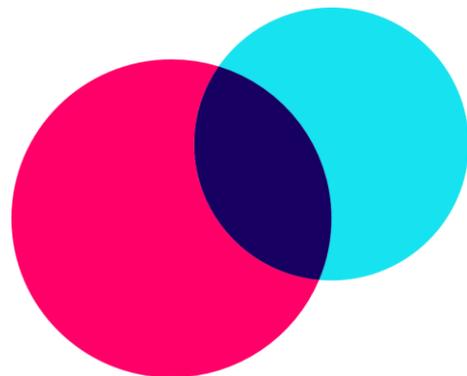


Nuts to crack

Leader Led Change in Action

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CHALLENGE #2 – Ignite people with your story

THE NUT TO CRACK

How to impact hearts and minds with your message?

If your case for change is clear, as we discussed in challenge 1, it is relatively easy to explain why an organisational change is necessary. That, however, doesn't mean that **people are moved by it**. The more important question then becomes: how to structure your message in such a way it ignites people.

THE SOLUTION

A personal change story

Success or failure of a change initiative is directly related to the clarity and personal ownership of the change story by the change leaders. **A compelling and personal change story** by the leaders is needed to be able to mobilise people. Every change story is different; in style, messaging and in length. And that is the way it's meant to be. There are common elements in every solid change story though. Answering the questions below will help you build a solid compelling change story

Support Tool I: Personal change story by change lead

1. Where do we come from and where are we now?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where do we come from and where are we now? ○ What prompted this intended move? Why is it important and necessary? ○ What are the internal/external causes? What frustrates you to date? What does the data tell? ○ What will happen if we don't move?
2. Where are we going?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is your goal? What is your greatest desire? What would make you proud? ○ What would you like to see changed 12 months from now?
3. How do we achieve success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What steps can we take today that will make a big difference? ○ What strengths should we keep (values, relationships, convictions) and build on? ○ What part of our history should we leave behind to get ahead? And why? ○ What do we need from an achievement point of view? From a leadership perspective? Any changes in our ways of working?
4. What do I expect from you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What would I like to see you and your team do differently? What to start and what to stop doing? ○ What do I expect from you?
5. What can you expect from me?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What can you expect from me? What can you challenge me on?
6. What is the desired result?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What will be ready when it's done? What does that mean for people's daily work? What will not change? ○ How does it relate to other business initiatives?

A change story is not a static thing, **it needs constant updating**. Its strength lies in the repetition of the main message and the constant clarification of the difference between desire and reality. This is supported by factual progress being made.

To create maximal impact, make sure your change story is **vibrant**, so people can envision it. These tips can help solidify your change story.

Support Tool II: Tips to help solidify your change story

Tip	Explanation
Share your personal energy, beliefs and faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use sentences like “I see...”, “I know...”, “I would like..”
Use examples and anecdotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appeal to your audience’s imagination using examples from daily life; refer to a specific complaint from a customer, or an action by an employee or by a competitor
..and connect the bigger picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the alluring power of the bigger picture
Be honest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you don’t have the answer, be honest about it. Manage expectations about when answers will become available. Make sure to share the uncomfortable truths as well. It’s about being honest, not about keeping up appearances
Be specific about any potential changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify how changes will impact the day to day operations of your audience, be specific for each target audience Don’t speak about ‘the change’ rather call out what you aim for concretely
Use simple and relevant language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the language of your audience

REAL LIFE EXAMPLE

Update your change story to energise your people

*Sam, a supply chain director of a packaging materials company, has been on a transformation journey for a year now. He wants to move from a decentralised supply chain organisation to a centralised one. He has noticed that **the energy of his people** to take steps on the transformation journey has diminished. Very little progress is being made. It frustrates him that people still don’t seem to understand. After all, he has already shared the transformation message and what’s needed to get to the end goal so many times. He is looking for a way to **create a break through**.*

Sam decides to ask a co-worker for help. His co-worker questions him extensively about why he started the transformation journey in the first place. What was it about that transformation that made him want to

stake his reputation on it, and where does he think they are at, one year into the journey? Subsequently, he questions him about the progress Sam is proud off and what frustrates him about the lack of advancement. And, about what success looks like to him in another 12 months’ time, and what he fears if it doesn’t materialise.

*While he is answering these questions, Sam realises he hasn’t actually communicated this message in a structured way to his people in quite a while. That there are quite a number of colleagues who have never even heard the reasoning behind the transformation. And, that he doesn’t usually display any emotion or personal views in his messaging. By building up his **storyline** with a renewed sense of*

purpose, he feels his story is gaining strength. Plus, he is rediscovering the joy of telling the transformation story. Compelling him to use every opportunity, whether it be an informal gathering, one-on-ones, meetings or townhalls, to get his crystalised story across.

He trains himself to stick to the **core messaging**, but to share three specific examples each time which

resonate with a particular person or group. This leads to new conversations because not everyone shares his views. By engaging in these conversations he notices a **renewed shift**, even from people he previously labelled as passive or resistant to the change.

Looking back, Sam realised this conversation with his co-worker was a defining moment. The transformation process is heading in the right direction again.



Tip for the
change leader

The level of comfort you feel in sharing your transformation story with an individual, a group of colleagues or an auditorium filled with employees, will depend on your personal preferences. However unnatural it may feel, this is where your **leadership skills** become apparent to others. Take the time to prepare properly, practice a few times if that helps, but don't avoid sharing the story verbally.



Tip for the
change enabler

Work together with the change lead, support him by giving him the **opportunity to practice** his story telling on you, before sharing it with the larger group. Avoiding the word 'change' and continuously repeating the aspirational goal will strengthen the story.

CONCLUSION

The change story of a change lead and his **personal ownership** of the story is essential for a successful organisational transformation. Create an **appealing and energising story**, build on organisational strengths and don't forget to also include the less positive messages. Make personalising and spreading the change story the responsibility of each and every leader within the organisation.

Challenge 21 will further elaborate on this.

