Leading Transformational Change

	Stage	Actions Needed	Pitfalls
	Establish a sense of urgency	• Examine landscape for potential crises and untapped opportunities. • Convince at least 75% of your stakeholders that the status quo is more dangerous than the unknown.	• Underestimating the difficulty of driving people from their comfort zones. • Becoming paralyzed by risks.
	Form a powerful guiding coalition	• Assemble a group with shared commitment and enough power to lead the change effort. • Encourage them to work as a team outside the normal hierarchy.	• No prior experience in teamwork at the top. • Relegating team leadership to only those formally identified as "leaders"
	Create a vision (with specific strategies)	• Create a vision to direct the change effort. • Develop strategies for realizing that vision.	• Presenting a vision that's too complicated or vague to be communicated in five minutes.
	Communicate the vision	• Use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies for achieving it. • Teach new behaviors by the example of the guiding coalition.	• Under-communicating the vision • Behaving in ways antithetical to the vision.
	Empower others to act on the vision	• Remove or alter systems or structures undermining the vision. • Encourage risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and	• Failing to remove powerful individuals who resist the change effort.

		actions.	
	Plan for and create short-term wins	• Define and engineer visible performance improvements. • Encourage risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions.	• Leaving short-term successes up to chance • Failing to score successes early enough (12-24 months into change effort)
	Consolidate improvements and produce more change	• Use increased credibility from early wins to change systems, structures, and policies undermining the vision. • Develop stakeholders who can implement the vision. • Reinvigorate the change process with new projects and change agents.	• Declaring victory too soon—with the first performance improvement • Allowing resistors to convince "troops" that the war has been won
	Institutionalize new approaches	• Articulate connections between new behaviors and success. • Create leadership development and succession plans consistent with the new approach.	• Not creating new social norms and shared values consistent with changes • Putting people into leadership positions who don't personify the new approach.

Adapted from Kotter, J. P. (2010). *Leading change: Why transformation efforts fail*. Harvard Business Press.
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