

Change Leader Profile



The person:

- Must have the capacity to confidently engage with senior management teams
- They must demonstrate high potential leadership
- They must be prepared to be an unpopular leader
- They must have a track record of success
- They should probably be of a minimum of senior supervisory/ middle managerial level
- Ideally they must be viewed as having potential for general management level within their career – or at least at highly competent middle management levels
- They must have demonstrated a capacity to work with teams
- They must be regarded as above-average performers
- They must have demonstrated a capacity to come to grips with knowledge outside of their own field of technical expertise
- They must be capable of identifying priorities and be willing to make concrete proposals on how to implement priorities
- They may be either introverted or extroverted
- They must demonstrate above-average energy to execute decisions and projects
- They must understand certain behaviours and their impact
- They must be prepared to ‘make a call’ on unaligned behaviours

- They must be a brand ambassador
- They must understand service to others
- They must be a part of a larger Change Leader community
- They must be Customer Obsessed
- They must have demonstrated the capacity to tackle complex or potentially unpopular ideas, and not to back down in the face of initial resistance
- Will not operate in isolation and readily ask for assistance when needed, but can also operate independently

How a Change Leader is selected:

- Nominations are obtained by each Board by who they believe fits the criteria.
- Nominees are taken through a one day assessment
- Successful candidates are then taken through a 4 day Train-the-Trainer
- Commitment required is that if in a leader role, they must facilitate one cultural workshop per month, otherwise a minimum of two workshops are to be facilitated per month,

As a Change Leader they essentially fulfill the accountabilities of the “Creative Minority” within a range of leadership roles that drive change, as indicated below:

| Change Mavericks | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "The power of one" - willing to champion the change when the majority of people are still strongly against it. ➤ Anticipates long-term trends and responds to them long before others know there are trends. ➤ Is often swamped by resistance and ridicule of mainstream thinking. ➤ Needs to be willing to operate with high probability of being ridiculed or rejected. ➤ Can readily be sidelined if there is not a rapid development of a supportive Creative Minority. ➤ Can tend to try and "go-it-alone" but with high personal cost. ➤ Often described as arrogant, hardheaded, aloof, loose cannon, unguided missile. ➤ Preserveres in the face of resistance, even in self-destructive ways. | |

| Creative Minority - Change Leaders |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The "trim-tab" factor that breaks down resistance - between 1% - 2% ➤ The "sand in the oyster" that irritates and stimulates the system to respond creatively and constructively. ➤ Become the well-informed and energized champions of the change. ➤ Must be willing to receive and respond constructively to criticism and resistance. ➤ Readily responds to resistance and criticism without giving up on or compromising the core objectives and process of change. ➤ Become students of change dynamics. ➤ Become students of <i>THE CHANGE</i>. ➤ Show willingness to take risk and live without short-term popularity. ➤ Apply disciplined change processes and tools. ➤ Continuously catalyse change and sustain momentum. <p>Actively build the Critical Mass, and then the Committed Majority.</p> |

The CMs of Change (continued)

| Critical Mass |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The "rudder" of the change - approximately 15% of the organisation. ➤ Managers and formal as well as informal leaders who are involved by Change Leaders and develop understanding as well as support for the change. ➤ Willingness to explore and test new ways of operating. ➤ Demonstrate mixture of active leadership and supportive followership. ➤ Interact increasingly with the majority of people and reinforce the need for change. <p>Participate in communicating about and tracking change.</p> |

| Committed Majority |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Steadily grow understanding and commitment to change. ➤ Become increasingly open to consider the need for change. <p>Become active participants in developing new competencies that reinforce the change.</p> |

| Competent Masses |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Involved in developing new competencies (skills, knowledge, and attitudes.) ➤ Define and pursue behaviors that have to be abandoned and those that need to be constructed and entrenched. <p>Endorse the need for compliance and assist in identifying and correcting non-conformance.</p> |

Change Mavericks.

At its start, change is invariably driven by Change Mavericks. In a sense, change is initially driven by "the power of one". This does not at all mean that any single person or even a small group of people will ever prove capable of initiating and sustaining change. But, it is also equally true that at its earliest stages change of any magnitude has very few supporters. Without the committed drivers of change, people who are capable of seeing the necessity for change and willing to engage in it, transformation cannot happen. Change mavericks are dynamic visionaries, capable of dreaming and doing. They can also effectively and compellingly communicate their vision to other people.

But no maverick is an island. Usually an organisation only has one or two of them, and while the power of their conviction may be robust, they cannot create change by themselves. This makes it absolutely essential for the initiating Change Mavericks to consolidate a Creative Minority who can take the process further. This may often prove to be a very difficult decision for the individual or few individuals who have invested a great deal of effort and probably even created significant resistance to themselves in the process of initiating the change. Without the necessary support they will get swamped.

A classic example is Chris Ball, managing director of Barclays Bank. He was a change maverick who managed the transition of Barclays Bank into First National Bank and was one of the first business leaders in South Africa who interacted with the then banned ANC and UDM. He also enabled the financing of advertisements calling for the unbanning of these organisations, a revolutionary act in those days. But while his actions were visionary, he did not have the adequate network of support to keep him standing and as a consequence, he lost his position at First National Bank.

To stand any chance of success, the change maverick has to encourage the development of a creative minority of change leaders.

Creative Minority or Change Leaders

The creative minority usually represents less than one percent of an organisation. They are a group of early adaptors, eagerly embracing the vision of creative change mavericks.

Encouraging the development of a creative minority is an effective shortcut to success. Rather than investing tremendous time and resources in trying to win over the masses, companies have learnt to focus their energies on a creative minority. This group is capable of inspiring and driving the creation of the critical mass. Some people refer to that role of Creative Minorities as the trim-tab factor. This refers to the small unit which forms part of a ship's major rudder. The main rudder which is moved to redirect the ship's direction can invariably not turn quickly enough due to the resistance of the ship's forward movement and pressure of water. Consequently, a 'little rudder' is built into the main rudder, and it is this trim-tab which is moved first. It contributes to breaking the initial resistance of both the ship's forward direction and water resistance, and thus helps the main rudder to move in the desired direction.

The Creative Minority, constituting a very small number of the entire organisation's community (managers, employees, union officials, shareholders, and ultimately customers and suppliers) need to develop a high level of intellectual capital and conviction if they are to succeed in initiating the large scale redirection and transformation of the organisation's mode of governance or strategic direction. If their enthusiasm is not matched by complementary skills and experience, the lack of intellectual capital will lead to them either to making proposals or championing responses which are impractical and doomed to failure. Alternatively, they will wither in the heat of resistance and slowly but surely lose interest and motivation. Ensuring that such a Creative Minority possesses sufficient magnitude of intellectual capital (and not just ra-ra enthusiasm), is essential for the success of the transformation processes that an organisation may be embarking upon.

Critical Mass.

The critical mass represents about 15% of an organisation. This is a key number: research indicates that once 15% of employees have moved in a new direction, the rest of the organisation will follow.

The critical mass may not be composed of visionaries or leaders, but they are realists. They will be able to understand the need for change and will be willing to change their own way of thinking in order to complement a valid vision.

In order to achieve this, the Creative Minority needs to be equipped with the necessary skills and intellectual capital to successfully transfer knowledge and expertise to the Critical Mass. One of the most frequent flaws which occur at this stage is that the Creative Minority forgets the learning process that they had to go through and hopes to transfer the experience and knowledge to the Critical Mass through policy driven methods. As is the case with any relatively complex issue, people have to go through an extended period of realignment and learning before they will internalise the new demands and become capable of sustaining them. The Critical Mass becomes the important point of access and leverage to rollout the process of change to the rest of the organisation. If, for whatever reason, they are ill equipped or have not been given the opportunity to develop the necessary new skills and abilities, then whatever they rollout will tend to become a mutated form of the past rather than an enduring transformation into the future. This is a most important facet of any change management process. It is self evident that if the Creative Minority is ill equipped to start with, then the Critical Mass is doomed to failure.

Committed majority.

With the Creative Minority and Critical Mass firmly in place, it is possible to constructively and productively concentrate on the development of a committed majority. The committed majority is created when the mainstream starts flowing in a new direction. Between 40% and 55% of an organisation should buy into the new strategy at this stage. They should be committed to transformation and have a relatively clear understanding and acceptance of why the organisation needs to change. This sets in motion a series of concentric waves of change which can be remarkably effective in rapidly spreading throughout the entire organisation. It is only at this stage that more conventional training and communication methods are likely to succeed and have an enduring impact.

When a committed majority is established, the process of change is well on its way and the chances of a return to the old order are now slim. Whether the change process will be successful in achieving its goals is still in question but that change will happen is certain.

Competent Masses.

A change strategy can't be successful if 80% to 90% of the people within an organisation do not have the skills to function efficiently in the transformed environment. Sufficient support should be given to equip the 'masses' with new competencies. Ensuring that the organisation's members become a Competent Mass who support and contribute to the organisation's change objectives is today easier than ever before. By

making use of a combination of techniques it is possible to very rapidly cascade learning throughout an organisation. Some of the well-tested and proven methods incorporate a mixture of the following:

- Organisation specific audio visual support materials which enable line managers without any real training experience to facilitate learning within operational teams.
- Distributed learning and communication technology makes it possible for a workforce of thousands to get exactly the same message at the same time.
- Relocating learning and communication processes into the work stream, by utilising a combination of team leaders and well trained facilitators minimises disruption and also serves to make it much more practical for people to link learning and communication to their own work places.
- Large group interventions have become a proven and reliable way of rapidly realigning practices and thinking within an organization and also creates a self-reinforcing environment in which the Creative Minority and Critical Mass can readily reinforce and sustain the commitment and competence of the majority of people.

Key to managing change with the CM groups in mind is not to work against the natural tide. Many companies have spent enormous resources in order to try and rally the masses around change initiatives without success. Encouraging smaller dynamic groups, who then go on and seed the rest of the organisation themselves, is much easier and is more effective.