Supporting People Through Change

Master's Capstone, Gonzaga University, 2023

Shanon Radford

Contents

- Introduction & Pilot
- Learning Objectives
- Change Models
- Is it Resistance?
- Reflection Tool
- Summary
- Next Steps
- References

Shanon Radford

I'm Shanon Radford, and this is the capstone project of my Organizational Leadership master's work at Gonzaga University. I want to thank you all for participating.

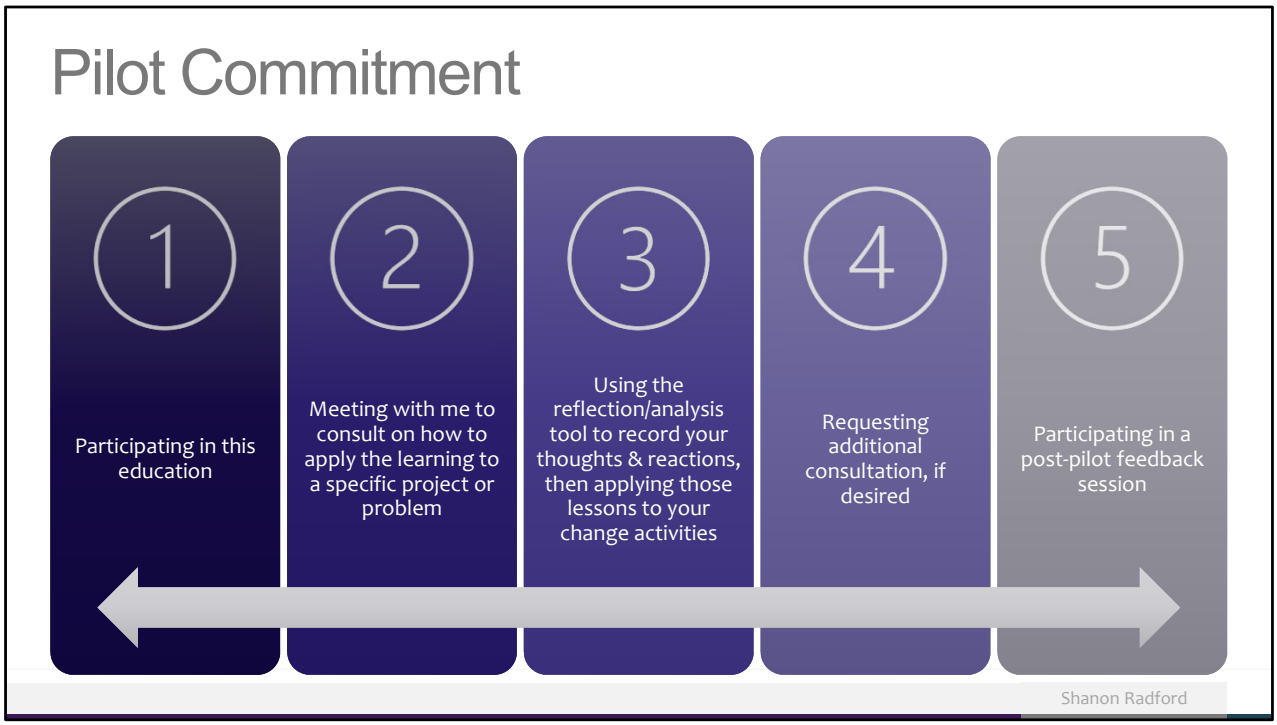
The project is a pilot to help leaders and change agents to consider the impact of change on both themselves and those they are leading in order to improve change adoption. The pilot consists of:

1) Participating in this education (1 hour)
2) Meeting with me to consult on how to apply this thinking to a specific project or problem (30 minutes)
3) Using the reflection to record your thoughts & reactions, then applying those lessons to your change activities
4) Requesting additional consultation, if desired; and
5) Participating in a post-pilot feedback session (30 minutes).

What I am proposing may seem small, but it represents, for me, a seismic shift in thinking about both leadership and change management. The underlying thinking draws on lessons from several change management models, as well as servant-leadership principles, and is focused on the people, not the organization (though the organization benefits in the end).

Though neither the pilot nor this presentation is about servant-leadership, you will get the chance to practice 8 of the 10 servant-leadership principles without even trying, as completing the pilot exercise will tap into listening, empathy, healing, awareness, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (the other two are persuasion and conceptualization, if you were wondering)

Questions so far? If there are no questions, let's jump right into our learning objectives.



The pilot consists of:

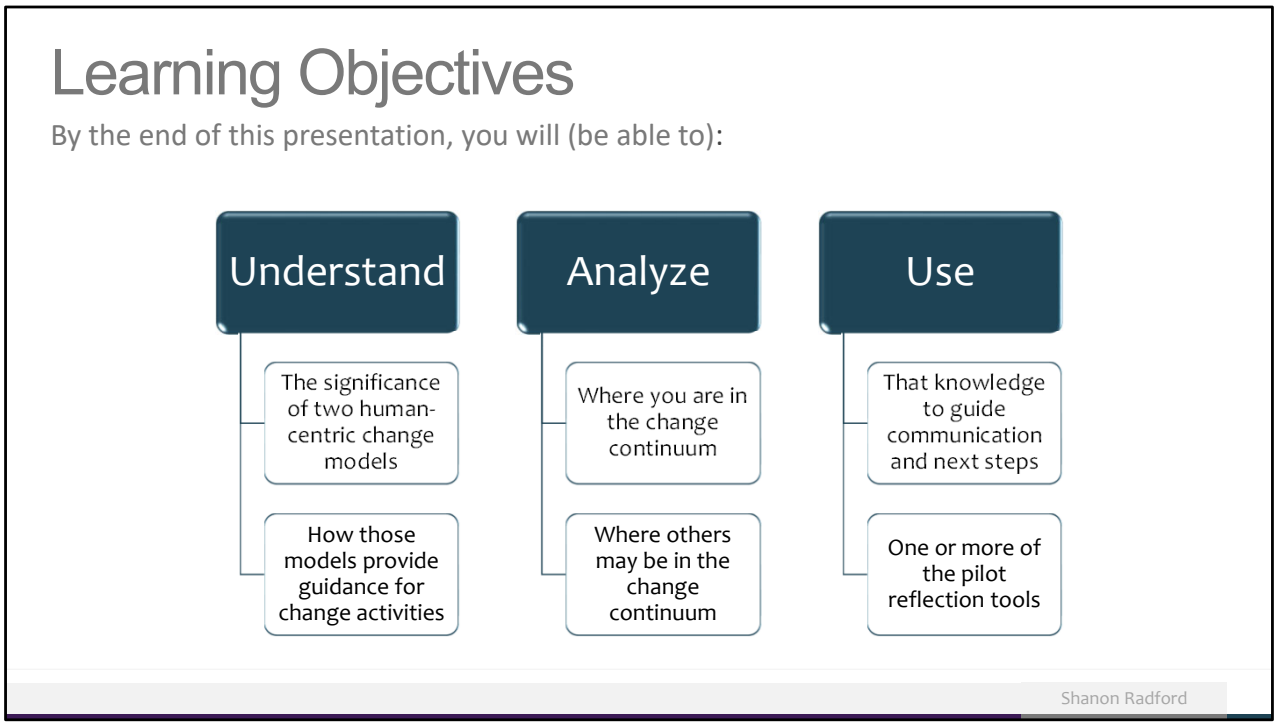
1) Participating in this education (1 hour)
2) Meeting with me to consult on how to apply to a specific project or problem (30 minutes)
3) Using the reflection/analysis tool to record your thoughts & reactions, then applying those lessons to your change activities
4) Requesting additional consultation, if desired; and
5) Participating in a post-pilot feedback session (30 minutes).

That's a total of two hours of meetings, and the rest of the time it takes is up to you.

What I am proposing may seem small, but it represents, for me, a seismic shift in thinking about both leadership and change management. The underlying thinking draws on lessons from several change management models, as well as servant-leadership principles, and is focused on the people, not the organization (though the organization benefits in the end).

Though neither the pilot nor this presentation is about servant-leadership, you will get the chance to practice 8 of the 10 servant-leadership principles without even trying, as completing the pilot exercise will tap into listening, empathy, healing, awareness, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (the other two are persuasion and conceptualization, if you were wondering)

Questions so far? If there are no questions, let's jump right into our learning objectives.



Time: 1-2 min

Key Points:

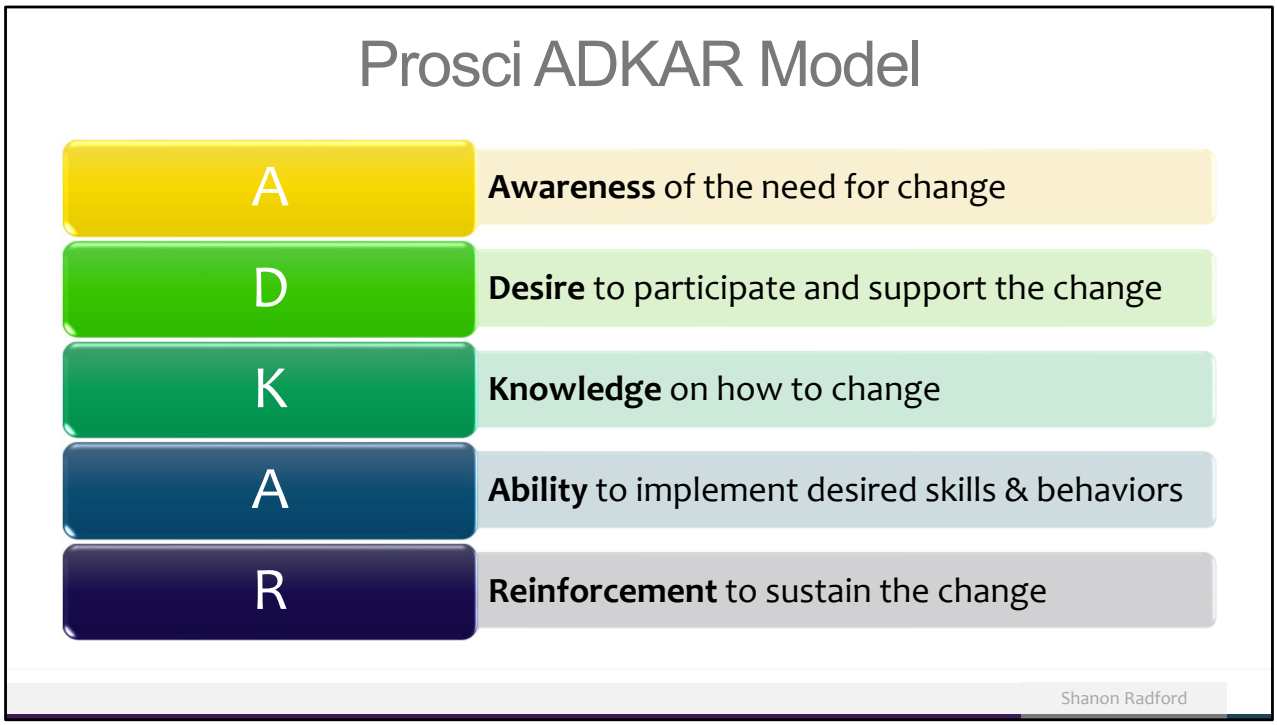
- Our goal today is modest but important
- You will not become a servant-leadership or change management expert through this presentation
- The purpose of this pilot is to provide you with something tangible, based in solid theory, that will help you in your change management efforts
- By the end of the hour, you will have
    1. New or additional insight into how people experience change on an individual level;
    2. How to leverage that knowledge to support your change activities; and
    3. A tool to help keep you on track with this new or enhanced thinking
- You will have the knowledge and tools to approach change with more empathy, patience, and (I hope!) success

Time: 1 min

Key Points:

- There are dozens of change management models. I recently read an article on the “top ten change management models” (Whatfix blog). Most have commonalities, but there are enough differences to make it very confusing if you are not a change management professional.
- We will look at four change models, spending the most time on the last one: the Prochaska/Norcross/DiClemente model
- The four models are ADKAR, Kotter’s 8 steps, Kubler-Ross Change Curve, and Prochaska, et al.
- No one model provides everything you need to manage all aspects of change without deep expertise
- But I will note this: In the end, all change is personal, and the best-laid change management plans will fail if human reactions are not understood and honored.

So with that, let’s review our four models.

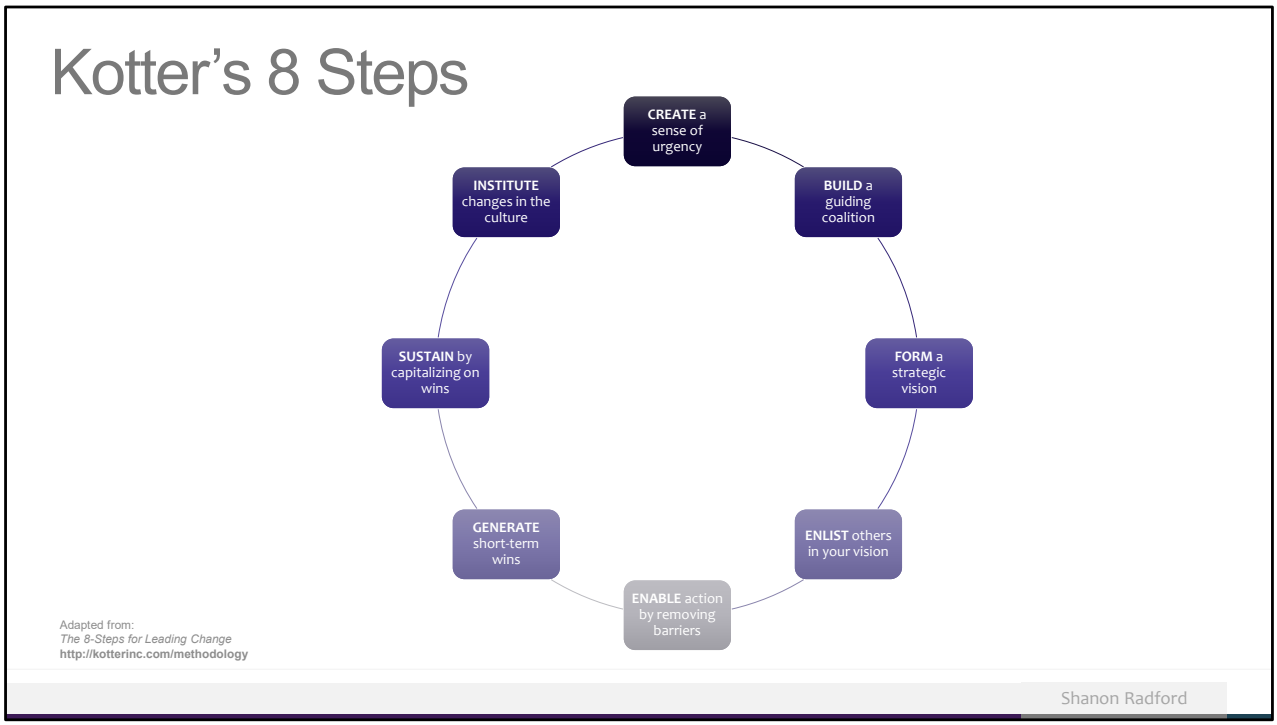


Time: 2-3 min

Key Points:

- The Prosci ADKAR model promises to help leaders engage individuals and manage resistance (Prosci, n.d.)
- Focuses on “outlining goals and outcomes” and enabling “leaders and change management teams to focus their activities on what will drive individual change” to “achieve organizational results” (Prosci, n.d.)
- Emphasizes what the individual needs to move through these stages, but not necessarily what the individual is feeling.
- Is scalable to large, complex changes
- Requires a technology package and professional support or training to implement as intended.

Background:
This is the method Seattle Children’s prefers

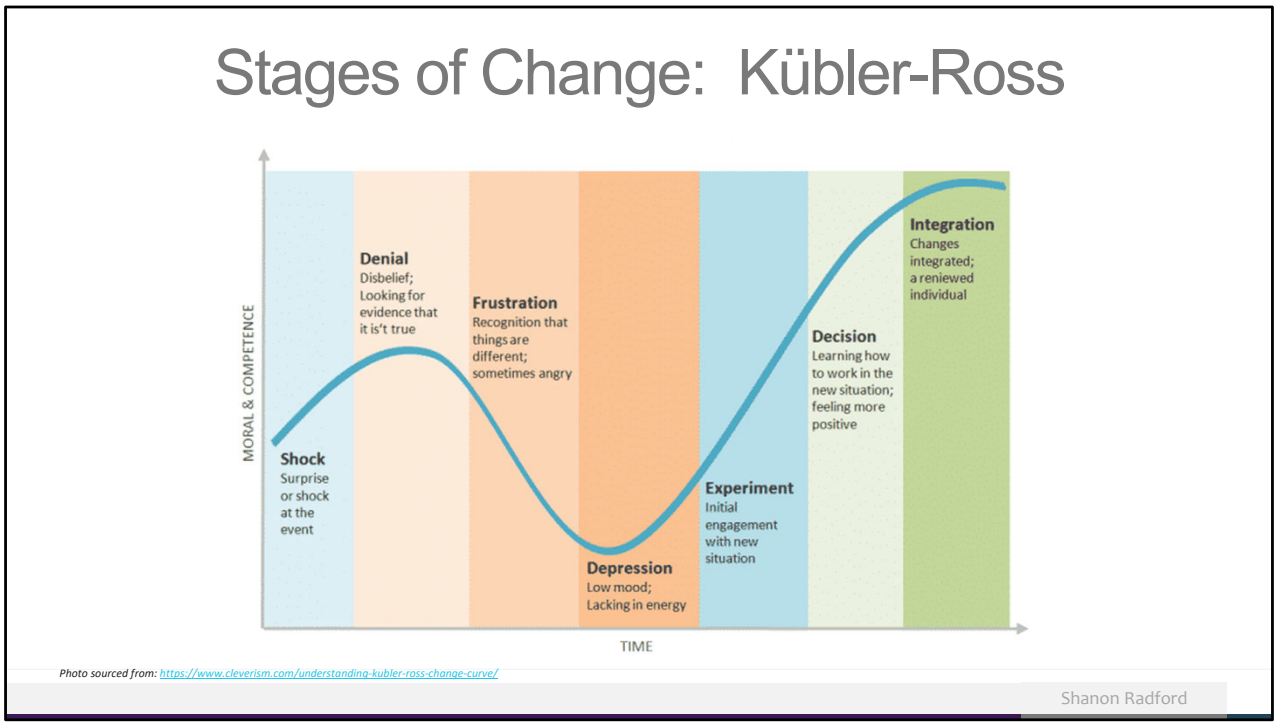


Time: 2-3 min

Key Points:

- Kotter posits that humans have two hardwired responses to change: Survive and thrive. While in survive mode, we are threat-seeking and while in thrive mode we are opportunity-seeking (Kotter, 2012).
- Focuses on a leader's role in creating and sustaining a sense of urgency, and vision, recognizing and removing barriers, and the difference between management (making a system work) and leadership (building or transforming systems).
- Requires deep understanding and commitment to implement well, as it requires mature, reflective leadership and collaboration over a sustained period
- Considered the foundational model of modern change management

Background:
Very common model, one which others are based on, but often cited as the model used while missing key factors that make it successful



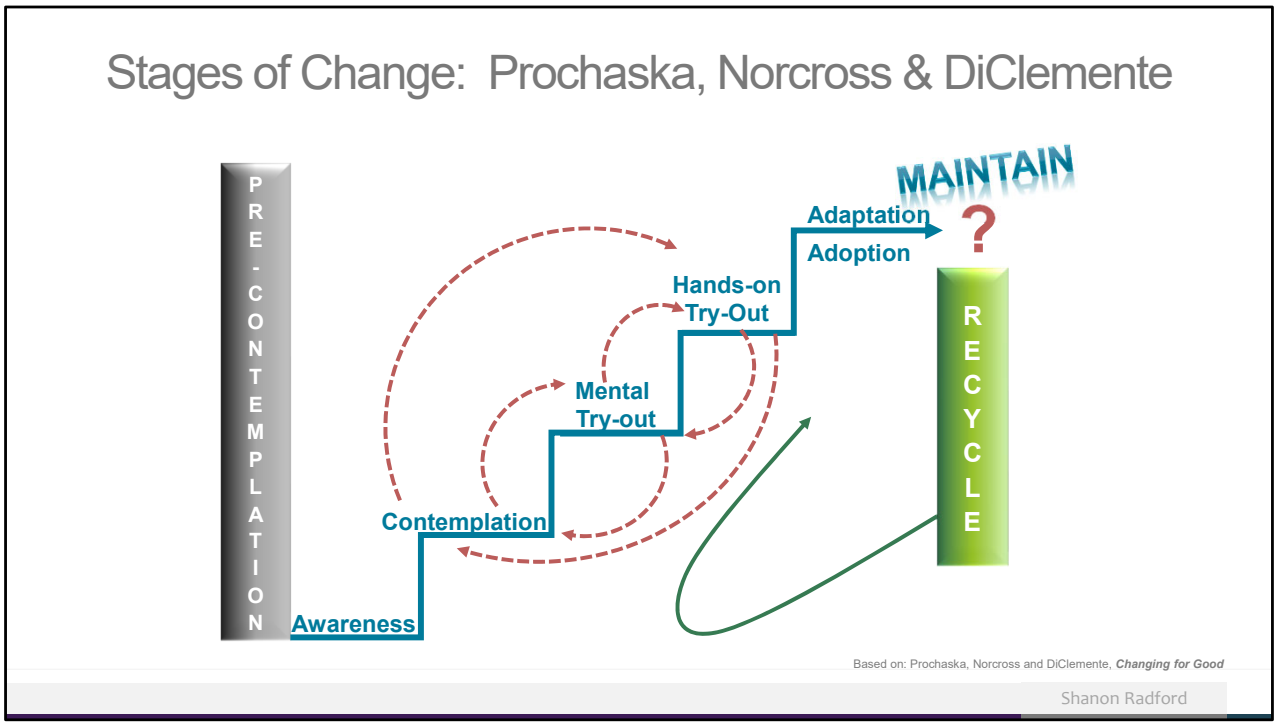
Time: 1-2 min

Key Points:

- One more model focused on individual experience of change.
- Even someone who supports a change may be experiencing feelings of loss and grief and may have trouble recognizing it. In addition, your win might be another person's loss, and if you are the leader or change agent, it is important to recognize that if you want to create a sense of urgency or desire to change.
    - Examples: Moving offices (attachment to old space), learning a new system (loss of mastery), adopting a new process (maybe had hand in creating the old process), reorganization (loss of friends, colleagues, expertise, autonomy)
- As leaders or change agents, it may be useful to ask "who is losing what?" or analyze a change through the lens of loss, to consider that what ultimately might be a positive change still has elements of loss to it.
- Optional: Share the story about unhoused friend here, if it seems appropriate. (For those reading this as part of my master's portfolio, that story is on my capstone project page).

Background:

- Kubler-Ross first defined the five stages of loss/grief in the 1960s in the context of terminal cancer patients (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2005), but she also proposed that the curve could apply to any "dramatic life-changing situation", as well as organizations or business (EKR Foundation, n.d.)



Time: 2-3 min

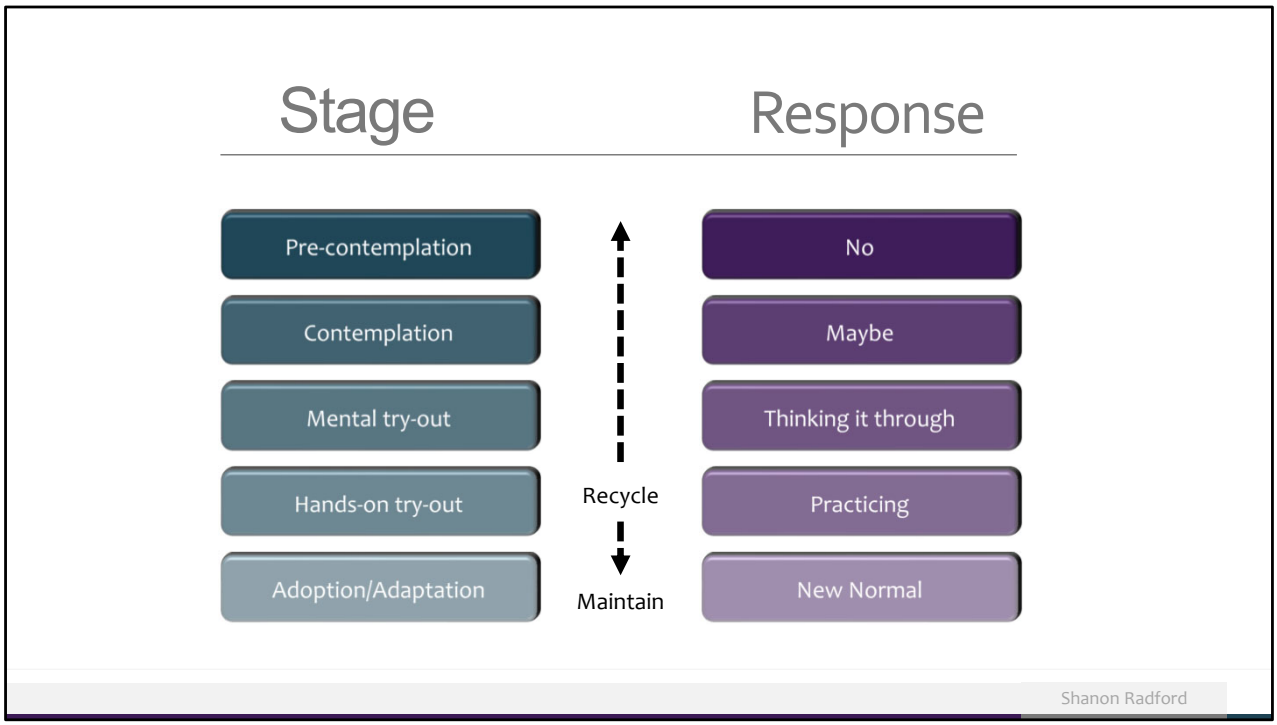
Key Points:

- This model is about understanding what people are going through. It is not a blueprint for structuring a change initiative. However, I have found it very useful as a reference when ensuring my change plan follows a logical progression.
- Prochaska, et al., posit that everyone experiences these stages in one way or another, every time, whether we plan for it or want them to. But if we are aware of this process, we can adjust our conversations, presentations, written materials, activities, and, yes, even our attitudes to support change initiatives.
- As leaders or change agents, we most likely have had time to adjust, to provide input, or maybe even design the change, but now we must implement with people who are hearing about it for the first time.
- Though we don't focus as much on this today, note that if effort isn't made to maintain a change, the cycle can start over (recycle).

Let's look a it a little differently

Background:

- This is an adaptation of the original Prochaska, Norcross, DiClemente model, which was developed to explain how people make personal changes, with an emphasis on addiction. This adaptation is geared toward the personal experience of change in a business setting.



Time: 3-5 min

Key Points:

- Here is another look at the stages of the adapted Prochaska, et al., model with the corresponding response.
- The most common first response to learning about a change is “no thank you” or “I can’t”
- As a leader or change agent, understanding that one fact can help you prepare communications and activities to help people get to “maybe” and then to thinking it through, even helping you to refine messaging and activities for the next group (or the next time)
- Though the details of what you say or do will vary based on the project or type of change, the need to plan for people to go through these stages is a constant
- This is where it is very helpful to reflect on your own initial responses and what helped you transition into the next phase
- The Prochaska, et al., model does not take the place of other implementation models such as ADKAR or Kotter, but it does offer at a glance insight into what people are going through
- Combined with Kubler-Ross’s change curve, it can guide you on how to structure conversations, written communications, and change activities
- Before engaging with an audience about a specific change, think through not only where you are *now* in this process, but what it was like when you first learned of the change. What was your first reaction? What words, activities, or thoughts helped move you to the next stage? Again, also ask: Who is losing what?

Is it Resistance?

- Or is it a natural first reaction?
- Resistance exists, but consider Prochaska before labeling resistance
- Lack of empathy with natural first reaction may *create* resistance
- True resistance requires different methods to counter, depending on reason

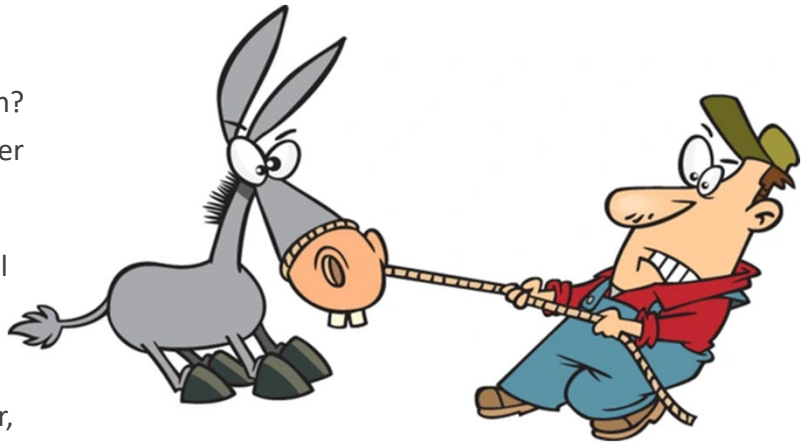


Illustration Hwjiny?Wts Qjnxmr fs 44 Xmzyyjwcythp

Shanon Radford

Key Points:

- My personal belief that much of what is labeled “resistance” is actually people’s first natural response to change, and I believe our response as leaders to that initial reaction can have a big impact on how people move forward with it.
- If we meet the natural first reaction with derision, impatience, or indifference, we may actually create true resistance. (I have no expert evidence to cite for that statement—it’s coming from my personal experience).
- When we get entrenched in a project, we have insider knowledge of what’s coming. We may be designing it, it may be our idea. That puts us in a different place than those hearing it for the first time.
- For myself, I know that coming back to both Prochaska and Kubler-Ross also helps me have patience when I have to repeat the same information to new groups. It helps me to remember to start from the beginning, to create consistent messaging, and to pitch my presentations, conversations, etc., to the audience (which is also just good communication theory).
- If you want to explore more about resistance, follow the Kotter link to read more about or Survive and Thrive, or read Pearse & Sheehan’s January 22, 2018, article on the 5 forms of change resistance. Both are linked on the references slide.

Reflection Tool

Prochaska Stage	My first reaction	Where am I now	What helped me	Where is my audience
Precontemplation				
Contemplation				
Mental Try-Out				
Hands-on Tryout				
Adoption/Adaptation				
Maintenance/Recylce				

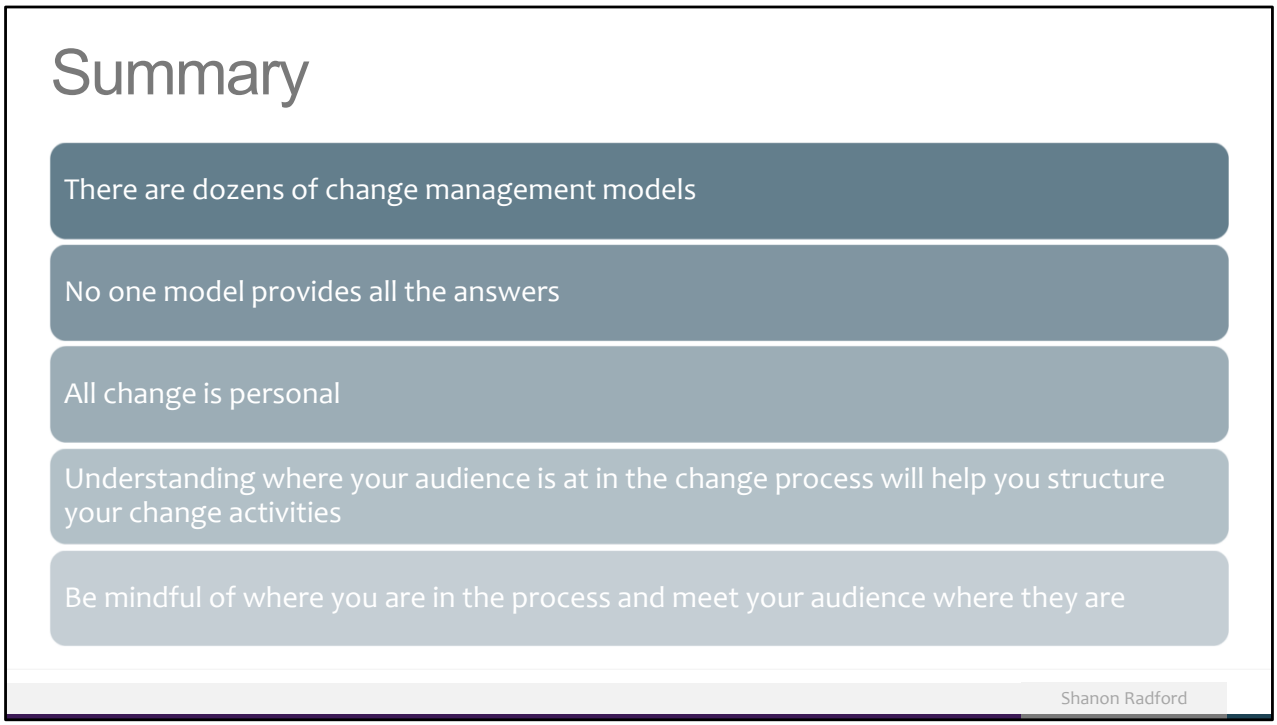
Remember to ask: Who might be losing what?

Shanon Radford

Key Points:

- So here we are: A very simple tool to organize and record your reactions to a specific change that you need to lead or communicate to others.
- Keep this log throughout the duration of a project and refer back to it periodically, particularly when you will be addressing a new group or preparing for a new phase.
- Remember that this does not take the place of ADKAR or other structural change management models.
- This tool is to help you focus your expectations, reactions, and communications.

- Questions about how to use it?
- If no more questions, then let's summarize and talk about next steps.



Key Points:

- We covered a lot of ground today, but if you take away one thing today, I hope it is that all change is personal.
- Organizational change cannot happen without the individuals making changes, and you, as a leader and change agent, are best positioned to help them.
- But you must meet them where they are at, and this requires listening—to yourself and to your constituents. It requires reflection and planning. But above all, it requires empathy for both yourself and those you lead or who are impacted by the changes you implement.
- While it may seem like a lot of work to engage in all this reflection and analysis, in the end, your projects and change initiatives—and ultimately, your organizations—will benefit.

- Are there any questions or comments?
- Let's move on to next steps

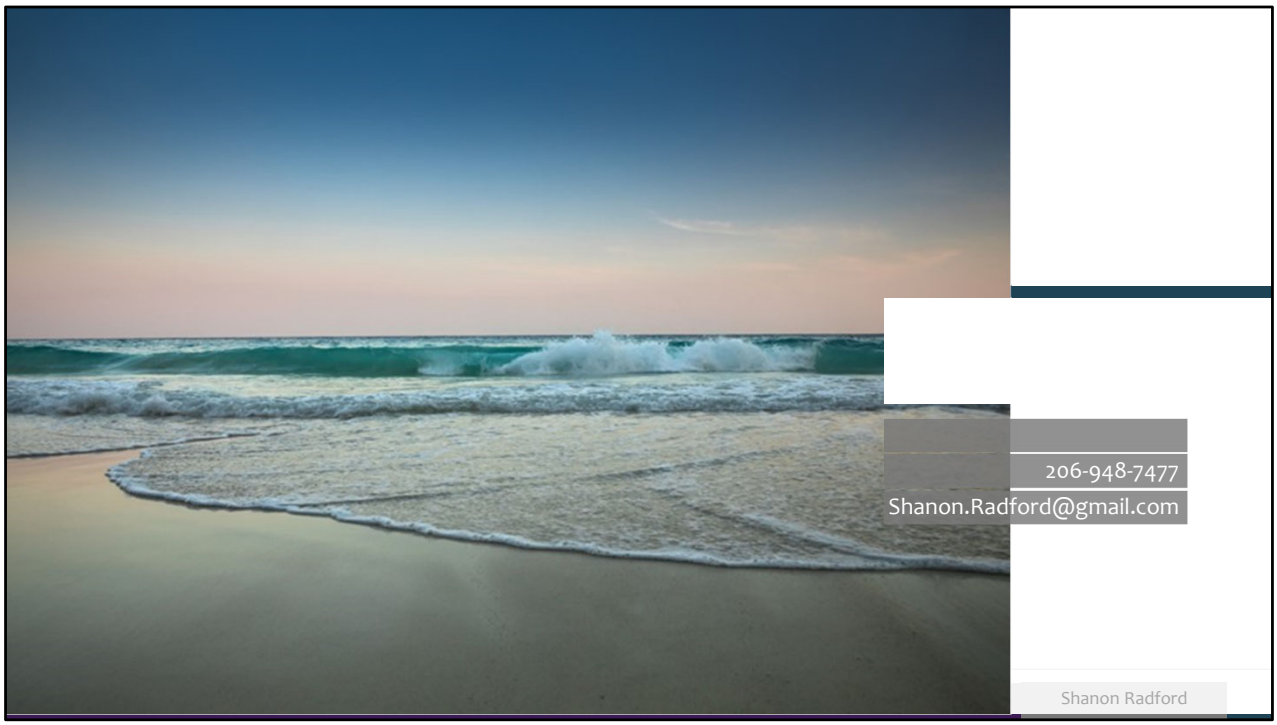
Next Steps

1. Choose a project or activity to focus on
2. Make a consulting appointment with me
3. Record your reactions in the reflection tool
4. Ask for additional consulting if desired
5. Participate in feedback session (date: TBD)

Shanon Radford

References

- Emergent Performance Solutions. (2019, April 19). *Change management: The art of understanding loss.* https://emergentps.com/2019/04/19/change-management-the-art-of-understanding-loss/
- EKR Foundation. (n.d.). *Kübler-Ross change curve*. https://www.ekrfoundation.org/5-stages-of-grief/change-curve/
- Kotter, J. P. (2012). *Leading change*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Kübler-Ross, E., and Kessler, D. (2005). *On grief & grieving: Finding the meaning of grief through the five stages of loss*. Scribner.
- Pearse, S., and Sheehan, M. (2018, January 22). *5 forms of change resistance*. MindGardener. https://www.mindgardener.com/blog/2018/1/22/5-forms-of-change-resistance
- Prochaska, J. O., Norcross, J. C., DiClemente, C. C. (1994). *Changing for good*. William Morrow.
- Prosci. (n.d.). *The Prosci ADKAR model*. https://www.prosci.com/methodology/adkar
- whatfix. (2022, September 5). *10 proven change management models in 2024*. https://whatfix.com/blog/10-change-management-models/


206-948-7477
Shanon.Radford@gmail.com
Shanon Radford