



**In today's newsletter:**

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## How to Succeed at Change

Leading Change. It's one of the biggest challenges faced by today's top executives. If you are now, or ever have been, at the helm of a change initiative, I would imagine this is uncomfortably familiar.

Large scale organizational change is a process rife with larger-than-expected challenges, obstacles around every corner, and the occasional solid brick wall. Resistance emerges, confusion rears, misalignment and miscommunication are par for the course. And they can absolutely stop your change efforts in their tracks.

It doesn't have to be this way. So let's dig deep and ask, why does change so often falter and fail?

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### What Clients Are Saying



*"Liz is a good listener and a totally trustworthy individual."*

*She has a deep understanding of leadership principles and qualities, a good*

Let's start on positive footing. We will assume that yes, change truly makes sense for your organization. That it's the right kind of change, introduced at the right time. Even so, your initiative may falter. Here are three problems to look out for. Change fails when:

**There is no clear Why.** Do you remember what it was like when you were a child, and your mother or father told you what to do and you asked, *But why?* And your mom or dad told you, *Because I said so, that's why!*

It's not all that different for us as adults. The fact is, no one likes to be given a mandate without a reason. What's the rationale? What's the context? Without these, you are simply insisting on a new strategy or process and saying, *"Do it because I said so."* And you are setting yourself up for resistance.

Tell people WHY things need to change. Give them context and share your vision.

*Is change needed to adapt to changing market conditions?  
To take advantage of a merger? To bring profitable new products to market? To create shifts in the marketplace that ensure future growth?*

**There was nothing beyond Why.** Ok, so let's assume the organization gets the 'Why'. For sure, that's important and a good start. But it may not be enough.

Change efforts can fail when leaders don't demonstrate what will happen if *nothing changes*. Make it abundantly clear and compelling that something must change. Answer the following

***perception of the commercial situation of companies, and a rapid and reliable judgment of people.***

***I have followed her advice and it has helped a lot."***

*- Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Stoll, MD; Chief Medical Officer, Biosensors International Group*

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questions:

*What's wrong with the status quo? What's the cost of doing nothing? Will the company miss an important window of opportunity? Will you lose marketshare? Will the business fail to meet changing customer needs and preferences? Are you at risk of losing your most talented workers to the competition?*

Identify and communicate the very real risks in continuing to do business as usual. It will help the organization understand and embrace the need for change.

**Objections were not anticipated.** Successful leaders know that part of their job is to be a great salesperson. They must authentically sell their vision and strategy to the people who will be at the forefront of implementation.

Change can fail when leaders don't pause long enough to thoughtfully consider the objections that will arise across the organization. They get blindsided and, as a result, they are unprepared to deal with the resistance that hits them from those they'd always considered most loyal and dedicated.

So put yourself in their shoes. But don't try to have all the answers yourself. Talk with your key stakeholders. Go to those influential people in your organization who will ultimately roll out change across their departments.

Test your ideas with them and ask the questions,  
*"What can go wrong here? What am I missing? Who is going to have the greatest difficulty embracing this new direction?"*

*How can we address their concerns and create champions instead of resistors?"*

It is said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. So be proactive in your change efforts. Start by building the case for change. Develop support before you dive in. Then go ahead and lead your organization to a better, brighter, more extraordinary future.

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## **How to Increase Your Leadership Presence**

In my work with Fortune 50 leaders, I help executives up their game in any number of ways. Sometimes the work is about being more strategic. Sometimes it's about elevating the performance of the leadership team. Sometimes it's about improving relationships and communication with key stakeholders.

Whatever the primary focus, one thing is a constant. Good leaders become remarkable leaders when they learn to exert greater influence across their organizations. Influence involves having strong relationships, outstanding communication skills, and the credibility that comes from resounding executive presence.

Whether you are a senior leader or still coming up the ranks, here are 3 simple ways to increase your executive presence right away.

**1. Dress the part.** Okay, I get it. This sounds a bit

superficial, doesn't it? Being an executive should be about substance not style - shouldn't it?

Being a leader should be about taking a strategic approach rather than getting 'caught in the weeds' - agreed?

Well, yes, substance is indeed essential. But it's not all that matters.

Think of it this way. The last time you checked into a luxury hotel, what did you notice? Chances are, you took immediate inventory of the lobby - the decor, brightness and general ambiance. And just as the foyer provides your first impression of a hotel, a leader's style of dress establishes a first executive impression.

So do this. Invest in a few high-end items of clothing. For key business meetings, show up in a sharp, tailored suit. Wear a fantastic watch. Invest in a great pen and use a leather folio. You'll command respect from colleagues and clients alike. And chances are, you'll stand taller and exude confidence when you show up looking like a million bucks.

**2. Speak the part.** This is about substance and style. Of course, you need to demonstrate your competence, intelligence and knowledge when you speak to clients and colleagues. You should be able to converse at a strategic level and also connect the dots from strategy to implementation. You should use targeted, sophisticated language-without alienating people with unduly obscure or inaccessible wording. And you should always strive to be clear, concise and unhurried in your comments.

Before your next important meeting or presentation, take a few minutes to center yourself, focus on your key points, and practice speaking slowly and deliberately-or passionately and with conviction if that's what's needed. When you're up at bat, state your case with confidence and poise. Build in some strategic pauses for impact. And always allow others the opportunity to ask questions, interject and provide their ideas and point of view.

**3. Turn on the charm.** Regardless of your political leanings, there are few people who can deny that certain leaders (think Bill Clinton) are remarkably charismatic. They know how to make others feel valued, important and liked. They are masters at building support through their positive interactions with the people around them. They inspire others with their words, expressions and body language.

Of course, I would never advise my clients to be false-and I don't encourage you to blindly copy a style that isn't genuinely you. However, if you're not naturally a charmer-and few people are-here are a two quick tricks for immediately upping the charm level.

**Smile more.** Before your next meeting, teleconference or formal presentation, take a moment to think about something that makes you feel good. Look at a photo of your last vacation. Listen to your favorite song. Breathe. Whatever works for you. As the old tune goes, smile and the world smiles with you.

**Make great eye contact.** Whether you're speaking with one person or sitting among a group, resist the temptation to check your email or type notes into your laptop. Look up, catch

someone's eye, stay there for a second or two. A bit of well-timed eye contact will help you make an emotional connection with the person across from you. And that can only help you exert influence and show up as a confident, poised, credible executive.

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## **Exceptional Leadership Tip #6**

Great leaders need extraordinary teams to carry out the vision. Hire well, inspire, communicate, develop... and trust your team to get the work done.

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### **About Liz Bywater**

For over a decade, top global organizations have requested Liz's help in resolving issues such as creating extraordinary client relationships, increasing market persuasion, and driving productive collaborations in an increasingly complex world.

Liz advises senior leaders at some of the world's most successful companies, such as Johnson & Johnson, Thomson Reuters, Bristol-Myers Squibb and AmerisourceBergen Corporation, among others. She uses her expertise in human behavior to drive commercial success. She helps her clients drive innovation, exert influence and lead their organizations through change.

A thought leader in organizational excellence, Liz provides expert commentary for such publications as the Wall Street Journal, NY Times, Fast Company, and USA Today. She earned her PhD in Psychology at the Derner Institute for

Advanced Psychological Studies. Her undergraduate degree is from Cornell University. Liz graduated Cornell Phi Beta Kappa and Cum Laude.

She is a member of the American Psychological Association and the Society for the Advancement of Consulting. She is a constant and author of the eagerly awaited forthcoming book, ***Slow Down to Speed Up: Harnessing the Power of Pausing to Improve Leadership, Advance Your Career and Get Things Done!***

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