

ideas

original perspectives on life and
business from leading thinkers

Volume no 2

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“A mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions”

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

change

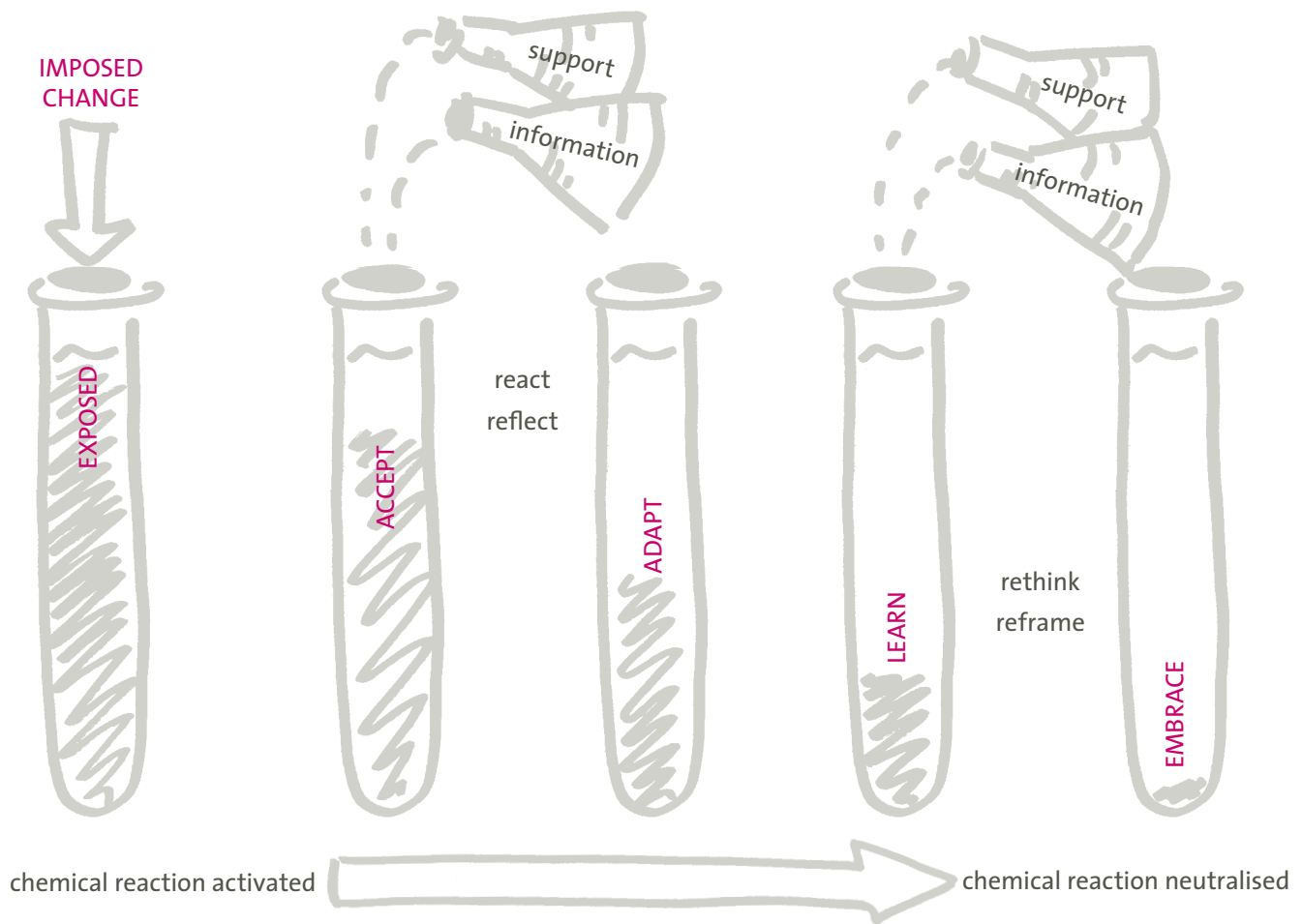
“It’s not about the change management process, it’s about leading people with compassion and courage to truly embrace change at a highly individual level.”

Change management success depends on your people! We are exposed to two types of change in our lives: the change we create ourselves, and the change that is imposed upon us. Leaders impose change then wait for everyone to embrace it. But while they wait, business is debilitated.

imposed change debilitates business

MANDY HOLLOWAY

IMPOSED CHANGE DEBILITATES BUSINESS



When leaders first expose people to an imposed change it is common for everyone to be filled with feelings of uncertainty, anger and suspicion about their future. It is as if the leader has activated a chemical reaction in the business. This reaction can only be neutralised when people really embrace the imposed change. The length of time it takes to complete this neutralisation process depends on what the leaders do and how they do it.

Leaders need to take an active, compassionate and courageous role. Simply put, they must supply information (task focus) and give support (people focus). People on the receiving end of imposed change need to be supported to move through a strongly developed personal process. The length of time between when people are exposed to the change and when they choose to embrace it must be minimised.

THE ACTIVE WORK OF THE LEADER

Leaders need to balance the effort they put into the task and people by:

Supplying information

Focus on the task by providing information – provide it often, provide it repetitively and provide it honestly. Keep pouring it in as loads is needed to give people the information they need to react and reflect with the intent of accepting or rejecting the imposed change.

When supplying information, leaders must have the courage to clearly and honestly define what is ending and what is beginning as a result of the imposed change.

The day after a manager in my team received a promotion to senior manager we sat and talked honestly about what needed to end and start for each of us as she transitioned into her new position. After agreeing that day-to-day management of the team was her responsibility, I vividly recall sharing how sad I felt about losing this level of interaction with our team. I also recall the look on people's faces when we told them of the changes. It was natural for all of us to feel a little sad because our team would never be the same again – the old ways were being left behind. When everyone was ready, we started to talk about the new way of working and what we had to look forward to! I strongly believe in supporting people to mark endings, mourn them and then get ready for the new way of doing things.

People on the receiving end of imposed change need to be supported to move through a strongly developed personal process.

Giving support

Did you know that over 80 per cent of imposed change that goes wrong in business is due to a lack of focus on the people? It is people who make or break the success of any imposed change. Leaders must keep pouring in support for their people. This encourages them to react and reflect honestly, with the intent of accepting or rejecting the imposed change. For this to work, leaders must be non-judgemental in their support. People go through a variety of reactions when change is imposed on them and leaders need to empathise, not judge. They need to validate that it is normal and expected for people to get angry, to bargain, to become defensive or even aloof and non-participative. This support needs to be given at a highly individual and compassionate level.

People go through a variety of reactions when change is imposed on them and leaders need to empathise, not judge.

THE PERSONAL PROCESS FOR EVERYONE

Everyone needs a personal process to get them through imposed change, and they need to convert it into a strongly developed habit. We all readily acknowledge the amount of change we are exposed to every year, and it is only going to increase, so it is a habit we all need to develop and continually refine.

We create readiness for embracing change when we:

- React
- Reflect
- Rethink
- Reframe

Our active habit works to neutralise the chemical reaction, and the amount of time it takes depends on the information supplied and the support given by our leaders. After people react and reflect they decide whether to accept, resist or reject the change. If they decide to accept, then leaders see them adapt to what has been imposed on them. At this stage people feel it is their fate – they cannot do anything about the change but accept it. They have accepted the change and adapted to it with their 'minds', but their hearts and souls are not yet in it. After we rethink and reframe we learn about ourselves, about the change, and restore our control by making the choice to embrace it. Now people have heart, soul and mind commitment to the change. Their suspicions about the future and feelings of uncertainty disappear because the chemical reaction has been neutralised.

Reacting

You never know how you will react to imposed change until it happens to you. Emotions are unpredictable, they take us to places where we have no control, no certainty, and for most of us this is daunting. The important thing as a leader is to suspend all judgement as people react to the change. See their behaviour as a reaction not as a label you pin to their chest. People get angry when change is imposed and if leaders do not see and feel this anger then I would say that their people are not being open and honest with them – the emotion has gone underground. If this happens, the neutralisation process takes much longer.

Reflecting

Leaders must create space for people to think. Things are happening around them, to them, and without them. They have choices to make and to do this they need time and space to think. I suggest leaders get people to focus their thinking by moving through the:

- *Facts* – what's been said, done, heard, what's happening and what am I thinking?
- *Feelings* – when the change was imposed and at critical stages throughout the process.
- *Future* – positive and negative consequences of the imposed change.
- *Freedom* – what choices do I have available right now?

Spending time reflecting allows people to begin the process of restoring feelings of control.

People get angry when change is imposed and if leaders do not see and feel this anger then I would say that their people are not being open and honest with them...

Rethinking

Challenge existing thinking patterns – current thinking is not good enough. The chemicals react differently in an imposed change, so leaders need to encourage different thinking in others to neutralise the reaction. They give support by helping people see any limiting mental models that might be at work.

I experienced a time of rethinking after receiving the ultimatum to return to work full-time after the birth of my first child or relinquish my executive position. Upon return to full-time work when my daughter was nine months old, I began to feel increasingly beaten up as people asked me questions like, 'How will you feel when your daughter says her first word while she's at childcare?'

Thank goodness she was an 'early walker' or that could have been something else I could have missed to bring further personal distress! I was sitting in the park one day, feeling particularly sad when I experienced a breakthrough in my limiting mental model:

All children are born into a hothouse where their parents have total control over who touches them, what they drink, when they sleep. Some parents choose to keep their children in this hothouse until they reach the age of five, when they are transplanted into the forest (school) with 25 other young trees. I could now see that I had decided to transplant my daughter from the hothouse into the nursery (childcare centre) with ten other saplings, where I still had a lot of control. In the nursery she was learning critical skills to transition into the forest with confidence and independence.

Once I had this new thinking, this new mental model, I felt strong and knew I had confidently restored control!

Reframing

At this refuelling point for passion you finally restore full control. People need to know and feel they have control over their own destinies. When change is imposed they momentarily feel they have lost all control. A critical part of their habit to embrace change needs to be a refuelling point for their passion. People are encouraged and supported by leaders at a very individual level to think about the good things in their lives, the great skills and knowledge they have acquired, the great people they have in their lives and the great things they have ahead of them. By integrating their new thinking pattern into their complete frame for existence, they begin to feel energised by their choice to embrace the change with their minds, hearts and souls. ☺

People need to know and feel they have control over their own destinies.



Mandy Holloway

MANDY's journey from emerging leader, to partner at KPMG, to developing business leaders through her company, Holloway Consulting (all while juggling the roles of wife and mother), has given her the incredible platform of realism she brings to every leadership development initiative.

Her passionate and energetic focus unleashes the courage within the people she works with to become the types of leaders they want to be, and importantly, the types of leaders their organisations need them to be while they negotiate the rapid changes imposed every day!

Emerging and existing leaders have their thinking challenged and their hearts engaged at a very real level when Mandy works with them. She nurtures them to build confidence and gain the personal conviction they need to make the right choices for themselves and their businesses. The outcome is authentic leaders who generate sustainable personal and business performance.

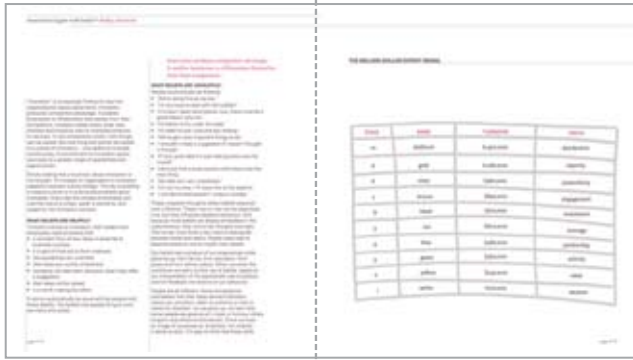


Shane Kempton

SHANE is six feet, four inches and 110kg of pure passion for life! After beginning his career in real estate, he left to join the military where he spent five years with the elite Special Air Service Regiment.

Returning to life as a civilian, Shane began pursuing his goal of becoming an industry leader in real estate. An award-winning salesperson, he quickly rose through the ranks, eventually starting his own office in 2003. By 2006 he had led his team to the coveted top-spot in Australian real estate, and compounded this success by being appointed CEO of the Roy Weston Group. He was instrumental in one of WA's largest mergers and now commands Harcourts WA.

Shane attributes his success to a commitment to ongoing personal development and shares his Success Acceleration Systems with people throughout Australasia in his role as a sought-after public speaker, coach and mentor.



23 original perspectives on life and business from leading thinkers, covering topics as diverse as the authors themselves - from creating sales and service cultures for the new millennium, to authentic leadership, self management, innovation, creativity, business building, communication and branding.

The second book of this series itself is an example of the power of a well-organised thought. Each section follows a structured approach. Every idea is separated into three distinct elements: each concept is presented articulately in a declarative statement, then it is shown contextually in the form of a model or diagram, and finally, the concept is described in detail.



Or in other words - each of our **Thought Leaders** provides the “stuff” that makes a point and paints the picture. This methodology is unique to the Thought Leaders™ process and central to the Expert Development Programs that we run.

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