



**NEXT GENERATION  
LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME**

Creating servant leaders for the African Church

**MODULE 9  
LEADING THROUGH CHANGE  
AND TRANSITION**

*Learning Leader Guide*

**Servant Leadership Programme  
for Alumni**



## Synodal Reflection

Core tenets of synodality are **VISION** and **AGENCY**. Take a moment to reflect, in any way you like, on how the Holy Spirit might be supporting your own belief in your ability to make needed change in your community.

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## Jesus as an Agent of Change

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### Jesus' Harvest Vision was Leveraged by Faith and Prayer

Prayer is continually connected to the mission of God in the life of Jesus. We have no ability to transform anything without God's power. Jesus explained the power needed for the harvest was found in the resource of praying: *"Then he said to his disciples, 'the harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.'"* (Matt. 9:37-38). The source for harvest workers is not in recruitment strategies, but in prayer. Prayer recognizes God as eternally resourceful.

### Jesus Put People First

Paul described the trust God places in us as a sacred trust. He said, *"We have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel"* (1 Thess. 2:4). Jesus led out of his character and heart for the world; he demonstrated incredible confidence in the potential of people to let him use them for a higher purpose.

### Jesus was Future-Sighted

Jesus' leadership was evident when he said, *"I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in me through their message"* (John 17:20)." Jesus was living beyond the moment. With the pressures and challenges it is possible for us to shorten our sight. Transformational leaders must look out decades, centuries rather than years to plan for impact. Jesus prayed for thousands of years into the future.

### Jesus Engaged Others in His Mission

Luke 9:1-2 and 10:1-2 give the picture of Jesus sending the believers away to do ministry. He sent them to touch the hurting and work for the harvest. *"When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, <sup>2</sup> and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick"* (Luke 9:1-2)."

*"After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."* The environment around Jesus had disciples constantly coming and going.

### **Jesus Embraced Other Cultures**

Jesus embodied a cross-cultural gospel focus. He was not afraid or offended by the Samaritans. He went out of his way to talk with them and refused to give up when they rejected him. This is illustrated by the life-changing conversation Jesus had with a woman at a well (John 4). The Holy Spirit birthed the church in a multicultural, multilingual environment.

Acts 1:8 reminds us that we are commissioned to reach every culture and people group on earth: *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

### **Jesus Led a Balanced Life**

By the use of the word balance, we mean his perfect investment in multiple environments. Jesus knew the value of time away from the crowds. On several occasions he retreated from crowds to rest and spend time in prayer: *“After dismissing the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan”* (Matt. 15:39).

## **Jesus as an Agent of Change, Continued**

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### **Jesus Resolved to Do What is Required**

Jesus surrendered his will to the Father. A transformational leader is in tune with the heart of God. He is not confused about who belongs to whom. Jesus prayed shortly before his death: *“Abba, Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will”* (Mark 14:36). We are not able to equal his work. But as transformational leaders, we must resolve to do whatever God requires. Jesus gave up his human will for God’s higher purpose.

### **Jesus Felt the Needs of the People**

Why did Jesus weep at the death of Lazarus (John 11:35)? Not for Mary, Martha, or the crowd to see. Simply because he grieved the loss of his friend. Jesus was a man who deeply loved others. He felt their pain. Jesus felt compassion because the people were “weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt. 9:35-37). Jesus cared for people who were hungry and afraid. He cared for the physically sick and the spiritually oppressed. Jesus felt the needs of people.

### **Jesus Helped Others to Focus and Re-Focus on the Issue**

Jesus came to serve the hurting (Luke 4:18) and save the lost (Luke 19:10). In him we witness the greatest transformation leadership skills the world has ever known. But he did not provide the model because of his infatuation with the leadership image or culture. Jesus led out of his character and heart for the world.

*Adapted from: Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations (2010)  
by Thom Rainer and Ed Stetzer*

# Case Study: Sr. Theresa

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Sr. Theresa is the new headmaster at a school who has lost its Catholic identity and is struggling financially. She has not yet gained the trust or respect of the school staff or school board. The school is a mix of girls from different tribes across the country. One particularly bright girl, Fatima, is not able to pay her school fees since her mother has recently been displaced and lost their home amid a tribal clash.

Sr. Theresa decides, against school policy, to delay charging her school fees while Fatima's mother finds work. While Sr. Theresa is away on business, the School Deputy sends Fatima back to her village, because she is behind on her fees.

When Sr. Theresa returns, she sets out to find the girl and bring her back; she believes this child has the right to an education and a future. Sr. Theresa prays to Jesus for guidance and protection in her car as she travels to the village, only to find that Fatima—at age 13—has been married off by her uncle to the village drunkard for a handful of shillings.

Sr. Theresa first decides to go to the police chief, who says there's nothing he can do, money has been exchanged. She then approaches the village chief who also says he cannot help her.

## Small Group Discussion

Who are the key players in this story? What is behind their resistance to help Sr. Theresa return Fatima to school?

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In general, why do others resist change? What do you believe is behind a resistance to change?

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# The Nature of Change

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## Everyone Looks at Change in a Different Way

- Depends on past experience with change
- By choice or imposed

## Fight, Flight, Freeze

- Our human system, guided by the brain, strives for equilibrium
- Unwanted or unanticipated change puts the limbic system on high alert – the body reacts as if it's experiencing physical pain
- It's exhausting - emotionally, physically and intellectually

## Resistance

- Human nature to choose comfort of familiarity over the anxiety that comes from the unknown
- Resistance is usually associated with one or more of these three things:
  - Lack of Understanding
  - Lack of Trust/Confidence
  - Emotional Reactions to Change

# Change and Transition

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*It isn't the changes that do you in, it's the transitions*  
- William Bridges

**Change** is an external event. It's situational. It's the retirement of a founder or executive director, the closing of a long-term program, the elimination of a long-standing policy, the relocation of a building or school.

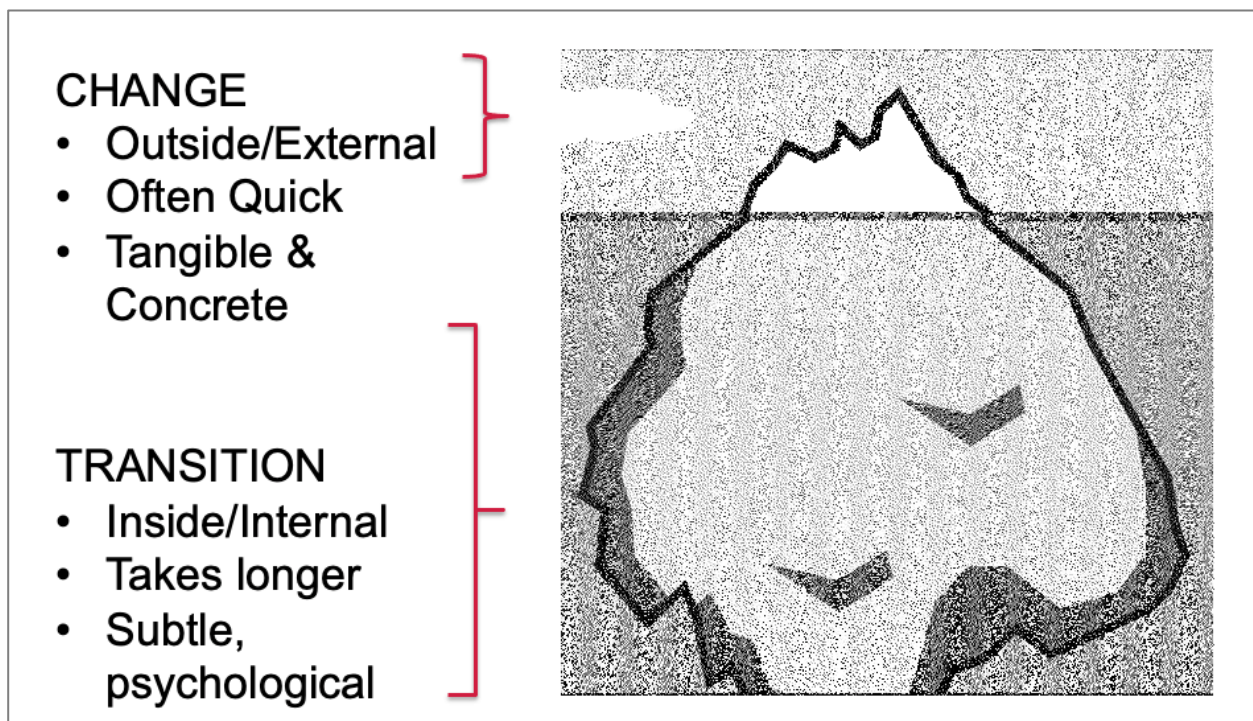
- Something old stops
- Something new begins

**Transition** on the other hand, is the internal, psychological process people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the change.

- Is a process by which people unplug from an old world and plug into a new world
- Starts with an ending and finishes with a beginning
- Deals with the psychological losses

Organizational attention, most often, is focused solely on the external event. What is often ignored or downplayed is how to lead people through transition.

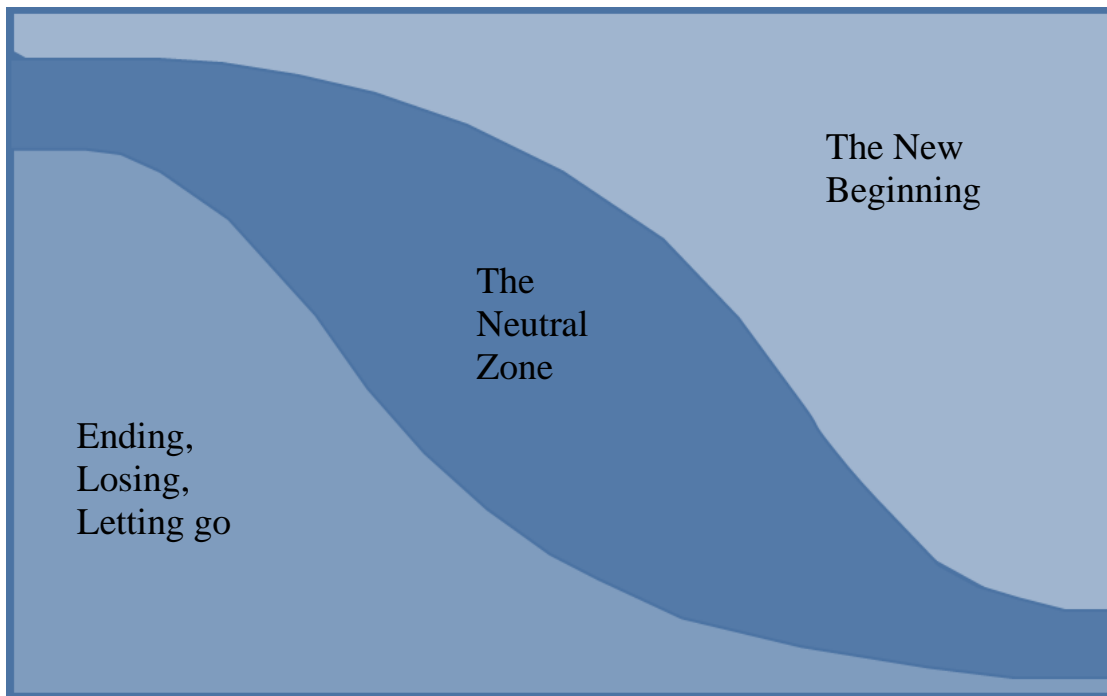
Getting people through transition is essential if the change is actually going to work.



# Three Phases of Transition

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Transition starts with an ending and finishes with a beginning.

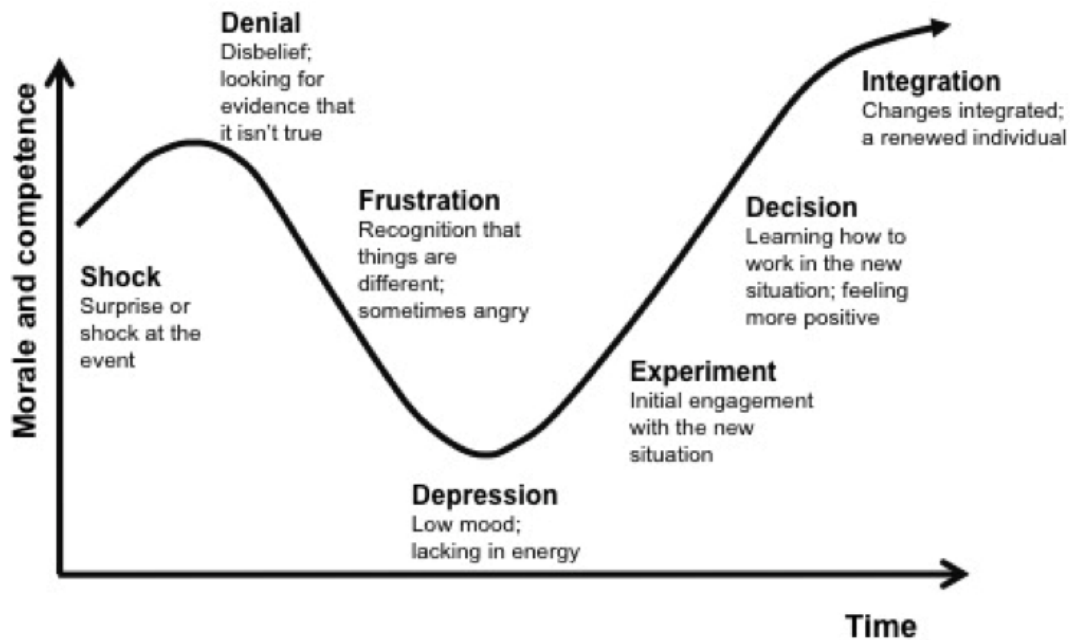


The "Change Curve"

1. The first phase of Transition is called the "Ending." It involves letting go of old ways and old identities. This is a time when people often are dealing with loss.
2. The "Neutral Zone" is the in-between time when the old is gone but the new isn't fully operational. It is when the old way of doing things is gone, but the new way doesn't feel comfortable yet. It is the psychological "no-person's land" between the old reality and the new one.
3. The "New Beginning" is when people develop their new identity, experience new energy, and discover a new sense of purpose that makes the change begin to work.

# Emotional Reactions to Change and Transition

## The Kübler-Ross change curve



### Individual Reflection: Leadership and Transition

What do I expect from my leaders during a transition?

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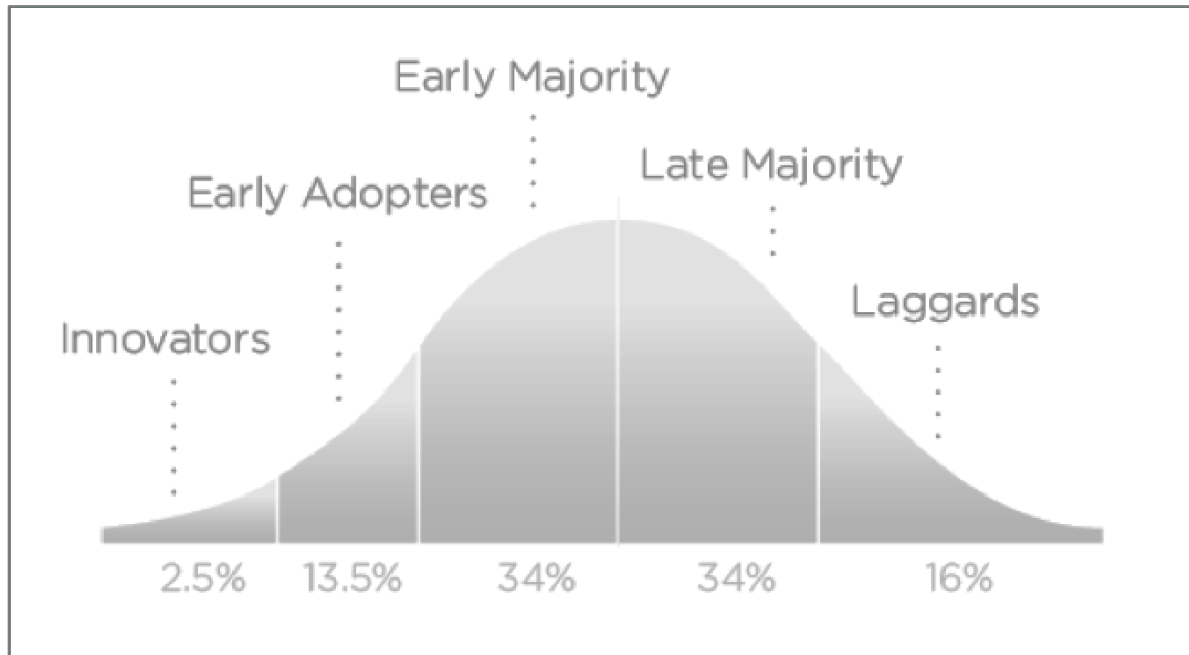
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# The Adoption Curve

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*"If you want to lead people to somewhere new, then you need to meet them where they are...  
Expect that some (even many) people aren't as far along as you would hope..."*

-Kerry Bunker



The Adoption Curve (Everett Rogers)

**Innovators** – Are Explorers energized by new challenges, willing to take the risk; can withstand failure.

**Early Adopters** – Opinion Leaders who like to be ahead of the curve, see the positives, want to be close to the action.

**Early Majority** – Ensure adoption, they look for the benefits, practical, watching and observing those in front.

**Late Majority** – May need help, support, convincing before they commit.

**Laggards** – Slow to adopt, resistant to change. They may not be able to adapt. Frame of reference is rear view mirror.

# Reflecting on Change

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As you reflect on your congregation's priorities, what are some of the changes that will occur? These might include things like allocating duties differently, new approaches to fundraising, addition of new or different technologies, restructuring the council, reaching out to new community partners or working differently with existing partners, etc.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

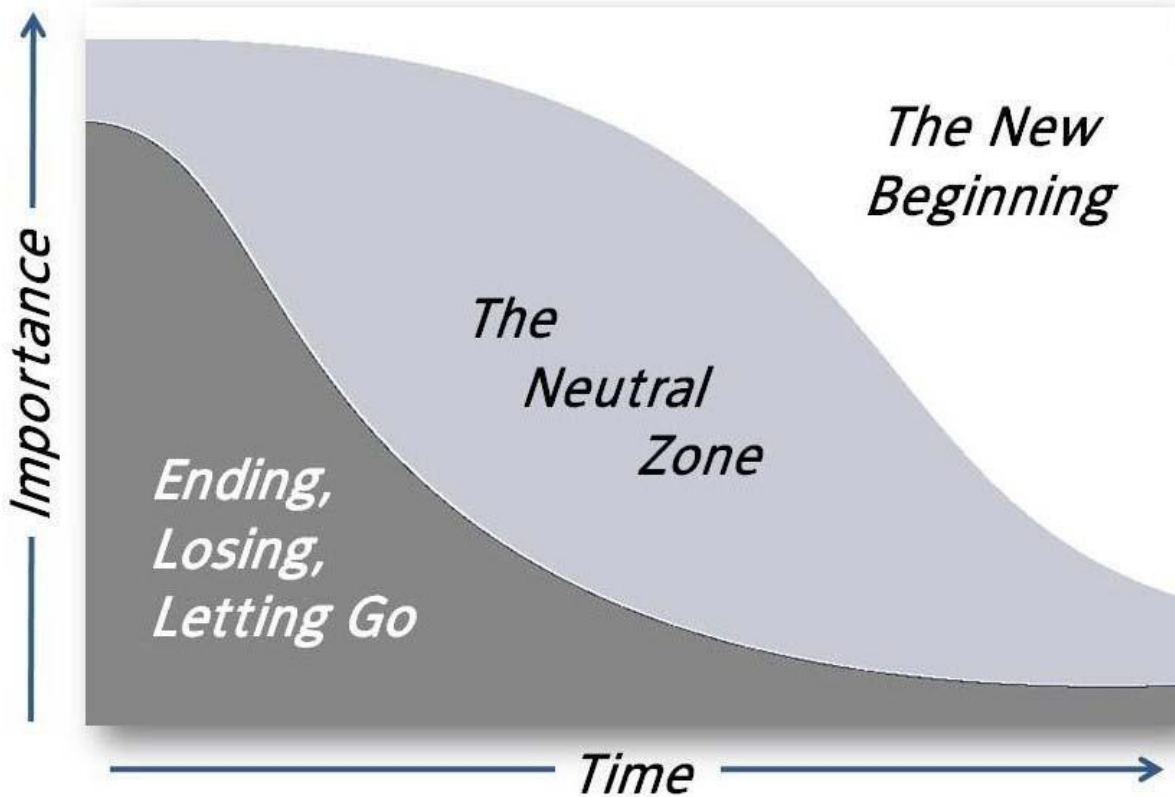
4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Activity: People's Responses to Transition

Knowing that people often flow back and forth between these stages during times of transition, where do you place yourself today? Place an **X** on the image below.

Where do you think other people who are affected by the change are? Place an **O** on the image below for where you think they are.



Discussion Notes:

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# Leading Through Transition: What Leaders Do

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- See the bigger picture
- Have a high threshold for uncertainty – use creativity to manage the ambiguity; try more than one way to achieve success
- Focus on their sphere of influence and span of control
- Practice Emotional Intelligence– help others to succeed despite discomfort
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Link the change to what people already know and understand – draw comparisons, use metaphors, tell stories
- Give people advance warning - Involve them, provide advance information so that they have some control and can plan for change
- Ensure that individuals understand what is going to happen; are as transparent and specific as possible
- Practice the 4 P's - Purpose, Picture, Plan, Part

## The Four P's

1. Explain the Purpose (The Why)
2. Show/Co-create the Picture (The What)
3. Lay out the Plan (The How)
4. Allocate the Part (The Who)

## Activity: Change Leadership Action Plan

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Reflect upon the area of change you are facing within the Church, your congregation, community, organization.




- What might you do to navigate *yourself* through this change and transition?
- What might you do to navigate *others* through this change and transition?

Refer to *Leadership Communication within the Change Curve* on page 13 for additional thoughts and ideas

Endings	Neutral Zones	Beginnings

<b>Current State (Endings)</b>	<b>Change State (Neutral Zone)</b>	<b>Desired State (New Beginnings)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain why the change is necessary</li> <li>• Explain what will happen if there is no change</li> <li>• Describe the Desired State</li> <li>• Identify and emphasize external drivers of change</li> <li>• Don't blame people</li> <li>• Identify what is not changing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeat the message again and again</li> <li>• Design a positive catch phrase</li> <li>• Create a variety of safe ways to express resistance and fear</li> <li>• Provide information and answers in a variety of ways</li> <li>• Grieve for the old ways and bury the old ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the distance people have come</li> <li>• Remind people why they are changing</li> <li>• Acknowledge the price people have paid</li> <li>• Present problems and issues that face the organization today</li> <li>• Identify future changes</li> </ul>

**Additional Resources for Leading and Learning**

	<p><b>Articles and Media</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Dr. John Kotter's 8 Steps for Leading Change</a></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Assessments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change Readiness Self-Assessment</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Lessons and Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NGLP Change Leadership Checklists</b></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vincent on Leadership: Leading Through Change Webinar</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vincent on Leadership: The Art &amp; Practice of the Learning Leader</a></li> </ul>