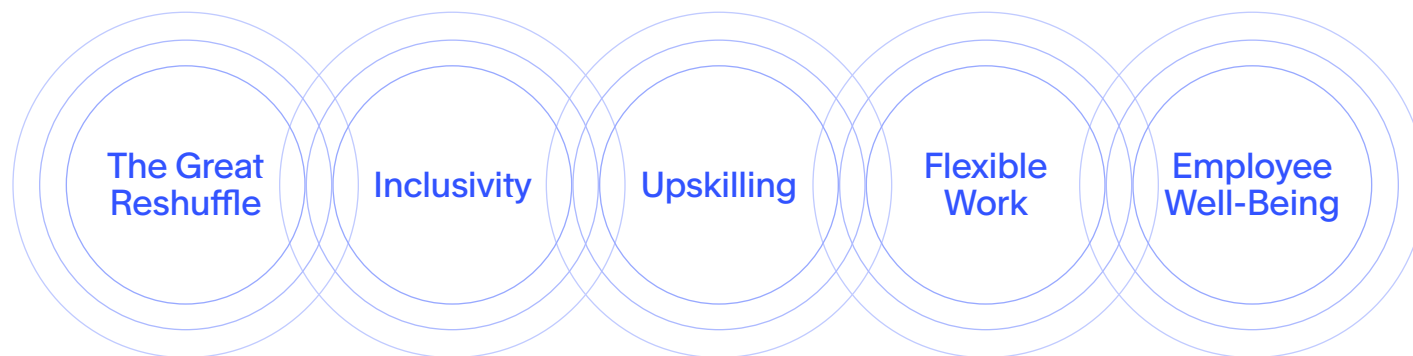
- Transform your organization's approach to change 13



Disruption Comes in All Shapes and Sizes

Leaders today are faced with rapid disruption in a number of different areas. Whether your team is defining a new normal in the wake of a global pandemic, grappling with talent shortages, or rolling out new programs to strengthen your company culture, every organization experiences confusing or unsettling times that can keep teams feeling paralyzed and apprehensive about the future.

How are the following widespread changes impacting your organization?





Leaders are facing the reality that their organization must be in “the people business” to stay competitive—and that applies to every department, not just HR.

Embracing the Great Reshuffle

As job opportunities continue to increase for highly trained, well-qualified employees, organizations must rethink their traditional approach to recruiting and retention. Leaders are facing the reality that their organization must be in “the people business” to stay competitive—and that applies to every department, not just HR.

Faced with rapid shifts in hiring dynamics, many organizations are overhauling their talent acquisition and retention strategies to provide new opportunities for career development, pay increases, and flexible work options to meet [employees' changing expectations](#). While disrupting the status quo can lead to uncertainty and friction, organizations that pivot quickly to change up their approach can reap both short-term wins and long-term benefits.

Prioritizing inclusion as a cornerstone of workplace culture

Creating an [inclusive](#), equitable, and sustainable company culture is no longer a nice-to-have—it's foundational to your organization's future success. Diversity creates greater potential for innovation and productivity, while inclusion helps organizations realize the business benefits of this potential.

Identifying and eliminating barriers to fair treatment for all employees is a process that requires a committed strategy and committed leaders willing to grapple with change personally and within their teams. These systemic changes take time, thoughtful communication, and persistence to go from concept to cultural cornerstone, but organizations that continue to prioritize inclusivity will achieve lasting breakthroughs.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Does your company collect employee feedback to keep informed about their workplace satisfaction?

How would a more inclusive company culture affect your business goals?



Over half of the workforce needs new skillsets to do their jobs.

Upskilling—not only required but demanded

A skills revolution is happening in today's workforce, demanding a new strategy for employee training and education. A recent [Deloitte Human Capital Trends report](#) indicates that over half of the workforce needs new skillsets to do their jobs—and this trend has grown more acute in the wake of [widespread staffing changes](#) as people switch jobs or leave the workforce altogether. As a result, organizations are finding it more difficult to fill positions than in previous years, accelerating the need to upskill and reskill new and existing employees to fill in knowledge gaps.

While building out new upskilling programs can be a substantial undertaking, organizations that help their teams successfully capitalize on change are poised to reap the benefits of increased retention, greater hiring flexibility, and improved employee performance.



KEY QUESTIONS:

What educational opportunities does your company offer as part of its career development programs?

What skills are in highest demand in your industry, and how do you see them evolving?



Smoothing out the wrinkles of flexible work

Many organizations moved to a hybrid or remote work policy during the pandemic. Now, they must decide what their long-term workforce strategy will be. [Flexible employment](#) initiatives such as hybrid work, remote work, and flexible work hours can have a significant impact on employee satisfaction and productivity. They can also benefit your organization from hiring, operations, and brand perspectives.

However, even seemingly positive changes can lead to complexity. Leaders must work closely with their HR teams to message changes in policy and provide support for their teams to ensure every employee feels equally valued and able to contribute to your organization, no matter where or when they may be working.



Investing in employee health for organizational health

Well-being is no longer an individual matter but an [organizational one](#). With the line between work and personal life increasingly blurring as more companies move to hybrid and remote work, employees are looking to their employers for programs that support their well-being holistically. Yet for many companies, employee well-being has been a low priority compared to more pressing initiatives, leading to big shifts in benefits strategy and budgets over the past couple of years.

Rolling out new benefits programs—even ones your team members are asking for—requires a thoughtful approach to change management to ensure that your organization's investments make a lasting impact on employee engagement and wellness. Leaders who position the opportunities of new programs to their teams are most likely to see great results.



Better Change Management Builds Better Culture

Leaders know that tackling changes is part of the job, but [how they facilitate change](#) can take teams and organizations beyond just business as usual. Building a culture of persistence and taking it beyond resilience during times of change allows leaders to turn adversity into growth opportunities and helps their teams do the same.

Many organizations focus on investing in expensive codified change management processes, but successful change takes more than that—at the end of the day, it's your people who make change happen.

Here are five behaviors you can take to lead teams effectively through change to innovation.

1. [Have a plan](#)
2. [Understand reactions](#)
3. [Cultivate persistence](#)
4. [Think bigger](#)
5. [Dialogue](#)





1. Have a plan that's tailored to your people and organizational culture

Working with a net is working in a safe space. As the ultimate safety net, a plan is one way leaders build **trust** with their teams and prove themselves worthy of confidence. Whether it's a large-scale solution or an individual practice, a plan is a signal to teams that your leaders know how to proceed. And the most effective plans are built on the shared language and values of your organizational culture to help people get comfortable with change.

"A plan gives both leaders and teams a path forward in times of change," says **Kory Kogon**, Vice President of Content Development, "because it provides the principles needed to navigate change, such as understanding what the change is and having the proper tools to adapt it." Putting the right information in the right order at the right time is a plan—and a great leader can make one happen.



2. Understand reactions to change both as a human and a leader

While change hits every person differently at different times, there are [five common reactions](#) we can look at to understand global attitudes toward change:

MOVE

You're all in on the change and ready to act.

MINIMIZE

You go along with the change but do what you can to contain disruption.

WAIT

You take no immediate action, waiting for additional inputs.

RESIST

You fight actively against change and do what you can to maintain the status quo.

QUIT

You decide a change ultimately isn't for you.

Leaders are people, too. As you get in touch with your own personal reactions to change, your empathy toward your team increases. This empathy is the key to helping your team persist through change. “We can only graduate to leading people through change if we know how to deal with change as humans first,” says Kogon.



“We can only graduate to leading people through change if we know how to deal with change as humans first.”

– Kory Kogon
VP of Content Development at FranklinCovey



3. Cultivate persistence

Resilience is an important skill for humans, teams, and leaders. Whatever change you face, resilience helps you move from a state of confusion back to the status quo—and we've all needed that skill over the past couple of years. But when you want to move beyond typical practice is when you need persistence.

As a leader, when you encourage your team to persist, the group together is able to take advantage of the opportunity to do and be more. Not only does the group recognize the change, Kogon says, but they can “persist through the discomfort of the change and move on into innovation—the opportunity beyond what was asked.”

The magic here is that people aren't just waiting for the next change and slogging along in the meantime. Persistence means teams and leaders are **actively looking** for ways to move past their usual routines and expectations every single day.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Historically, how has the leadership in your organization reacted to change?

4. Think bigger than your usual processes

As a leader, you've learned you need systems to get things done. But even skilled people can only go so far with the right processes in place to drive results. To move your team forward in a time of disruption, you need to do more than follow your checklist. You also need to respond.

Responding to change is ongoing, and it includes the pre-work of creating a compelling vision of change that helps you engage with your team through the tough spots. As you develop, revisit, and recalibrate the awareness that responding requires, you're able to help people through their individual reactions to change and lead your team through disruption skillfully.



5. Dialogue instead of dictate

Helping your team get through obstacles requires [encouraging leadership](#). When presented with change, many people have an initial response of fear or frustration that can send them spiraling into passivity or even resistance.

An employee in a reactive mindset requires special attention. Kogon calls it “dialogue, not dictate,” and it requires you to be both engaging and clear while seeking understanding. Demanding or expecting compliance hinders both the resilience and persistence necessary to turn change into lasting growth.

KEY QUESTIONS:

What communication channels are available to leaders and employees as they work through new challenges?

Does your organization welcome and encourage dialogue during periods of change?



Change is Untapped Potential

The challenges organizations face today may not be the same ones they'll face in six months, a year, or five years from now, but one thing is certain: change is a constant. Leaders who understand their personal and team responses to change are positioned better to see change as a possibility—and reap its benefits. With the right mindset and toolset in place, leaders can teach their teams to value disruption and persist beyond short-term uncertainty.






Transform your organization's approach to change

While every change is unique, it follows a predictable pattern. Understanding this pattern and building the skills to navigate it successfully allows you to consciously determine how to move forward—even in the most challenging seasons of disruption.

Change: How to Turn Uncertainty Into Opportunity™ is a course designed to help organizations build individual confidence through a predictable pattern of change, lead people through the human reactions to change, and optimize change-management processes.

Get started

Change is available in multiple learning modalities, including:

-  **Live-Online**
-  **On Demand**
-  **Live In-Person**

To learn more, email info@franklincovey.com or call us at 1-888-868-1776.



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