

Additional Patterns for Fearless Change

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The patterns in this collection are an addition to those that appeared in *Fearless Change: Patterns for Introducing New Ideas*¹. Our passion for this topic didn't end when the book was published. Rather, we continued to read, observe, take extensive notes and, most importantly, listen to comments and suggestions from our readers. We have not stopped learning about leading change!

As people exchange ideas about the environment, and exchange patterns, the overall inventory of patterns in the pattern pool keeps changing. ...Of course, this evolution will never end. (Alexander, C.A., *The Timeless Way of Building*)

A pattern language and the patterns in it are living things. The work is never finished. We are grateful for the opportunity to share as we are learning. This paper contains the following new patterns: **Wake-up Call**, **Town Meeting**, **Emotional Connection**, **Elevator Pitch**, and **Pick Your Battles**. References to existing patterns in our book or in this paper appear in brackets, e.g. [Do Food]. Summaries for the existing patterns are in the Appendix.

The patterns follow a variation of Alexander's format. Each pattern includes:

- Name in bold
- Alias (if applicable)
- Abstract in bold
- Opening Story in italics that conveys the essence of the pattern
- Context
- Problem statement in bold
- Description of the Problem and Forces
- "Therefore" in italics
- Essence of the Solution in bold
- Elaboration of the Solution
- Resulting Context
- Known Uses in italics

¹ Manns, M.L., Rising, L. (2005). *Fearless Change: Patterns for Introducing New Ideas*. Addison-Wesley.

Wake-Up Call

Alias: “Houston, we have a problem.”

To encourage people to pay attention to your idea, point out the problem that you believe has created a pressing need for change.

"Hey, we've got a problem here." The message from the Apollo 13 spacecraft to Houston ground controllers at 10:08 p.m. EDT on April 13, 1970 initiated an investigation to determine the cause of an oxygen tank failure that aborted the Apollo 13 mission.

You are an [Evangelist] who sees a need for change, trying to spread the word about your idea. Some are listening. [Innovators] may be excited, but [Early Adopters] are simply responding with noncommittal, polite comments. Skeptics are becoming challenging because they don't see the need for change. The critical mass does not see any reason for the organization to take action.

People in your organization are comfortable with the status quo. They don't see the need to change the current state of things. As a result, your suggestions are falling on deaf ears.

We are creatures of habit. When we are in a routine and are satisfied with the way things are, we're not likely to see an impending threat. We need help to understand that the world has changed.²

Most of us have a built-in desire to make things right. Therefore, we are more likely to consider changing if we feel a significant amount of tension brought about by such things as a potential risk, a need for safety and comfort, a desire to feel good about ourselves, or to fulfill a value-based goal. If you create this tension, people will seek resolution.³

Well-known author John Kotter makes the argument that the first step in real change is to “get the urgency up.” He explains that showing people a compelling need for change will energize them to make something happen—it will get them “off the couch, out of the bunker, and ready to move.”⁴

It's also important to recognize that facing reality is difficult. People can feel overwhelmed and hopeless about their ability to face their problems.

When you talk about your idea, you are proposing a solution to a problem. But if people aren't aware that there is a problem, they are likely to see your idea as merely an interesting option rather than something that requires action. As a result, they respond with complacency, pessimism, or even defiance.

² Garvin and Roberto, *Change through Persuasion*

³ Doppelt, *The Power of Sustainable Thinking*, p. 70.

⁴ Kotter, *The Heart of Change*, p. 3

In the beginning your story may not match the current reality, either. You should always question your own understanding of what people face in the current environment.

Thomas Friedman, author of *The World is Flat* reminds us: “Where there is a problem, there is an opportunity.” Your idea is that opportunity.

Therefore:

Create a conscious need for change by calling attention to a problem in the organization and the resulting negative consequences.

Do your research and [Ask for Help] so you truly understand the problem and the situation it is creating. Present concrete information. Let the numbers talk but don't forget to include the human side as well and try to establish an [Emotional Connection]. Present the problem in a compelling and powerful way. Make sure it is something people care about. Relate it to the goals of the organization with [Tailor Made] and use [Personal Touch] to help individuals answer the question: What's in it for me?

Point out what could happen if the problem is not solved; describe various scenarios. Apply [Fear Less] and encourage a [Champion Skeptic] to help you uncover the worst case scenarios. However, don't just tell horror stories—you will be accused of exaggerating.

Keep it simple and explain [Just Enough]. Be careful not to overanalyze—you want to inspire hope and encouragement so people will have the courage to face the situation. Focus their attention with a concise, credible description of the problem. Get them intrigued enough to engage in discussion. Then, as you address their questions, you can bring out more detail about the solution you are proposing.

Tell your story—how you recognized the problem and developed your idea for a solution. However, be cautious about outlining a complete strategy—then it becomes all about you. It's more convincing if you involve others and [Ask for Help]. Encourage them to craft as much of the solution as possible. Think about holding a [Town Meeting] to solicit feedback, build support, get new ideas, and bring in participation.

Take it [Step by Step]. Deal with the easier problems first to gain some [Small Successes]. Keep a [Sustained Momentum]. If the urgency seems to diminish, you may need to bring new problems to light.

Keep in mind that you are not likely to get everyone to care about the problems you raise. If too many are not responding to your wake-up call, you may have to [Pick Your Battles] and move on.

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As a result, you will create awareness of the current reality in the organization and the problem(s) that created it. Listeners will stop and think, “Wow, I didn’t know that!” You will likely uncover issues that many people didn’t see or may have been denying. Some are likely to open their minds to the possibility of a new reality and recognize the need to take action. This allows you to propose your idea(s) for change.

But be careful about talking about an existing predicament; there can be serious political ramifications. You can come across as a nay-sayer, especially if the old way is owned by those with influence. You may want to keep this pattern in reserve until you need it.

The system for assigning faculty to committees at one university was tedious and outdated. Ellen drafted a new system that needed to go to the Faculty Senate for approval. Unfortunately, she didn’t use [Corridor Politics], so there were many questions and concerns from Senate members following the presentation of her proposal. When Ellen realized that her proposal was not likely to pass, she politely stopped the discussion and back-peddled with a detailed explanation of the problems in the present system. Senate members reacted with surprise. They had not been aware of the problems and were immediately more willing to support her proposal. Ellen then suggested a [Trial Run] of her new system and the motion passed in her favor.

Mary was trying to start a community support system for those who have experienced a relationship “break-up.” She wanted this system to include a variety of resources so she talked with many different people including psychologists, biofeedback experts, breathing coaches, and medical personnel. Throughout her efforts, she discovered that most of these individuals did not see grief after a “break-up” as a serious problem—their advice was to just “get over it” and “move on” in a short period of time. Mary knew this usually isn’t possible, or even healthy. She made her case by describing the serious emotional problems and physical symptoms often experienced after a relationship loss. She used [Emotional Connection] and included stories of the struggles faced by people she was attempting to help. Once her listeners had a change of heart about the significance of the problem, she could give the [Elevator Pitch] about her idea. This would usually prompt a discussion about the support system and the role the listener might be willing to play.

Paul Levy was appointed to head the BIDMC hospital system, a product of a difficult merger between two hospitals that was now in need of fresh ideas. To signal the need for a new order, Levi developed a bold message explaining that this was BIDMC’s last chance to make improvements. Pointing to his private discussions with the state attorney general, he publicized the real possibility that the hospital would be sold. He knew this bad news might frighten the staff and patients but he believed a strong wake-up call was necessary to get employees to face the need for change.⁵

⁵ Garvin and Roberts, *Change Through Persuasion*

Town Meeting

As early as possible in your change effort and throughout, hold an event to gather as many participants as possible to solicit feedback, build support, get new ideas, and bring in newcomers.

Involve local communities in virtually every step of the conservation process. "We don't present solutions," says Francisco Nunez, scientist for the Nature Conservancy. "We put scenarios on the table and let them decide." If you want to protect biodiversity, you need to give local residents a stake in preserving it. But finding "win-win" solutions is not always easy. For every success story, many more projects fail, often because "solutions" are conceived without consulting all stakeholders. Or because the projects rely solely on one economic activity, such as ecotourism, that depends on factors often beyond local communities' control. "This is a process," says another scientist for the Nature Conservancy. "There aren't easy solutions."⁶

You are an [Evangelist] or [Dedicated Champion] who wants to explore the issues in a change initiative. You may be at the beginning of your effort, interested in identifying problems and possible solutions. You may have experimented with some of your ideas in your own work by deciding to [Just Do It], or you may have completed a [Trial Run] and want to share the results and thoughts about what [Next Steps] to take.

You want to engage others and try to understand how they feel, but personal conversations take time and are not an effective way for building consensus across a wider community.

It might seem easier to trust your own judgment and do whatever you think needs to be done but you risk taking actions that do not provide real help for the organization. Feedback is essential—you don't want to work in a vacuum. You might be removed enough from the day-to-day environment that you have lost touch with the real needs of the organization.

You might miss important information or run the risk of people who feel ignored.

Therefore:

Hold a meeting to solicit feedback, build support, get new ideas, bring newcomers in, and report progress. Invite as many as possible.

Advertise the event with [In Your Space] and [e-Forum]. Try to personally invite as many as you can, using [Personal Touch]. Encourage participants with diverse backgrounds and ideas [Involve Everyone]. Include likely skeptics [Fear Less]. Make sure you invite those who will be most affected by the change. Use [Corridor Politics] to influence the lay of the land before you open the discussion to a large group.

⁶ "The Poverty/Conservation Equation," *Nature Conservancy Magazine*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Summer 2006, 20-30.

Have a clear agenda. Begin by focusing on the purpose of the meeting. You might give a brief history of the change initiative. Solicit feedback on your ideas. Brainstorm new ideas.⁷ Check your ego at the door and explain that you are there to increase everyone's understanding, including your own.

Be sincere when you [Ask for Help]. Sometimes groups expect a leader to provide all the answers. It's a fine line between appearing incompetent and weak and bringing others in on the conversation.

Watch out for ineffective discussions and endless debate. Be willing to politely put these matters in a "parking lot" for later or for offline discussions.

End the meeting by discussing possible [Next Steps] and welcome willing volunteers to help. After the session, you can continue the conversation on an [e-Forum]. Post progress updates for everyone to follow [In Your Space].

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You will build visibility and knowledge of the change effort and the impact of potential solutions. It gives you a chance to solicit feedback, gather support and collect other ideas. The event can be the beginning of a [Group Identity]. People are more likely to take ownership if they have been given a say in the changes that could be made.

However, attendees will expect that their suggestions will be followed. If they are disappointed, they could get angry and work against you. Be sure to set clear expectations during the meeting that you are gathering feedback and suggestions. Be honest about your ability to please everyone. Don't make promises you can't keep.

Allen was hired as the new president of a university. It was a time for change. Allen saw problems and issues that needed to be addressed, so his staff scheduled a series of planning meetings to gather input for a strategic plan. Everyone on the campus was personally invited over email or phone to attend one of the sessions. Each meeting began by setting the expectations for the session and the suggestions that would be gathered. In each meeting Allen presented a list of specific questions. The responses were recorded, and a summary of the results was sent to each participant. The participants were kept current on how the summaries were being used in the strategic planning process.

Ralph, the head of the library, was retiring after 30 years of service. The administration decided that it was a good time to examine the organization's structure and procedures to determine what changes could be made. One representative from each department was invited to a series of meetings where these issues were studied. Their rough ideas and recommendations were then presented in a meeting with everyone in the library. The results of these meetings formed the basis for the new leadership as Ralph's retirement

⁷ <http://www.effectivemeetings.com/teams/participation/brainstorming.asp>

drew closer—changes in the org chart, decisions regarding Ralph’s replacement, and modifications to some processes and library facilities.

Emotional Connection

Connecting with the emotional needs of your audience is more effective in persuading them than just presenting facts.

One CIO explains that he “was very fortunate early in my career to learn all anyone really needs to know about meeting clients’ expectations.” After personal interviews with business, corporate officers and general management, he reported, “... let me say what those clients were telling me in a single sentence: ‘I probably won’t remember what you say to me, I may not even remember what you do for me, but I’ll never forget how you make me feel.’”⁸

You are an [Evangelist] or [Dedicated Champion] who has been studying and working with a new idea. You may be using [Test the Waters]. You may be trying it out in your own work [Just Do It]. As you learn more about the possibilities for your new idea, you are communicating this information in conversations [Personal Touch], in a [Brown Bag], or by posting [In Your Space].

People are listening as you present information about your new idea, but are not getting involved or taking any action to show that they have accepted what you are saying.

You are getting good at communicating the facts. You have a snazzy PowerPoint presentation with slides showing lists of bullet points. You have your [Elevator Pitch] ready, and you are careful to make sure others understand the problem [Wake-up Call]. This is a good way to begin—your listeners must know about an idea before they can be influenced to accept it. But a list of facts is not very persuasive.

Information overload is a fact of life and details are quickly forgotten. We all interpret facts to support our own deep-rooted belief system and, if the facts don’t fit, we ignore, challenge, or dismiss them. As a result, listeners may respond with, “She isn’t making any sense. Is she serious?” They will be anxious about how the change is likely to affect them and could even become angry if they don’t see any signs that you, or the organization, do not relate to their concerns.

We all slip into automatic-response mode when possible. We avoid cognitive evaluation because it is hard work. This does not mean we are lazy; it is actually a primitive survival instinct. We automatically take the path of least resistance to conserve energy in case we

⁸ Kuebler, A., What my clients taught me, *ComputerWorld*, August 2008, <http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9112546>

are attacked or threatened. This is why we do not act on logic and reason. We make emotional decisions and then justify them with logic and reason.⁹

Someone who truly understands your pain can inspire a sense of hope in the power of a new idea for overcoming your troubles. Research reported in *The Heart & Soul of Change* has found that the chemistry in emotionally charged relationships is a key factor in inspiring hope and a desire to change.

Harvard Business School professor John Kotter explains, "... changing organizations depends overwhelmingly on changing the emotions of the individual members... Thinking and feeling are essential but the heart of change is in the emotions."

Therefore:

Build an emotional connection to bridge the underlying concerns of your audience and your idea for change.

Foster relationships that allow you to become aware of others' interests and fears. Be willing to listen to help you try to understand their thoughts and feelings. Become intrigued with all there is to learn from each person. Look for ways in which you are alike so you can identify with the person—this will build a relationship that connects on an emotional level.

Know your audience—what do they care about? Acknowledge, respect, and address their deep concerns. Personalize your presentations so you are no longer just a talking head with a good idea. Share your own experiences and be honest about your shortcomings. Tell your story about how and why you became convinced of the idea you are proposing. Exhibit humility and a sincere enthusiasm for the big possibilities in your little idea.

Think about how you can engage the senses of your audience. Include memorable images and stories with names, details, places and events that are meaningful and credible to your audience.¹⁰ Ask listeners to visualize a better future.

Create a sense of ownership for the problem and a "we can do it" belief in the solution. You will need to show that there is a problem [Wake-up Call], but there is no need to dwell on it. Cultivate hope instead fear and resentment. Build an environment in which people will have a desire to act by expressing your belief in each person's value and unique ability to contribute.

If you become aware of any strong negative emotions among the people you are trying to convince, investigate the reason. Address it directly, but be patient—the passion in

⁹Brusman, B. *Leadership Secrets for Emotional Persuasion*. <http://ezinearticles.com/?Leadership-Secrets-For-Emotional-Persuasion---The-Brain-Science-of-Persuasive-Powers&id=1379252>

¹⁰ Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*.

negative feelings, such as anger, does not allow people to be willing listeners. You may need to delay conversations until the intense anger has diminished.

To help you appreciate the role of emotions in decision-making, reflect on some of the decisions you have made in your life—what were the emotions that guided you? This will help you recognize and take advantage of the emotional reactions you see in others.

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You will become more persuasive. You will bring the participants more deeply into the game and make it possible to have more enlightening discussions about your idea and the changes you are proposing.

However, this may be difficult to put into practice. Most of us find it is easier to present the hard facts; analysis is more comfortable than digging deep into feelings. You can begin by just going through the emotions—cognitive scientists tell us that when we behave in a certain way, we become more like the image we project.¹¹ Therefore, even if you are uncomfortable with this pattern, your behavior can gradually change the way you feel until you can develop deeper concerns for those you are trying to influence. Practice is important—taking [Small Steps] and continuing to [Just Do It] will allow you to improve.

This approach is also risky. Presenting facts gives you a solid foundation and safety. Good stories will really transport the message, but stories badly told are embarrassing. Even worse, if people don't like your story or your storytelling, then it can backfire and be painful because the resistance is personal.

*The Ormish program understands that bad habits and addictions are really misguided solutions to underlying psychological and emotional problems such as depression, stress, unhappiness and loneliness. Therefore, patients spend time with a support system of those who understand, care, inspire a sense of hope and teach addicts to learn, practice, and master a new lifestyle. (Read more in Deutschman, *Change or Die*, 2007.)*

Before he became a U.S. senator, Frank Lautenberg was a corporate CEO. His firm was a pioneer of the computer age, and, like most businesspeople, especially those in technical fields, Frank thrived on facts. As a senator, he became a champion of the environment, mastering the technicalities of environmental legislation. When it came time to run for reelection, Lautenberg had a hard time translating his many environmental accomplishments into language his constituents could understand. He'd stand in a town hall meeting in Verona, New Jersey, and wonder why his audience would fall asleep. Amy Knox was a little girl who lived in Mt. Holly, New Jersey. Amy was battling cancer, a disease she believed she'd contracted because she lived near a toxic site. Amy was a tough, brave kid. She'd started a community group called PUKÉ (People United for a Klean Environment) and had written to her senator asking for support. Lautenberg had

¹¹ One study showed that seriously-depressed patients were helped as much by smiling as by drugs. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*.

offered help and encouragement, doing everything a good senator should do. The jargon was removed from Lautenberg's speeches and replaced with stories of a little girl's courage. "When I'm on the floor of the Senate," he would say, "and the big polluters and their pin-striped lobbyists are trying to use our state as their dumping group, I think of Amy Knox." As a result, Lautenberg was able to communicate his message and win reelection.

KeySpan is a publicly traded \$6 billion, Brooklyn, New York-based energy company with 12,000 employees in New York and New England. It is one of the largest energy companies in the Northeast and the fifth largest natural gas distributor in the U.S. The company has spawned an atmosphere that most companies yearn for but struggle to achieve. Without fanfare, KeySpan has embraced a management philosophy that somehow balances bottom-line demands with a sense of caring and family. There is the palpable belief in the proposition that what is good for the soul is also good for business. Kenny Moore is the former monk with the title of "corporate ombudsman," a position created for him by Bob Catell, the CEO. Kenny reports directly to Catell and roams the company freely, listening to the concerns of both employees and executives while "engaging the soul of the company," as he likes to put it. His role is to help foster corporate change in a time of difficult transformation and to infuse the agenda with a sense of spiritual connectedness. What is different about KeySpan? ... Perhaps it is the recognition that employees bring all their baggage to work. The company recognizes that it must reach people on not only a professional level but also on an emotional and a personal level.¹²

Mahatma Gandhi began his change initiative by attempting to persuade others with facts. When this didn't work, he became a master of appealing to people's feelings rather than their rational thinking. (See the movie "Gandhi" for the many examples.)

Elevator Pitch

Prepare a couple of sentences that you have ready to introduce others to your new idea.

I remember when I came back from my first agile conference. I was so excited! I couldn't wait to talk to my team and tell them about all the new ideas that were buzzing around in my head. The first person I saw when I came back on Monday morning asked, "Hey! How was the conference?" Words started tumbling out and thoughts began competing for air time. I saw myself overwhelming the poor guy but I couldn't stop. Half of what I said didn't make sense and I hummed and erred a lot. "OK! OK! I guess you had a good time! Maybe we can talk later!" It was a dose of reality for me. I needed a better way to answer the question he asked—and fast!

¹² Catell and Moore, *The CEO and the Monk: One Company's Journey to Profit and Purpose*.

You're an [Evangelist] or [Dedicated Champion] working on your new idea. You are constantly encountering others who ask about your initiative. These people are busy and time is limited. You know a lot about your topic and could talk about it for days, but you have to transport the core ideas quickly.

At some point in your change initiative, someone will, by chance, appear on your radar screen. Since you are excited about your new idea, you don't want to waste time stumbling around for the right words to make your case.

We face this challenge all the time. Someone we want to influence asks, "What's that new idea you've been talking about?" You've got a small window of opportunity to get your message across in a way that makes them want to know more.

It was a similar issue—time constraint—that prompted the inverted pyramid style of most newspaper stories—where the essentials: the basic facts, the conclusion, the lead, come first. In the days of the telegraph, the whole story took a long time to transmit. The essentials were sent first since they were more important than the details for getting to press immediately.

Today, we are accustomed to sound bites. According to a study by sociologist Kiku Adato, in the 1968 presidential election the average time each candidate spoke without interruption on the network news was 42.3 sec. By the 2000 campaign, the average time had shrunk to 7.8 sec. The people you want to reach have been raised in the sound-bite culture. They're used to professional politicians, ad makers, and entertainers getting to the point in a matter of seconds. You need to do the same.¹³

If you don't have a clear message ready to share, your excitement about the idea could cause you to rattle on and on. This could give the impression that you really don't know what your goal is for this idea. You need to understand your key message as much as you need to have the ability to explain it to others.

Most of us struggle with the answer to the question, "What do you do?" because we know so much about our complicated lives that we feel the listener needs a lot of background to understand us. Without a prepared short introduction we either overload our listeners or we stumble around and give little worthwhile information.

Therefore:

Craft a short speech that contains your key message.

In a few sentences, describe simply and clearly what your idea is all about. This could contain the following:

- What is your idea?

¹³ Carville and Begala, *Buck Up, Suck Up...and come back when you foul up.*

- What problem does it solve? (Make a connection between your idea and the situation it addresses.)
- What is your vision for the end state? (Where will this initiative take the organization?)

Keep it simple. [Just Enough] is always the watchword. What Mark Twain wrote in 1880 applies today: *"I notice that you use plain, simple language, short words and brief sentences. That is the way to write English-it is the modern way and the best way. Stick to it; don't let fluff and flowers and verbosity creep in..."* Beware of jargon, buzzwords, and long convoluted sentences. You'll be more effective the clearer and simpler you are.

Practice your elevator pitch out loud, until it flows smoothly and conversationally. You want to be convincing. Don't stumble around for the right words. But, try not to sound too rehearsed. Make sure your personality and enthusiasm come through.

Just deliver your elevator pitch and then allow a space to let the listener ask for more information. Don't crowd the listener by pushing for the "close."

Initially, your short speech will be the same for each person you encounter because you want to get everyone on the same page. When someone wants to know more, continue your conversation with a customized message that meets the specific interests and needs of a particular domain [Personal Touch]: developers, testers, team leads, managers, marketing and business folks. When you meet someone in a new area, do your best to address their needs; make a note to create new follow-ons for your pitch.

You will not only need this approach when you start your work. Since you will always have opportunities to talk to new kinds of people and learn more about your innovation, you will want to continually update your pitch and the follow-ups to keep them fresh.

Post your elevator pitch on your web site or outside your office [In Your Space] and have it ready for publication.

Be sure to [Stay in Touch] to address any issues that might arise as a result of your brief introduction. Stay open to comments in conversations. Use your elevator pitch as a key to open doors for learning that swing both ways.

Here are some examples of elevator pitches:

"I connect people to computers. I create simple, effective user interfaces that make it easier for them to do their jobs. Would you like me to simplify your workplace?"

"I keep your company out of the Dilbert comic strip! I'm a management consultant specializing in change. If your company is experiencing rapid growth or change I can offer experience and wisdom to keep your employees happy and your profits in the black."

Search for elevator pitch examples on YouTube—you can find videos of innovators giving their pitch in an elevator and then being evaluated on the effectiveness of their message.

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You can start a dialogue that will help your cause. You'll increase your credibility with your audience because you'll make it easy for them to understand your key messages and take action. You will get everyone on the same page and begin to think about tailoring meaningful responses to any follow-on questions.

However, you can turn off people if you are too glib and too self-confident. Your job is to make the elevator pitch part of a [Personal Touch]. Your goal is to build a relationship. If you come across as a marketing guy just trying to make a sale, it will get in the way.

I was on a panel at an agile conference recently. To open, we were each asked to give a 30-second definition of Agile. Preston Smith was so good—he started with a problem statement: If you're delivering late and not meeting customer expectations, blah, blah, blah, then having shorter iterations and working with the customer, blah, blah, blah. I thought it was a very good elevator pitch. It was short. It was convincing. It told me that he had thought about it and had his answer at the ready. The rest of us were good, but we stumbled around and lost the audience. Preston grabbed their attention and kept it—for a brief, convincing moment.

Mary was working on a climate change project that required her to talk with natural scientists, social scientists, business people, and the general public. She devised the same elevator pitch to begin her conversation with each person—a summary of the project, the problem she was addressing, and her vision for how her work would contribute to the issue of climate change. She quickly learned the questions each type of professional was likely to ask, so, if they asked for more information, she did her best to also prepare a collection of individualized responses.

*In his book *The Heart of Change*, John Kotter says: “What works? ... Visions that are so clear that they can be articulated in one minute or written up on one page.” This is good advice for other things, including an Elevator Pitch.*

Pick Your Battles

Spend your energy in conflict only when it's important. Fight for the things you believe in, but don't fight if it's not important.

The notion of a Pyrrhic victory comes from the story of Pyrrhus, a king of Epirus who lived in the 3rd century B.C. In 279 B.C. he decided to take on the mighty Roman army. Before he sailed for Italy, Cineas, his chief ambassador, had the following conversation with him (faithfully recorded by the ancient historian Plutarch).

Cineas: The Romans are reported to be great warriors and conquerors of many nations. If the gods permit us to overcome them, how shall we use our victory?

Pyrrhus: That is an easy question. Once we conquer the Romans, there will not be any city in all of Italy that will resist us.

Cineas: Once we have Italy, what next?

Pyrrhus: Sicily, which is a wealthy island, should be easy to take.

Cineas: You speak what is perfectly probable, but will the possession of Sicily put an end to the war?

Pyrrhus: Carthage and Africa would then be within reach, and once we have them, who in the world would dare oppose us?

Cineas: No one, certainly. And then what shall we do?

Pyrrhus: Then, my dear Cineas, we will relax and drink all day and amuse ourselves with pleasant conversation.

Cineas: What prevents us from doing that now? We already have enough to make that possible without any more hard work, suffering, and danger.

But Pyrrhus didn't get it. He attacked and defeated the Roman army at Asculum in Apulia. He won, but his casualties were so heavy that he wryly observed: One more such victory and I am lost. Later his weakened army attacked Sparta and lost. Pyrrhus was hunted down and killed by an angry mob in the streets of Argos.

You're an [Evangelist] or [Dedicated Champion] struggling to introduce a new idea into your organization. You may have given some [Brown Bags], tried to [Do Food], or had some successes by starting to [Just Do It] and a [Trial Run] and shared some experiences in a [Hometown Story]. You're meeting some especially irritating resistance as you talk up your new idea.

Even if you had the time and the energy, you lose credibility if you fight every battle. Those who support your ideas will find themselves reluctant to get caught up in every little skirmish or worn out with trying.

It's easy to lose focus and become distracted by all the little annoyances and blow them way out of proportion. You may be torn between doing what you believe is the right thing and saving your energy in a world of too many tasks. It's hard to compromise when it comes to things we deeply care about.

We'd all like to live in a conflict-free environment. Perhaps getting to this point is a matter of figuring out what is really important, what is worth fighting for (and what's not), and, perhaps, being a little more open-minded and accepting of those around us. This may involve reevaluating our priorities, and, for most us, it's uncomfortable to question and compromise our ideals. We may feel that these priorities define us and being flexible with them destroys an important part of what we are.

Therefore:

Stop. Take a deep breath and think for a moment. Ask yourself if the current conflict is worth it. Know who you are and what you believe in. Make a conscious decision to only fight for those things that will make a difference. Maintain your integrity, so that at the end of each decision moment you are proud of yourself.

Ask yourself:

- **Can I win?** If there is no hope for victory, what will you really gain? Choose wisely. You have limited resources. Be honest with yourself. Ask yourself what abilities are needed in this situation and whether you have them. This may be a battle worth fighting but do you have the skills it takes to do it? Even when you feel you are compromising deeply held principles, it's important to live to fight another day. History is full of examples of armies that won the battle but lost the war. Don't risk this fate by standing your ground for every tiny skirmish. At the end of the day, it's not about the battles fought and won, it's about making progress in the overall struggle to reach your goals.
- **Should I win?** Consider the importance of the relationship with your opponents. It might be of more value to support this relationship than to win the current decision. Often you can block your group's progress and perpetuate conflict because you are holding out for a win—you are so sure that you are right and the others are wrong. Compromising can mean that the group moves on rather than being stuck. Winning is not necessarily what it's all about. Seeing movement in the right direction is. Sometimes it's important to lose now in order to win later. You don't have to have the last word. Often it takes a bigger person to simply let the conflict go. Sometimes this can be a turning point—let the opponent win and you may win a convert.

- **What's it all about?** Maybe it's a simple misunderstanding. If it's worth fighting over, it's worth spending time to understand what the real issues are. Check your terms. Make sure your opponent really said what you heard and make sure your opponent really heard what you said. Things are rarely black and white. Try to see the many shades of gray. Be more open and accepting when other's values are different from yours. Try wearing De Bono's six thinking hats (described in the Appendix) to force yourself to consider all the sides. You can learn a tremendous amount about your own cause by doing this.

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You will create opportunities to live to fight another day, since you're not worn out by battling constantly. You will not put resources into something you are not likely to win. Focusing on the important issues will help you achieve your long-term goals since you'll be far more effective in winning the battles that truly are important to you. Choosing your battles wisely will lead to a more peaceful existence and will likely strengthen your interpersonal relationships, both within your working and your home environment.

However, this approach does take work, and, like any lifestyle change, sufficient motivation to make it work. It can be difficult to implement. It's easy for our brains to deceive us about whether we can win, since we are overly optimistic about our abilities, and we are rarely objective about our motives. It's an easy thing to see in others but really hard to do for ourselves.

Another downside with this pattern is that your decision to avoid fighting a certain battle may be the wrong one and have significant impact. You don't always have all the facts you need to make the right decision. History tells many stories of negotiators who chose "peace at any cost." Neville Chamberlain, Conservative British prime minister, thought Hitler was someone he could appease. After Hitler had re-armed the Rhineland, after he had "annexed" Austria (both in violation of the Treaty of Versailles), Chamberlain cut a deal with Hitler—the infamous Munich Accord of September 1938. Chamberlain agreed to allow Hitler to take over a large chunk of Czechoslovakia. After acquiescing to Hitler, Chamberlain declared, "A British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honor. I believe it is peace for our time.... Go home and get a nice quiet sleep." Chamberlain didn't rush in. He gave this battle his time and consideration, but his decision was wrong.

*Ben Thacker-Gwaltney, community organizer in "We Make Change," explains: "I think organizing is a pragmatic profession. If you're too idealistic you're not going to make it. You're going to get disillusioned. You have to cope with failure and compromise on all the rest."*¹⁴

A group of students were standing on the street, attempting to get as many signatures as possible on a petition to legalize gambling in North Carolina. When people reacted negatively to their ideas, the students did not argue with them. In some cases, they took a

¹⁴ Szakos and Szakos, *We Make Change: Community Organizers Talk about What They Do – and Why*

little time to listen to their concerns, but in most cases, they politely thanked the nay-sayers and moved on to the next pedestrian who might be a potential advocate for their cause.

As a parent I have to recognize and respect the fact that peer pressure is real and that I have to deal with it. Constantly fighting with my child is counterproductive. If I criticize everything my child and his peers are doing, I risk shutting the door on communication permanently. It's not easy to live with an outrageous hairstyle or a baggy and sloppy wardrobe, but it may be better at times to let these things slide and to save my strength for the more important life struggles such as stealing, alcohol, or drug abuse.

My husband was a serious bike racer and entered a number of races where he could always see some overzealous, extremely competitive rider who couldn't bear to be left behind. The aggressive but not very tactically-savvy rider would always burn out because he forced himself to stay at the front and would exhaust all his energy before the race was over.

Linda has been interested in the difference between the cultures of the chimpanzees and the bonobos. The chimp culture is alpha-male-dominated, aggressive, and hierarchical. They are territorial, have been observed killing members of neighboring communities and, it is a common tactic for a new alpha to kill infants to make their mothers available to him. Bonobos, on the other hand, are peaceful, non-aggressive, female-dominated and resolve conflict with sex. When the community is upset over anything, the first order of business is—everyone has sex with everyone—males with females, males with males, females with females, young with old, and then the conflict doesn't seem so important any more. A good lesson. Maybe there are few battles really worth fighting.

Appendix

Six Thinking Hats, Edward de Bono, Back Bay Books, 1999.

When wearing the:

White Hat, focus on the data and see what you can learn from it. Look for gaps in your knowledge, and try to fill them or take account of them. Analyze past trends, and try to extrapolate from historical data.

Red Hat, use your intuition, gut reaction, and emotion, and try to understand the intuitive responses of those who do not fully know your reasoning.

Black Hat, look at things pessimistically, cautiously, and defensively. Look for reasons why ideas and approaches might not work. Highlight weak points in a plan or course of action, and try to eliminate them, alter your approach, or prepare contingency plans to counter problems that arise. This can help make your plans 'tougher' and more resilient. It can also help you to spot fatal flaws and risks before you embark on a course of action. Black Hat thinking is one of the real benefits of this technique, as many successful people

get so used to thinking positively that often they cannot see problems in advance, leaving them under-prepared for difficulties.

Yellow Hat, think positively. See all the benefits of the decision, the value in it, and the opportunities that might arise from it.

Green Hat, develop creative solutions to a problem, in a freewheeling, brainstorming way of thinking, where there is little criticism of ideas.

Blue Hat, control the “hats,” for example, when ideas are running dry, ask for Green Hat thinking, or when contingency plans are needed, ask for Black Hat thinking.

Additional Patterns for Fearless Change II

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The patterns in this collection are an addition to those that appeared in *Fearless Change: Patterns for Introducing New Ideas*¹⁵. Our passion for this topic didn't end when the book was published. Rather, we continue to read, observe, take extensive notes and, most importantly, listen to comments and suggestions from our readers. We have not stopped learning about leading change!

As people exchange ideas about the environment, and exchange patterns, the overall inventory of patterns in the pattern pool keeps changing. ...Of course, this evolution will never end. (Alexander, C.A., The Timeless Way of Building)

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¹⁵ Manns, M.L., Rising, L. (2005). *Fearless Change: Patterns for Introducing New Ideas*. Addison-Wesley.

A pattern language and the patterns in it are living things. The work is never finished. We are grateful for the opportunity to share as we are learning. This paper contains the following new patterns: **Concrete Action Plan**; **Small Concession**; **Myth Buster**; **Go To Person**; **Imagine That!**

References to existing patterns in our *Fearless Change* book or in this paper appear in a different font, e.g. Do Food. Abstracts for the *Fearless Change* book patterns can be found at: www.fearlesschangepatterns.com

The patterns are written in a variation of Alexander's format. Each pattern includes:

Name in bold
Alias (if applicable)
Abstract in bold
Opening Story in italics that conveys the essence of the pattern
Context
Problem statement in bold
Description of the Problem and Forces
"Therefore" in italics
Essence of the Solution in bold
Elaboration of the Solution
Resulting Context
Known Uses in italics

Concrete Action Plan

To make real progress toward your goal, at each implementation step, say what you will do, where and when you will do it.

Larry Smith has mastered the difficult art of translating ideas into action. Typically, says Smith, the problem is that we don't know what result we want in the first place -- let alone how we are going to achieve it. The solution: Start by defining a concrete desired result, and then work backward. Map out the entire execution process, from conception to delivery, and then put someone in charge of each step.¹⁶

You are an **Evangelist** who sees a need for change. You have a clear vision and are proceeding toward it **Step by Step**. You always take **Time for Reflection**, but you often find that you are overwhelmed by the large goal you have set for yourself and defining what each small step should involve.

How can you stop spinning your wheels and make your move from goal to action?

It's easy to confuse a clear vision with a short distance. Yes, the destination is clear but the pathway requires many small steps. (Jim Stoffel, CTO Eastman Kodak Co.)

¹⁶ Roberts, Paul. *The Art of Getting Things Done*, Fast Company, December 19, 2007, <http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/35/smith.html>

You've probably experienced the frustration of setting goals only to see them fade away. The goals are so far out that you can't seem to reach them. In some cases, you never think seriously about them after documenting them. Goal setting makes you feel good for a while but then you feel let down when nothing happens. That leads you to ask whether goal setting is even an exercise worth your time and effort.

You want to get somewhere but you just end up spinning your wheels.

Therefore:

Describe each small step as a set of concrete actions. Include what you will do, where you will do it, and when you will do it.

For example, if you want to lose weight, avoid general statements such as, "I'm going to exercise more and eat less." Be specific-- say exactly what exercise you will do, where you will do it, and when you will exercise. "I'm going to walk around the block after dinner on Tuesday and Thursday." Schedule the exercise as you would anything else on your calendar for a specific time and place.

Don't simply make promises. Focus on actions. Create an "implementation intention"—write down a statement that clearly defines what, where, and when specific behaviors will be performed. Keep it simple and make sure it is achievable in the time period you are committing to. This makes it more likely that you'll keep your promises with yourself to reach your goal.¹⁷

When feelings of powerlessness overwhelm you, move your efforts toward the next small step you can completely control for now.

Take Time for Reflection periodically to evaluate if you need to revise your steps or your ultimate goal. Celebrate your Small Successes along the way. This will help to keep you focused on your accomplishments rather than the long road ahead.

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This pattern builds new habits—it replaces old ones with new ones. It helps you take the next step and then follow through. Since most of what we do every day is done on "automatic pilot," this sets new triggers that will bring about desired behaviors instead of doing the same ol', same ol'. By expanding your resolutions to reach large goals with a simple and well defined plan of action, you are more likely to avoid procrastinations, overcome distractions, and carry out your resolutions.

However, it's easy to "fall off the wagon." It's not enough to set up new triggers and hope for the best. You will also have to include in your implementation intention an allowance to help you deal with possible wayward slips. The tendency is to give up everything after even the smallest transgression. Be patient with your efforts and willing to forgive mis-steps. Look for a **Shoulder to Cry On** when you slip up. We are all human. No one is perfect. Reflect on whether there is anything you can do differently as an experiment and then move forward.

Thomas asked Werner for some advice for solving a problem in his consulting business. Werner said, "Go with your instinct. Never compromise your values and, above all, follow your heart." "Thanks for

¹⁷ "Motivations to exercise change over time," Amy Norton, MiNDFOOD, November 7, 2008, <http://www.mindfood.com/at-motivation-exercise-self-efficacy-goals-fitness.seo>

*the great advice,” Thomas lied. He had no idea how to apply all that well-meaning advice. Another friend, who was sitting at the table said, “I would start by trying one of those new approaches you mentioned when you have a client who seems to be open to a little experiment. Then you can see how that works and decide whether to continue or toss it out.” “Thanks!” Thomas replied. And this time he meant it. He was remembering a section in *Made to Stick* (Chip Heath and Dan Heath, Random House, 2007), that said concrete information is more effective—it’s true!*

David Armstrong, the fourth generation of his family to run Armstrong International, tells the story of how he got people in his staff meetings to stop being negative about new ideas. He wanted to introduce a new heat-sensitive paint that changes color with temperature. He knew that the initial reaction of his senior engineers and salespeople would be: “It’s too gimmicky. We sell engineered products.” “Our current paint is good enough.” “Why would we ever want to fool around with something like that?” To make sure he didn’t hear those things, he told people at the meeting that they were there to discuss new ideas and then gave everyone an M&M, saying, “You are allowed one negative comment during this meeting. Once you make that comment, you must eat your M&M. If you don’t have an M&M in front of you, you can’t say anything negative.” It worked well. Instead of simply saying what the goal of the meeting was, David had put a simple implementation intention on the table. The staff caught on quickly and jumped on any negative comments with, “Shut up and eat your M&M!” They got a new product idea out of the meeting—steam traps that change color when they stop working.

Karen’s nutrition counselor told her, “It’s not good enough to just promise yourself, ‘No more junk food,’ instead, say something like, ‘I’m not going to walk into the kitchen as soon as I get home and start to snack so that I’ve eaten 1,000 calories before supper. I’m going to change into exercise clothes and walk around the block. I’m also going to have fresh fruit and veggies ready to eat as I am cooking dinner.’”

The National Novel Writing Month web site (<http://www.nanowrimo.org/>) supports writers as they create a novel in a month. The success rate is high... Why?... because the site offers support in the form of a concrete action plan each day.

Stephen was struggling to learn about his new role as the team manager. He made a lot of mistakes. He especially had difficulty apologizing for his mis-steps. He would say to himself, “I’m going to do better next time.” But it didn’t seem to help. Finally, his mentor, Jake, sat down with him and said, “To say you are sorry takes real courage. Even the worst behavior can be forgiven if you are willing to do three things:

- (1) Apologize, with sincerity and without self-justification.*
- (2) Talk about what you’ve learned from the experience.*
- (3) Say what you will do differently in the future.*

But remember, your credibility will only carry you so far if you establish a pattern of apology following by another explosion. Your team is likely to see you as manipulative and not to be trusted.” It was magic. Now instead of a big promise to himself about an ill-defined goal, he had a few simple steps he could take to address his problem.

Small Concession

To address the concerns of someone who is resistant to your cause and making a lot of noise, consider a small concession that will show you acknowledge the point of view and contribution.

Dick and Jane are semi-serious bike riders and take long rides through a rural area where lots of local farmers keep big, fast dogs. It makes for some exciting sprints when dogs charge them as they rode by. After awhile they learned where the more aggressive dogs were and got in the habit of carrying dog biscuits to toss at any dogs that got too close. It was a sure-fire scheme that had an interesting side effect. Over time the dogs expected a treat and became more playful than aggressive. Dick and Jane began to be less fearful and started calling them friendly names instead of cursing at them. Dogs are like the rest of us, fearful of having our territory invaded. We make a lot of noise about protecting the home front when most of us just want someone to pay attention to us and acknowledge that we exist.

You are an **Evangelist** with a new idea. You see a need for change so you are working hard to spread the word about your ideas, but not everyone is getting on board. Some are with you, but there are skeptics who have resisted your attempts at **Fear Less**, where you have honestly tried to see their side of things and learn from them. You've done a good job at deciding when to **Pick Your Battles**, so you know what things are important to you and what things are not so important or unimportant.

Someone is particularly resistant to your suggestions and is standing firm on one or two points. It's hard to see a way around this person.

Change is difficult. It often puts people in a position of possibly losing prestige or status, so we often find ourselves face-to-face with someone who won't budge on some minor issue. They may be testing you, as much as your idea, to see what kind of person you are and what values are important to you.

It may not be that difficult to allow them to hang on to their pride instead of stripping them naked and taking them prisoner. It's a better strategy to acknowledge that you might not have all the answers. If it's "all about you" and "your way or the highway," others will be less supportive than if you evidence real leadership and a concern for how others feel.

You are at risk for making a real enemy by not being open to a small compromise that might be very important to someone else. Sometimes allowing people to have something to hang on to helps them become more comfortable with the new way of doing things.

Therefore:

Make a small compromise to specifically address the sticking points, the things you and the skeptic are not agreeing on.

Go in with the attitude that rarely does anyone have all the answers for anything. Look for common ground and places to compromise along the way.

Consider a **Trial Run** for any ideas both of you see as possibilities. Set clear expectations—establish the length of the trial and the evaluation criteria for the concession. Be open to learning what you can from every experiment and be flexible about adjusting your ideas. In other words, be an **Evangelist**, not a fanatic. An all-or-nothing approach will only turn off others.

Take this opportunity to appreciate the view of the resistor. Send a clear message that everyone is on an adventure together. There are few, if any, "rights" or "wrongs" – instead, progress is a series of small steps where everyone is always learning.

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This pattern encourages respect for individual differences in adoption of your new idea. Since you have compromised for the resistor, it's likely that he will become more open, not only to your idea, but to a more respectful relationship with you. Sometimes allowing resisters a small "win" will bring them to your side. Sometimes a resistor can become an ally. Since you are proceeding in a **Step by Step** fashion and learning about the change initiative and the organization as you go, this will provide a learning opportunity for everyone concerned.

However, it's also a real possibility that, even after your compromise on the sticking points, some skeptics will retain their position. It might be worthwhile to consider this person as an effective **Champion Skeptic**, someone who takes on the role of the skeptic for a time and has the responsibility to point out all the downsides.

Paul was a department manager in Kathy's organization when she was introducing patterns. Paul wasn't resistant exactly, just not supportive. A proposal Kathy had made for a prestigious publication was accepted—an experience report about their use of patterns. Kathy stopped by Paul's office and said that she would like to mention his department's efforts in the patterns adoption and if he wanted to let her interview him she would be happy to include his name in the list of authors. She made this offer without realizing how influential the strategy was. Paul suddenly became very interested and very supportive and very involved with patterns and very concerned about their success across the organization. The whole experience taught Kathy how a small concession can have a large impact. She resolved to use even small things as gifts to bring others in.

Dan was coaching a team that was moving to agile software development. The plan for the team was to move to an open environment with individual offices available to anyone on an as-needed basis, but one of the team members, Fred, was insistent on keeping his old cubicle. It seemed like it would hold everything up until Dan suggested that for the next few months, they could let Fred have his cubicle. The rest would adopt the new plan. They would evaluate at the end of a trial period and see what had been learned. It's amazing how well that worked. Because Fred felt that his concerns were being addressed, he was not so openly resistant, and it only took a short time before he realized that having the individual office available whenever he needed it was going to work just fine for him. He began to spend more time in the open environment. The rest of the team didn't make a big deal out of it, but just welcomed him whenever he decided to join them.

Karl was nervous about this meeting with Dave, the customer rep. He knew there was no way his team could deliver full functionality by the end of June. He'd been thinking about a way to convince Dave to work with them but he wasn't sure it would work. He started his presentation: "Thanks for hearing us out, Dave. By now you know that we're going to be at least six weeks late but I'm hoping that I have some good news to balance that. I believe that what you really want is the database functionality and I'm going to offer early delivery on that. That piece is complete and just needs a small adjustment to the user interface to be ready for use. We will have it in a couple of weeks." Dave looked thoughtful and replied, "I think that would work for us. We really need that database functionality, and having it early is good news, but I would like to be sure that if we let the final date slide that there will be no further slips in the schedule." Karl smiled, "Thanks, Dave. I think we are very close to meeting all the requirements. I realize that by asking you to take delivery on this database piece we are not taking liberties with our commitments. We want everyone to be happy with our product. We will have that final delivery by the end of August. Thanks for being open to our proposal."

Myth Buster

There are always myths around every change initiative. Document those and address them in a timely and forthright manner.

The great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie - deliberate, contrived and dishonest - but the myth - persistent, persuasive and unrealistic. (John F. Kennedy, 1962)

You are an Evangelist or Dedicated Champion who has focused on the facts about the innovation, its benefits, and the particulars about its transition into the organization but, despite your best efforts, there are misconceptions flying around the organization.

If we hear someone bring up a misunderstanding about our ideas, we usually address it head on with the person who is expressing the concern. However, a false impression in one person's mind is usually a sign that misconceptions are shared by others.

People who hold misconceptions may not be aware that their ideas are incorrect. But, because we build new knowledge on current understandings, these misconceptions can have serious impacts on learning about a new idea.¹⁸

Inaccurate information is often repeated until it achieves a certain myth status. These myths need to be debunked before they take a strong hold and create even more concern and anxieties.

Therefore:

To get the word out about what the innovation isn't as well as what won't happen as a result of its introduction into the organization, create a simple list.

"...life is complicated. Lists aren't."¹⁹ Address the explicit misconceptions you know as well as any others that may be looming. Each bullet point can include the following:

The <innovation> is not... because...
The change initiative will not... because...

Give **Just Enough** explanation for each one. Keep it brief, and include the name of a contact person or other resources the reader can consult for additional information.

Be clear. People are open to suggestion. Calling attention to negative things can validate them. Make sure your list is designed in a way that clearly points out these things are *not* true. Use positive language and don't repeat the myth beyond its initial mention in the list.

Ask for Help from the Champion Skeptic and others to create the list—they are likely to know about the fears and other negative talk surrounding the innovation.

¹⁸ *Misconceptions in Science*: <http://www.indiana.edu/~w505a/studwork/deborah/>

¹⁹ Robert Thompson, professor of popular culture at Syracuse University, CBS Sunday Morning, *Lists Are Taking Over America*, http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/09/20/sunday/main3282144.shtml?source=search_story

Post the message **In Your Space**. Create a web site for the change initiative, include it your presentations or **Town Meeting** about the new idea, or send it in an email to everyone in the organization. You may also want to prepare a one page clear handout to share at **The Right Time** with anyone who approaches you with incorrect impressions and suspicions about the new idea.

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This pattern can help create a clearer understanding of what the new idea isn't. It allows people to build their knowledge on the truth rather than on their misunderstandings.

However, some people do not like to be proven wrong, and will continue clinging to a misconception despite any evidence to the contrary. When you're dealing with people who really want to believe something, attempts to change their minds may only have the opposite effect of strengthening their position, especially if you're using facts as opposed to opinions.²⁰ However, you have given them something to think about and they may come around later. For strong opinions, use **Fear Less**.

During the battle for health care reform in the United States, rumors and misunderstandings often created fear about things like "death panels" or "rationing" or the crushing of small businesses. The president of the United States, Barack Obama, attempted to "debunk the more outrageous myths" in his weekly address titled "Myths and Morality in Health Insurance Reform"²¹ In addition, web sites such as the following attempted to explain the truths behind the myths: <http://harryreid.com/content/reform-myths/>

Simon, a scientist at the National Climatic Data Center, was concerned with the compelling, yet inaccurate, climate change information distributed by less than credible people and organizations. He asked about "effective strategies to pursue to counter this" and a consultant recommended the following: "Your question is a common one. I have recommended to other people that they create some sort of "breaking the myths" web site. For example, the site could summarize, point by point, what people like "plucky captain Jean Luc Picard" claim and then provide the true wisdom for each point. Then, there's an important step 2: You must do all you can to get that site out there-- to encourage people to read it. For example, NCDC could include the URL in all their presentations, links on their sites."

A web site with five of the most common math misconceptions helps elementary students eliminate these tightly held mistaken beliefs. It states that "elimination of mistaken beliefs about math concepts is critical."²²

*To investigate 16 claims that surfaced after the 9/11 event, POPULAR MECHANICS assembled a team of nine researchers and reporters who consulted more than 70 professionals in fields that form the core of the magazine, such as aviation, engineering and the military. The resulting report, *Debunking the 9/11 Myths: Special Report*, reported that they were "able to debunk each of these assertions with hard evidence and a healthy dose of common sense... Only by confronting such poisonous claims with irrefutable facts can we understand what really happened on a day that is forever seared into world history."²³*

²⁰ Debunking the Undebunkable, http://www.classicalvalues.com/archives/2008/09/science_proof_t.html

²¹ <http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/08/22/obama.health.care/>

²² *5 Misconceptions in Elementary Mathematics*, http://teachertipstraining.suite101.com/article.cfm/5_misconceptions_in_elementary_mathematics

²³ http://www.popularmechanics.com/technology/military_law/1227842.html

Since 2002, the "MythBusters" t.v. show has declared more than 300 myths confirmed, busted or plausible. They use the scientific method to conduct controlled, albeit sometimes messy, experiments. Each episode typically tackles between two and four myths, usually within a related topic. The original idea was to have fun and educate -- to have science meet entertainment. But the business of busting myths has proven to be popular. "MythBusters" quickly became one of Discovery Channel's highest-rated shows with more than 10 million viewers tuning in worldwide every week.²⁴

Go To Person

Identify key people who can help at critical points in your change initiative.

*"You know," said the newly appointed CEO of a large company, "I have more than 1000 people in my head office organization; 900 can tell me something's gone wrong, 90 can tell me what's gone wrong, 9 can tell me why it went wrong, and one can actually fix it!"*²⁵

You are an Evangelist or Dedicated Champion who is willing to Ask for Help. There are helpful people in your organization, but they are busy people, often with little time to invest in supporting your idea.

Your "to do" list is growing. You don't have the time, resources, or talent to tackle all of the action items alone.

There are many things to do. You know you need to Ask for Help. You need people who can be trusted to provide a particular service or deal with a particular problem. But where do you start?

Therefore:

Make a list of the things you need to do in the next milestone of your Step by Step initiative. Create a Concrete Action Plan. Next to each item, write the name of the person (or persons) who have the specific resources or ability to help you get that item done.

Look for people who can provide what you need or can facilitate the resources. They will have the necessary skill and knowledge, the authority, influence, and/or ability to cut through red tape, or have access to the connections that can open doors and get the job done. They understand the task you are bringing to them and will make the solution happen.

A go-to person must also have the time and motivation to help. Take the effort to cultivate their interest in the project and the task you are asking of them. Have your general Elevator Speech ready, but use Personal Touch to address their questions and concerns—then you are in a better position to Ask for Help. If you don't know them well, solicit the assistance of a Bridge-Builder. Be mindful of any established processes, so that you don't ruffle any feathers.

²⁴ <http://dsc.discovery.com/fansites/mythbusters/mythbusters.html>

²⁵ Gandz, J. (2007). Go To People: What Every Organization Should Have, *Ivey Business Journal*, http://www.iveybusinessjournal.com/article.asp?intArticle_ID=675

Give each go-to person a palpable, do-able task. Respect their time by providing as much lead time as possible. Even if you don't need their help immediately, discuss your plans and the timeline—then **Stay in Touch** and give them progress reports. Try to fit your schedule into **The Right Time** for this person. This will make it more likely that they will be available when you need them.

Even when you check “get go-to people in place” off your list, keep a back-up plan in mind. Think about what you will do if these key people disappear. Be careful about cultivating too much dependence on a limited amount of people. You don't want to burn them out and risk that they could disappear.

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This pattern creates a way to expedite whatever it is you must get done. You've reached out and located the key people you need to move forward. And you are helping to build a **Group Identity** for your initiative.

However, you could potentially become known as the person who bugs people too much. Individuals may run when they see you coming because they think you will ask a favor. **Just Say Thanks** to help go-to people feel good about themselves; allow them to be an example to others by publicizing the **Small Successes** that are made possible through their assistance.

Sally was planning a Big Jolt event. Finding an appropriate location and a budget for food would be a challenge, but if anyone could figure it out, the admin, Jennifer, could. Sally planned to ask Adam to make sure the technical support was in place and enlist William and Lisa to spread the word among the key people on their teams. She thought of Harry, and his interesting artwork, as a possibility for a gift for the speaker. Then, she set off to talk with each of these go-to people.

Zahrah was trying to get a daycare center established in her organization. At the start of each milestone, she listed the tasks that needed to be done and, beside each one, she wrote the name of the person she needed to contact for information, resources or for other kinds of help. Then, she made phone calls or visits to each one of them to discuss her needs. Once this was done, it felt good to know that all her go-to people were in place to make the next milestone a reality.

Maury was a member of a geographically-dispersed conference planning committee consisting of many volunteers who held a variety of different roles. So, as he listed the specific tasks that needed to be done in each phase of the planning process, he noted the name of the other volunteer(s) that needed to be contacted to get each of his tasks accomplished.

A “go to player” on a team is the person on a sports team who always gets the ball or puck and is counted on to score, especially in a close game.

Imagine That!

To move your change initiative forward, engage people in an exercise to imagine future possibilities.

The ABC News Special titled “Earth 2100” (airing in June 2009), depicted an imaginary, but possible, scenario in the year 2100. ABC introduced it as follows: “To change the future, first you have to imagine it.”

You are an **Evangelist** or **Dedicated Champion** who is talking about the new idea that is likely to happen in the future, but people are focusing on the visible difficulties surrounding the idea rather than the potential outcomes. This inhibits their ability to understand how the new idea can impact the future.

It is hard for people to understand how a new idea will fit into the work they will be doing in the future. They usually find it easier to remember the problems of the past and concentrate on the challenges facing them in the present.

You want people to believe that a new beginning, a better world is possible and could be just around the corner. You want people to *understand* the past, but *focus* on the future.

However, you don’t always have the resources to do a **Trail Run** and you rarely, if ever, have the ability to perfectly simulate what a new idea will provide. Yet, a visualization, a mental rehearsal, is always possible.

Therefore:

Ask people to imagine the future. Begin with “What if…”

Encourage them to think out loud and fill their mental imagery with many different kinds of sensory detail. How will things look when the new idea is a reality? What kinds of things will we hear? What will it allow us to do?

Tell the story. How could the events unfold? Replay the steps that got us to the problem as a **Wake-up Call**.²⁶ Then, continue the story with the potential ways a new idea could address the current problem(s).

If you want to take it a step further, ask them to consider how they would feel if a new idea allowed things to change... relief?... satisfaction?... confidence?²⁷

In addition to talking about the positive outcomes, imagine the risks of moving forward with the change-- what side effects could surface, and what might we be able to do about them?

Imagine the other side too-- what could happen if we *don’t* change?

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This pattern allows you to fit a new idea into the future. It helps everyone imagine the possibilities and how they are relevant to their daily existence. By focusing on the future, people may be more motivated to let go of the past. This engages them in the potential for change and creates a fertile pool for making it a reality.

²⁶ Heath & Heath, *Made to Stick*, 211-212

²⁷ Heath & Heath, 211

But don't get carried away. Imagining can be fun and, as a result, you may tell a story about an unrealistic future. This will only create problems for you later if the imagined does not match the future reality. Be sure that the story is **Tailor Made** to what the organization and/or the person can and cannot do.

In order to get employees interested in using new project management and social networking software, the CIO's presentation included a variety of specific scenarios describing when, where and how this software could be used in existing and future projects. The attendees nodded and responded with potential scenarios of their own: "Oh, and I can also see how this software can be used in <here>"

*A church was facing a new, uncertain future after the unexpected loss of the head minister. The deacon held a **Town Meeting** in which he asked all attendees to choose to participate in one of three groups that represented their personal feelings: anger, confusion, hope. The "hope" group was asked to spend time imagining a new, better and exciting future for the church. When this group reported the outcome of their exercise, smiles and nods appeared among the people in the other two groups.*

*Gary often does an imagery technique with his clients who are depressed. He asks the person to close her eyes and describe herself—what color is she wearing, how does her facial expression (eyes, mouth, etc) look, how does her stature appear, how are her friends reacting to her, what does she do every day, etc. Then, he asks this person to imagine herself in a year, prompting her with the same questions about facial expression, stature, lifestyle, etc. Afterwards, they have a discussion about which of the two images is preferable and what **Concrete Action Plan** the person can make in order to begin moving towards the more desirable image.*

*When one small company gets "stuck" the CEO gathers his staff and asks them to let their imaginations run wild for awhile. How can we move forward? What are all the possibilities? Once all the ideas have been expressed, the CEO then guides them in dialing back to realistic options and an outline for a **Concrete Action Plan**.*

The Piedmont Community Design Forum was established by four architects to create a public discussion before a new community is built. The planning process always begins with a request, to both the developers and the neighborhood residents, to imagine what their ideal community would look like. From this starting point, everyone can begin to compromise and work out the details for a new environment.

Bill is a diver in his personal life and a risk consultant in his professional life. He tells us: "A given person can 'reframe' their expectations about an unknown future, through visualization, from dread to excitement. As a diver, for example, I would envision an upcoming competition with me choking, or with me nailing my dives. Similarly, an employee can use visualization and rehearsal to prepare for the 'best case outcome' (versus the opposite) for an upcoming presentation to more senior executives. If they are going to be thinking obsessively about a scary situation, they might as well focus on best case outcomes instead of worst case."

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our shepherd, Klaus Marquardt, who is not only a patterns expert, but a long-time friend who understands the "heart" of this pattern language. His comments made a tremendous difference in this version. We can only hope to continue growing these patterns to reach the high standards he has set for us. Thank you, Klaus!

In addition, thanks to the members of the “People” writers workshop at PLoP ’09 who helped us improve our patterns even more: Takashi Abi, Marco Hernandez, Jeff Hutchinson, Lise Hvatum, Christian Kohls, Jake Miller, Karl Rehmer, and Robert Zack.

Finally, thanks to the members of the MiniPLoP ‘09 writers workshop: Ademar Aguiar, Brian Foote, Dick Gabriel, Ralph Johnson, Rick Mercer, and Joe Yoder.

Additional Patterns for Fearless Change III

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The patterns in this collection are an addition to those that appeared in *Fearless Change: Patterns for Introducing New Ideas*²⁸. Our passion for this topic didn't end when the book was published. Rather, we continue to read, observe, take extensive notes and, most importantly, listen to comments and suggestions from our readers. We have not stopped learning about leading change!

*As people exchange ideas about the environment, and exchange patterns, the overall inventory of patterns in the pattern pool keeps changing. ...Of course, this evolution will never end.*²⁹

A pattern language and the patterns in it are living things. The work is never finished. We are grateful for the opportunity to share as we are learning.

For readers of this paper who have not read our book, we'd like to say a little about the context for the broader pattern language: it's for a powerless leader, we call that person the Evangelist, someone who believes sincerely in the new idea, but has no authority to "make it happen" in the organization. All our patterns include an opening story and three known uses. We learned early on that it was difficult to get users of our patterns to share their experiences, so we have changed names of individuals and organizations to protect their identities, but all the stories are real.

This paper contains the following new patterns: **Know Yourself, Accentuate the Positive, Low Hanging Fruit.**

References to existing patterns in the *Fearless Change* book or in this or other papers appear in a different font, e.g. Do Food. Abstracts for the *Fearless Change* patterns and others from PLoP publications can be found at: www.fearlesschangepatterns.com

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²⁸ Manns, M.L., Rising, L. (2005). *Fearless Change: Patterns for Introducing New Ideas*. Addison-Wesley.

²⁹ Alexander, C.A. (1979). *The Timeless Way of Building*. Oxford University Press.

The patterns are written in a variation of Alexander’s format. Each pattern includes:

- Name in bold
- Alias (if applicable)
- Abstract in bold
- Opening Story in italics that conveys the essence of the pattern
- Context
- Problem statement in bold
- Description of the Problem and Forces
- “Therefore” in italics
- Essence of the Solution in bold
- Elaboration of the Solution, followed by “=====”
- Resulting Context
- Three Known Uses in italics

Know Yourself

Before you begin the long journey required to lead a change initiative and throughout the adventure, consider whether you have a real and abiding passion, the talents and abilities, and sufficient resources to make it happen.

At first Greg Mortenson, an avid mountain climber, just wanted to build one school. Even though he wasn't sure he would be able to find the funds and actually carry out his plans for the small Pakistani village where he found himself exhausted and lost after a failed attempt to ascend the notorious K2 Himalayan summit. But he was determined to return the generosity the villagers had shown him. "I kind of had to give up everything, and sell all my possessions, until things started to change around," he says. After hearing of his efforts, American schoolchildren stepped in. Their 62,400 donated pennies helped to build that school. In his two best-selling books, "Three Cups of Tea" and "Stones into Schools," Mortenson describes his journey—how he started with one small promise to build one school and how it became his life's work—educating children, especially girls. As he says, "Young women are the developing world's greatest agents of progress. Just one year of schooling will dramatically raise a girl's later economic prospects, and where girls get to fifth grade, birth rates and infant mortality plunge. Teaching girls to read and write reduces the ignorance and poverty that fuel religious extremism and lays the groundwork for prosperity and peace. In military parlance, educating girls is a 'force multiplier.' Thus, the flame that burns at the center of my work, the heat around which I cup my hands, are the stories of girls whose lives have been changed by education." This changing self-knowledge has been a guiding principle that has helped Greg Mortensen build schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan for more than a decade.

You're an Evangelist-wanna-be. You are enthusiastic about a great idea. You believe in it, but you don't have an unlimited amount of time and resources to make it happen. You must set priorities.

You're not always sure if you have what it takes to make your idea successful. There's always the possibility that your priorities are not clear and you might take on more than you can handle. Your passion for the idea can waver over time.

You know that you believe in your idea now, but do you have the long-term interest to make it happen? Can your passion be sustained throughout the difficult change process? Opportunities and problems are all around. It can seem that even the best intentions and the hardest work and the greatest abilities are no match for the challenges we face.

We all have limited resources. Even when we recognize that change efforts take a great amount of time and energy, it will likely take even more than we realize.

We can get stuck implementing the details and lose the big picture when, despite our capabilities to reflect, we don't take the time to do so. As a result, we really aren't sure if we're doing the right thing.

When we don't take the time to develop a realistic understanding of ourselves and the resources we have, we're open to being pulled in different directions. We sign on for too much. We have trouble saying, "No." We believe we can do it all.

Therefore:

Deliberately spend Time for Reflection trying to understand your own abilities, limitations and resources. Identify your values, principles, likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses. Reflect on the beliefs and qualities that define who you are and what you can do.

A good way to start your reflection is with a list of questions. For example, see those discussed in the books *What Color is Your Parachute?*³⁰ or *The First 90 Days*.³¹ The list will help you evaluate your strengths, weaknesses, preferences, priorities, habits, and past experiences. Your ability to observe yourself is uniquely human. We call it "self-awareness" or the ability to think about your very thought process. This is why we can evaluate and learn from others' experiences as well as our own. This is also why we can make and break our habits. Self-awareness enables us to stand apart and examine even the way we see ourselves—our self-paradigm.

Have a dialogue with yourself—that is, talk out loud to yourself—even better, walk around while conversing with yourself! Take different roles and perspectives. Most of us use only one strategy to try to understand ourselves—thinking silently. But numerous studies have shown that this leads to a negative, self-defeating pattern of thought that makes matters worse, especially when we are depressed or in a bad mood.³² Ruminators

³⁰Bolles, R.N. (2010). Ten Speed Press. The Library of Congress lists this book as one of "25 Books That Have Shaped Readers' Lives." First published in 1970; updated annually.

³¹ Watkins, M. (2003). *The First 90 Days*, Harvard Business Press.

³² Kline, N. (1999) *Time to Think*, Ward Lock Wellington House, London.

are worse at solving problems related to their distress, focus more on negative aspects of their past, explain their behavior in more self-defeating ways, and predict a more negative future for themselves.³³

Try writing (with paper and pen)—it can produce surprising results. Psychologist James Pennebaker, author of *Opening Up*,³⁴ has shown the powerful insights that can be uncovered by journaling. Create a mind map or concept map—you can use small cards to rearrange what is most important.

Have a dialogue with trusted others too. Cognitive psychologists tell us that it's difficult to understand our own motivation.³⁵ Scientists also say we are hardwired to be optimistic about our own abilities.³⁶ While some of our colleagues often believe that we can “do anything,” someone who has known us for a long time and has seen our ups and downs can provide a more accurate view.

Uncover areas where you will need to Ask for Help. While it may be tempting to stretch beyond your limits, identify the roles you can expect to play well and target others in which help from others can improve your overall effectiveness.

After some initial evaluation that allows you to know yourself better, Test the Waters to start to learn what you might and might not be able to do. It's difficult to understand your own motives, but when coupled with the task of understanding the culture of an organization, it's easy to misunderstand your capabilities. This learning process never ends.

Keep in mind that your effectiveness depends not only on your contributions, but on the environment, and both are continually changing. The result of this initial reflection must only be the start. If you are to continue to be successful, you must continually learn about yourself, about your initiative, and about your organization.

As you continue along in your journey, periodically ask yourself if you still have the passion for your cause. Evangelist isn't a job title; it's a way of life. If you don't love a cause, you can't evangelize it.

Set priorities. Even when you have true and abiding passion and the ability to make your new idea happen, there are often deciding factors in the environment that can point in another direction. Consider the Low Hanging Fruit to maximize your limited resources.

Don't forget to celebrate Small Successes and find a Shoulder to Cry On when you feel discouraged. Involve Everyone because all change efforts are the result of community action.

³³ Wilson

³⁴ (1990). The Guilford Press.

³⁵ Wilson, T.D. (2002). *Strangers to Ourselves*, The Belknap Press.

³⁶ Fine, C. (2006). *A Mind of Its Own*, W. W. Norton and Company.

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This pattern will help you develop a better understanding of who you are—your talents, abilities, and preferences, as well as your tendencies to take on too much or your reluctance to sign up for things that interest you. You'll have a clearer understanding of your limits and know when to ask for help. You'll be better equipped to make a decision about whether or not to take on the change initiative and whether your passion for the new idea will last through the long-term commitment that is necessary for real change. How we see ourselves also impacts how we see others. It's not only important to know yourself so you can be true to your own values, goals, and needs, but it's important for seeing others more clearly too. Until we have reached a better understanding of our own motives, we will waste a lot of energy projecting our feelings on others.³⁷

However, if you identify essential skills you don't have, this doesn't mean you should give up. Everyone has a unique contribution to make in any setting. If you aren't a perfect match for the requirements you identify, it may mean you may have to work harder and look for (or develop) other Evangelists to help you. When you are challenged to succeed despite some obstacles, you'll have a valuable chance to learn and to show what you can do. Many successful initiatives have been started by people who didn't feel they were up to the task. Your own tolerance for risk and uncertainty will certainly play a part, but a spirit of adventure can often save the day.

Zella and Fred were trying to start a day care center for the children of the employees in their organization. They begged Dan to help because they knew he was a hard-working individual. Dan agreed only because he was a friend of Zella and Fred and didn't want to let them down. However, as the months went by, Dan became less and less interested in the project and often found an excuse for not pulling his weight. After a heart-to-heart talk with his friends, Dan finally admitted to them (and to himself) that he didn't have the essential passion for the day care center like they did.

Anna was asked to lead a new initiative in her organization. She believed in the benefits of the change so her initial reaction was to accept the opportunity to be the project manager. But, rather than immediately responding with a "yes" she evaluated whether she truly had an interest in developing the skills that would be required to lead this particular kind of project. Anna didn't mind moving out of her comfort zone (she had done it many times before) but she had learned through past experiences that when she didn't have a sincere interest in something, it would not get her best effort. So Anna turned down the project and, as she watched it progress with another manager, she knew she had made the right decision.

At the beginning of President Bill Clinton's first term, he spent his time investigating anything and everything. His physical and intellectual energies were nearly limitless, and when you're president, if you want to know everything there is to know about the wool and mohair subsidy, the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Wool and the Vice-Under-Secretary for Mohair will be in the Oval Office in five minutes. At the same time, Clinton

³⁷Covey, S.R. (1989). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Simon & Schuster, 66-67.

*was trying to work on a few big things: his economic plan, his health care plan, and his crime plan. But the endless research was exhausting him. Finally, he realized that he needed to understand the limits on his time and energy. He stopped, reassessed, streamlined, and began setting priorities. That left him with time to think, read, and focus on the things he really cared about. One of the keys to the Clinton comeback was likely his ability to maintain a strategic rather than a tactical focus.*³⁸

Bob is an Innovator who quickly gets excited about new opportunities. He found himself agreeing to projects that would take a great amount of his time without first evaluating if he actually had the time or the long term interest to carry it to completion. His overbooked schedule created frustration for him and for the people who counted on him. So eventually, Bob learned that when he is offered a new opportunity, he needs to stifle his enthusiasm and logically evaluate his available time and potential for long term commitment before accepting it.

An extract from an interview between Jane Goodall and Harvard Business Review(HBR) shows how Goodall found her way by knowing herself:

HBR: *You've often taken a pragmatic, incremental approach to changing the world.*

Goodall: *Part of me says gosh, I'd love to join the most violent and destructive groups out there who want to go and raid labs and release animals and do all sorts of dreadful things, but it wouldn't help.*

HBR: *How do you find the right balance between your ethics and what's possible in the short term?*

Goodall: *With difficulty. If I'm perceived as a tree hugger, I won't be able to talk to the people who can make the decisions. But then I get criticized from both sides. So I have to be tough enough. And "to thine own self be true."³⁹*

³⁸ *Buck Up, Suck Up...and come back when you foul up*, James Carville and Paul Begala, Simon & Schuster, 2003.

³⁹ Interview with Jane Goodall, *Harvard Business Review*, April 2010, 124.

Accentuate the Positive

To encourage people during the change initiative and inspire them to believe the change can happen, motivate them with a sense of hope rather than fear.

*Fear less, hope more;
Eat less, chew more;
Whine less, breathe more;
Talk less, say more;
Love more,
and all good things will be yours.
~Swedish Proverb~*

You have attempted to use Personal Touch to show people how your new idea could be of value to them, but some people aren't seeing this value in the same way you are. You may have used Wake-Up Call to point out the problem you believe is creating a pressing need for change. This has persuaded people to pay attention to your idea. This leads you to believe that if a little fear worked, more will work even better. So, you continue to try to talk primarily about the frightening things that are happening in the organization or the things that could happen if your new idea is not adopted. You believe this will cause people to become more and more fearful of the current situation and, in turn, accept your idea for "saving" the organization. Yet, this kind of strategy only works in the short term.

It can be easy to alert people to all the things that could happen if a change does not occur. This may work in the short term but does not work well in the long term.

Fear typically doesn't motivate people to take sustainable action. Fear is good at rallying negative feelings against others, but does not lead individuals to take on responsibility and become proactive, especially in the long-term. The typical reaction to threats or fearful scenarios is denial or paralysis.

A Wake-Up Call can jar people into immediate action for a short-term problem, especially if there is a clear way to eliminate the problem that is causing the fear.⁴⁰ For example, a confrontation with a manager who is angry about a missed deadline is likely to cause an employee to stay late to work on that project.

But when problems are larger and solutions are more complex, the use of ongoing fear tactics is likely to cause people to avoid you. Most individuals aren't attracted to something that creates negative tension. They are not usually looking for yet another thing to worry about in their already stressful lives. Therefore, your attempts to rouse people with fear can produce the opposite effect. Humans often shield themselves from

⁴⁰ Goldstein, N., Martin, S., Cialdini, R. (2008). *Yes: 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to be Persuasive*, New York: Free Press, 42.

threats by triggering defense mechanisms such as denial or rationalization. To avoid the anxiety, the people you are trying to reach can simply ignore or disconnect from the situation you are trying to create.

Even though defense mechanisms are a common, helpful tool for getting us through our daily lives without the weight of the world on our shoulders, they are one of the biggest reasons it's so difficult to motivate people to change.⁴¹ Change leaders want to avoid an environment in which people are denying or disconnecting from the problem or the solution.

For example, Allen Carr, a former chain smoker, advises people who wish to encourage their friends and relatives to stop smoking, do so by helping the smoker believe he can stop—this will cause his mind to open. Carr explains, “If you try to force a smoker to stop, he will feel like a trapped animal and want his cigarette even more. Don’t try to scare him into stopping by telling him he is ruining his health or wasting his money.” Instead, Carr recommends that you give the smoker hope that he can quit by exposing him to ex-smokers who thought they were hooked for life but can attest to how much better their life is as a non-smoker. Continue to tell him how proud you are of him during the long quitting process of ups and downs. Point out his small successes along the way such as how much better he smells and how much clearer his breathing is.⁴²

Alan Deutschman, author of *Change or Die*,⁴³ explains it in this way: “After we “rationally” inform and educate people, we resort to scare tactics. We like to think that change is motivated by fear and that the strongest force for change is crisis, which creates the greatest fear. There are few crises as threatening as heart disease, and no fear as intense as the fear of death, but even those don't motivate heart patients to change.”⁴⁴

A change approach that makes use of too much fear can also cause people to become overwhelmed and, in turn, get weighed down with a negative state of mind and a sense of helplessness and apathy. Instead of inspiring action among the people you are trying to convince, you may, instead, cause them to believe they are powerless to deal with the situation.^{45 46}

Dan Pink, in his book *Drive*,⁴⁷ points out that this can apply to the commonly-used approach of providing negative consequences (or “sticks”) to motivate employees to improve. He explains that this causes individuals to be “near sighted,” with a desire to accomplish the task that will avoid the threatened punishment, but nothing else. The fear, Pink argues, does not foster creativity and out-of-the-box thinking because greatness and near-sightedness cannot exist together.

⁴¹ Deutschman, A. (2007). *Change or Die*, Los Angeles: HarperCollins, pg. 39

⁴² Carr, Allen (2004), *The Easy Way to Stop Smoking*.

⁴³ Deutschman, A (2007).

⁴⁴ <http://www.fastcompany.com/articles/2007/01/change-or-die.html?page=0%2C3>

⁴⁵ *Change or Die*, 39

⁴⁶ Global warming is a good example. From science we know for sure that we are destroying the world – we know it! Yet we don't change. The problem is just too overwhelming and we feel helpless.

⁴⁷ Riverhead Hardcover (2009).

A fear tactic is an external force that does not usually create an internal change. When the fear disappears, so can the desire to sustain the change.

One reason people don't change is they do not feel sufficient internal pressure. Wake-Up Call can help to create this. But it is not enough. Research on the effects of faith and hope in facilitating change has found that a belief in the ability to change is a strong predictor of success.⁴⁸

Therefore:

Inspire people throughout the change initiative with a sense of optimism rather than fear.

Use Wake-Up Call sparingly, to create the pressure for change, but don't stop there. Stress the positive rather than the negative so that people feel they have control over the problem. When people feel it is The Right Time to attempt the change, provide a clear, obtainable solution.⁴⁹

Use Personal Touch and Tailor Made to help individuals believe that they, and the organization, can obtain this solution. Point out their assets, strengths, and skills that will allow the change to become a reality.

Identify typical scenarios in which people are likely to react in a negative way. Plan ahead for these so you know what to do and can react with confidence.

To keep the positive feelings from wavering throughout the long process of change, build a Group Identity and strong relationships so that people feel safe to express their concerns before they give up hope. Provide continuing support and a Shoulder to Cry On when needed. If the morale is getting low, bring people together in a Town Meeting for an update and Time for Reflection. It's important that you remain optimistic, so don't hesitate to Ask for Help and find your own Shoulder to Cry On when you get overwhelmed or discouraged.

Show people what it is possible for them to do. If possible, provide External Validation. Individuals are likely to draw strength from comforting and reassuring testimonials of others who have been through a similar change.⁵⁰

Keep people informed on the progress and future plans. Stay in Touch and stress Small Successes so that people concentrate on what has been accomplished rather than worry about all the work that is still ahead of them. Low Hanging Fruit can enable early wins. Nothing is as encouraging as the Smell of Success.

⁴⁸ Bandura (1986) (in Doppelt, 70)

⁴⁹ Goldstein, 43-44.

⁵⁰ <http://www.ourjourneyofhope.com/spiritual-support/testimonials.cfm>

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This pattern helps to create belief and continuing sense of hope that your new idea can be realized. Forward movement can result when people are optimistic rather than resistant.

However, you must be careful not to offer false hope. You sacrifice a great deal of credibility when you promise more than you can deliver. Know Yourself to ensure that you never mislead. If something does go wrong, be sure to take responsibility and offer a clear plan for addressing the issue.

Dr. Edward Miller, dean of the medical school and CEO of the hospital at Johns Hopkins University points out that "If you look at people after coronary-artery bypass grafting two years later, only about 10% of them have changed their lifestyle," Dr. Dean Ornish, founder of the Preventative Medicine Research Institute, raised that number to 77% by realizing the importance of going beyond the facts and using hope instead of fear. He observed that providing health information is not always enough and motivating patients mainly with the fear of death wasn't working either. For a few weeks after a heart attack, patients were scared enough to do whatever their doctors said. But death was just too frightening to think about, so their denial would return, and they'd go back to their old ways. Instead of trying to motivate them with the "fear of dying," Ornish reframes the issue. He inspires a new vision, convincing them they can feel better, not just live longer. That means enjoying the things that make daily life pleasurable, like making love or even taking long walks without the pain caused by their disease. Weekly support groups with other patients, as well as attention from dieticians, psychologists, nurses, and yoga and meditation instructors help to point out the "short term wins" that reassure their faith in their ability to lead a healthier lifestyle.⁵¹

Sally was going through a divorce. The stress caused her to lose her appetite and her energy. She was staying in bed more than usual and her weight was dropping at an alarming rate. Many concerned friends pointed out the effect this was having on her health and her ability to do her job, but Sally didn't seem to care. Her friend, Alice, took a different approach. When she could encourage Sally to get up and do something small or eat a few bites of food, she applauded the small success and encouraged Sally to try a little more the next day. Alice also got Sally in touch with other people who had been through a difficult divorce and came out better at the other end. The understanding from her friend Alice and the support given by others who had been through similar circumstances provided the hope Sally needed to eventually return to her old self.

Marcy, a college professor, gets irritated when her students perform poorly on exams or assignments because they don't take the required effort or make their schoolwork a priority. She is often tempted to create panic by threatening them with a potentially low final grade or a possible failure. However, she has learned that fear lasts only until the next distraction appears in their lives. More importantly, a repetitive fear tactic makes her sound frightening rather than approachable. Marcy has learned that a brief Wake-Up Call in which she explains the reality of a bad grade is sometimes necessary, but she

⁵¹ http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/94/open_change-or-die.html?page=0%2C0

follows this with a commitment to help the students change their study habits and attitudes. She doesn't do the work for them but makes herself available to help students who have the desire to improve. She encourages them with stories of other students who struggled but succeeded with a good grade in the class and cheers them on by pointing out their Small Successes along the way.

Low Hanging Fruit

To show progress in your change initiative, complete a low risk task that has wide impact quickly and then publicize the results.

We hear so much about alternative energy, energy tax credits, ENERGY STAR products and more, but with little or no budget, a person can take simple steps to address low hanging fruit that can go a long way in saving energy and reducing costs. Most utility companies recommend setting thermostats to 78 degrees or higher in summer and 68 degrees or lower in winter. Each degree below these recommendations in summer, or above in winter, represents an approximate 4% increase in the electric portion of your utility bill. Fans are a low cost way option in the summer—they can make you feel about 6 degrees cooler and often use less energy than a 100-watt bulb. Simply turning off fans and adjusting thermostats when no one is in the room can help too. Regular maintenance of cooling and heating equipment ensures equipment is running efficiently with clean condenser and/or blower coils and filters, proper refrigerant levels and no leaking ducts. Maintenance saves up to 30% of fan and up to 10% of space-conditioning energy use. Energy expended for lighting in commercial buildings is second only to the energy used for heating and cooling equipment. Turning off lights that do not contribute to the workspace and are not used at the end of the work day can reduce operating costs by saving energy and reducing the number of lamp replacements. These are easy tasks with significant outcomes.

You're an Evangelist or Dedicated Champion actively using the patterns: Test the Waters, Time for Reflection, Small Successes, and Step by Step.⁵² At each iteration of this "Learning Cycle," you are faced with moving forward based on what you have learned from your past experience. You understand the importance of incremental change and realize that it is your best hope for the large goal you have for your organization.

Given all the tasks you have to accomplish in your change initiative, how do you decide which one to tackle next when you are getting pressure to make progress and take on more than you can handle?

Even if you're a Dedicated Champion, your time and energy are limited. You can never take on all the tasks you'd like to in your change initiative. But you need to show progress toward your goal.

You may have managers or executives invested in the change effort who are monitoring your effort and expect results. You may need to choose between tasks that are "almost" done. Or, you may need to show progress in a report for an ongoing large project.

John Kotter has been studying organizational change for two decades and stresses that change leaders must provide enough visible, unambiguous short-term wins in mission-

⁵² Psychologists call this The Kolb Cycle, The Learning Cycle or The Experiential Learning Cycle.

critical areas to persuade skeptics and marginalize cynics. “These are concrete successes,” Kotter says, “ones that an objective group of people would agree are clear evidence of progress.”⁵³ Short-term wins allow a better chance of actually completing a change effort if they are visible to many, the terms are unambiguous, and the victory is closely related to the change effort. A victory generated to meet these requirements creates excitement, certainty, momentum, and serves also to quiet critics. Kotter explains that planning for results instead of “praying” for results is the key. There is also a difference between “gimmick wins” and actual short-term victories. Gimmicks can be effective at least initially, but might involve a sacrifice for the future. Planning short term wins helps boost morale, since employees can see the successes of the change in small doses, which allows them to envision the overall success of the change in the future.⁵⁴

Therefore:

As you prepare to move forward Step by Step, look for an easy win.

Find something small and Just Do It. This low-hanging fruit should be low risk, but visible, likely to succeed, with relatively large impact. Rather than wasting your time on low-impact efforts that will dilute your focus, look for easy wins that also have impact. Low hanging fruits should be actions that you have to perform to reach the higher hanging ones and finally make radical change.

Ask for Help from anyone who may be able to provide suggestions about where to look for the easy wins and may be enthusiastic enough to help you carry it out.

Take time to Know Yourself and determine what to do after this easy win. Kolb’s “Learning Cycle” suggests that it is not enough to just have an experience in order to learn. Reflection is required to make generalizations and formulate concepts that can then be applied to new situations. This learning must then be tested in new situations. The learner must make the link between the theory and action by planning, acting out, reflecting and relating it back to the theory. Your change effort is a series of small steps where each step is an experiment.⁵⁵

After you have achieved a Small Success advertise your progress. Keep the good news In Your Space. Schedule a Hometown Story. Stay in Touch with your supporters; never assume that news of your progress is known across the organization.

If the next easy win is not obvious, this might mean you have an opportunity to start a Study Group, or it could be that it’s time to take a break because it’s not The Right Time to take another step forward.

⁵³ “Mission Impossible?” *Fast Company*, April 2007, J. J. Brazil, 93-97, 108-109.

⁵⁴ *Leading Change*, John Kotter, Harvard Business School Press, 1996.

⁵⁵ *The Art of Changing the Brain*, James E. Zull, Stylus Publishing, 2002.

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The early wins created by this pattern can be convincing for members of the Early Majority and others who need to see success before they are willing to experiment with the new idea. When you see what works well, you and other Evangelists will learn more about the new idea and about your organization. This will give you valuable information for building a change initiative that is Tailor Made for the organization.

However, sometimes you have to tackle the big, complicated issues and be willing to trudge along with no easy wins. Make sure you have a healthy balance of low hanging fruit efforts and more significant progress on larger projects. After taking several small steps and completing small projects, it might be time to consider a larger step with wider impact. As you spawn more Evangelists across the organization, who are successfully completing small projects, you might have to consider together if it's The Right Time for bigger steps.

When Rachel was introducing Scrum into her organization, she created a short presentation that she gave at a Brown Bag. Other teams heard about it and asked her to give the presentation at their weekly meetings. She was encouraged by all the interest, but she realized that as a volunteer Evangelist, she didn't have much time to work with every interested teams. So, she started with just one presentation and, over time, added another every few weeks. Usually someone in each team signed on to join the change effort and play the role of Evangelist. It wasn't long before most teams were doing some Scrum experiments.

The broken windows theory was first introduced by social scientists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, in an article titled "Broken Windows" that appeared in The Atlantic Monthly in March 1982. The title comes from the following example: Consider a building with a few broken windows. If the windows are not repaired, the tendency is for vandals to break more windows. Eventually, they may break into the building, and if it's unoccupied, become squatters or light fires inside. Consider a sidewalk. Some litter accumulates. Soon, more litter accumulates. Eventually, people even start leaving bags of trash on the streets. The book, Fixing Broken Windows, by George L. Kelling and Catharine Cole is based on the article but develops the argument in greater detail. Published in 1996, it discusses the theory in relation to crime and strategies to contain or eliminate crime from urban neighborhoods. A successful strategy for preventing vandalism, according to the authors, is to fix obvious problems immediately when they are small. Kees Keizer and colleagues from the University of Groningen conducted a series of controlled experiments to determine if the effect of existing disorder, e.g. litter or graffiti, increased the incidence of additional crime, e.g. stealing or littering. They selected several urban locations which they then arranged in two different ways, at different times. In one condition - the control - the place was kept free of graffiti and broken windows, etc. In the other condition - the experiment - an identical environment appeared as though no one cared about it: broken windows, graffiti-covered walls, etc. Researchers monitored the locations to see if people behaved differently in the different environments. The results confirmed the theory. Their conclusion, published in the

journal Science, was that: One example of disorder, like graffiti or littering, can indeed encourage another, like stealing. Many consider the experiment the best confirmation of the broken windows theory to date.

*Wal*Mart increased shopping cart size and sales of big items (like microwave ovens) increased 50%.*

Using a round table instead of a square one increases the percentage of people contributing to a discussion.

When the serving plate is more than 6.5 feet from the dining room table, the number of "seconds" goes down 63%, compared with leaving the serving plates on the table.

Getting rid of wastebaskets under desks increases the amount of recycled material.

The University of Colorado-Boulder put hand-sanitizer dispensers all over a dorm (but no signs asking students to use them) and the number of sick days and missed classes per student decreased 20%.