

# Change... Driving It

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There is always a point in organizations of all sizes to come to the realization that a radical change must take place. This decision usually is prompted by circumstances such as: attractive new opportunities in adjacent markets; threat of nibble competitors, depressed profitability.

Change... a transformation... has very mixed results in terms of relative success. Less than 40 percent have been “successful” while 10 percent were considered “failures.”

Problems appear to be centered in two issues: (1) setting an inspiring aspiration or vision for change and making it emotionally “alive” for all participants and (2) mobilizing and supporting the transformation “horsepower”. . . . the stream of energy & ideas needed to force the organization forward.

#### Establishing the target:

Accurate articulation of the target for a transformational change connects and inspires people inside and outside the company. The success of this essential first step depends on the leader’s ability to define the target at the outset then . . . .

1. Segment into clear themes and initiatives
2. Draw out the picture of what it will look like at . . . .
3. Various stages along the time line
4. Then decipher into an exhilarating story

### What is Aspiration?

Central to transformational change goal should be a sustainable step change in a company’s performance and health. A transformational change must be nestled in a spirit that unites the dissimilar elements of the organizational change itself. Besides the basics of improving profitability, market value and ROCE, it must incorporate the highlights of corporate health which, when done effectively, encourages executives to think about the organization as a system whose parts are reciprocally interdependent.

### What does the architecture look like?

The leaders in management must clearly outline themes whose objectives will cooperatively achieve the, on the whole, targeted goals. The objectives should then be segmented into precise initiatives, and made clear how they will be sequenced plus how they will work together. By clearly spelling out the exact goals reduces needless apprehension in the organization.

### Timetable?

Typically, timetables of three to five years for an overall goal of transformation can seem too distant for management and employees lost in thought by short-term pressures. At this point, the “journey” must be broken out into “bites” of time and progress toward the overall transformational goal.

Articulating and visioning progressive goal achievements is desirable for two reasons:

- A midpoint goal is sufficiently close at hand to be described as highly tangible
- Contrastingly, the fact that this midpoint goal/target is just a station along the progressive path, reinforces its rank as something that even could be surpassed.

### Ideas

There is no doubt a central need for the BIG IDEA is implicit in the transformational strategic targeted goal. However, the subordinated support themes that underlie the success of the BIG IDEA, must constantly be developed as a flow of fuel to the transformation process itself. The common failures center on leaders being inactive and NOT dynamic in refreshing these underpinnings.

Many times leaders are willing to be satisfied with ideas that are merely good enough, which leads to a de-energizing of the organization versus a constant “stretch” its people need.

### Change must be personal

To build trust and confidence employees need role models who exemplify specific ideas in a visible and meaningful way. What may initially have come across as a slogan, springs to life when demonstrated in person.

Your comments are welcome. **CW**

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