

# Leading Change

## The Change Cycle

In each edition you'll explore a leadership framework accompanied by questions for you and your team to work through, helping you to be even more effective in leading through challenging times.

### Inside



Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's  
Change Cycle

Rosabeth Moss Kanter's  
Theory on Sources of  
Resistance to Change

Patrick Lencioni's 5  
Dysfunctions of a Team



# Hello and Welcome

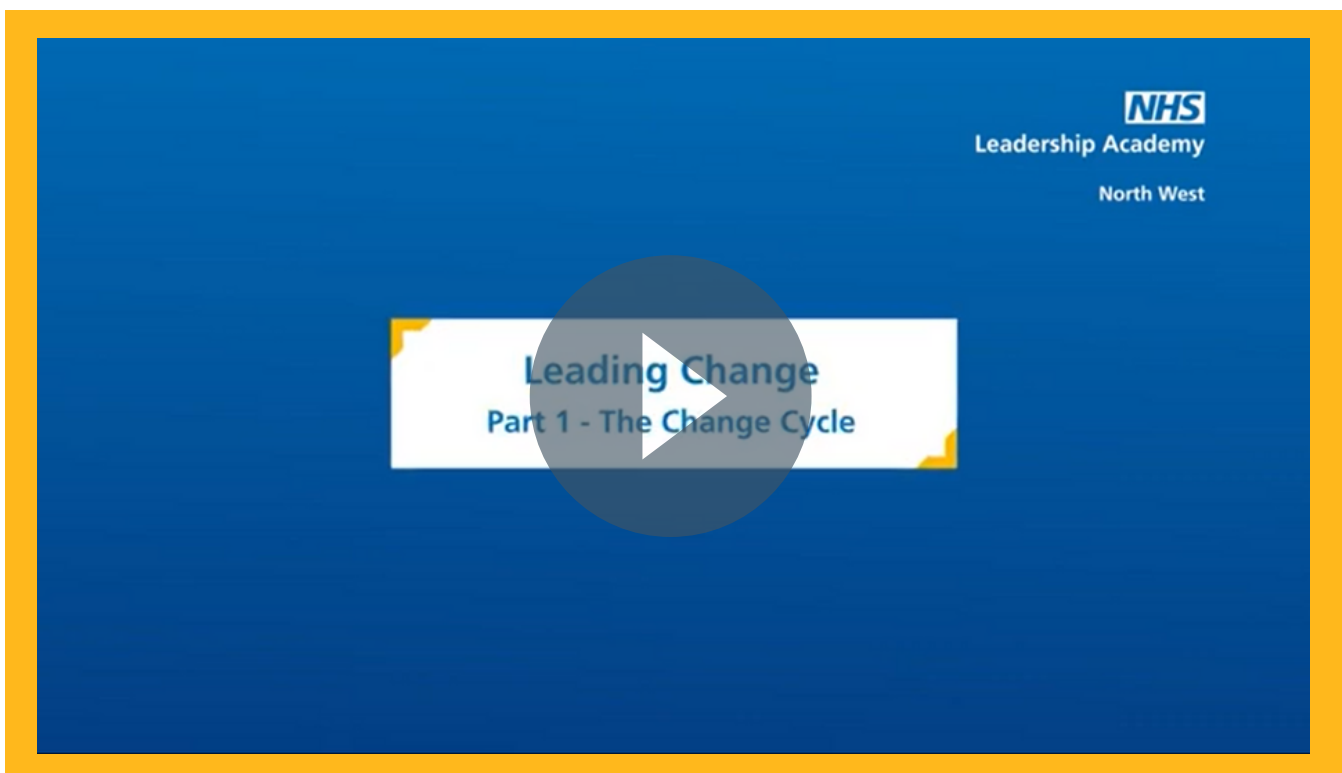
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This short video and supporting workbook is designed to help you lead successfully these challenging times.

The workbooks can be read alongside or separate from the accompanying video series and is yours to keep as a resource in your leadership journey. We hope the video series and workbooks will be helpful whether you are an aspiring or established leader.

This series will introduce teams to skills and behaviours that generate greater engagement, trust, transparency, heightened performance and cultures where all can thrive.

This first in the series will introduce Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's Change Cycle.



**Managing change is not always easy. These workbooks will cover three models that can help you to lead and manage change effectively.**

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Because, of course, the one thing that is constant is change.

We are always experiencing it and these days we hear leaders talk about how we are living in times of unprecedented change.

And its easy to see why. We have just been through a global pandemic, have had to move warp speed towards new ways of working and politically, economically and environmentally it has been a tumultuous time as well. And for many staff, these changes, and the fall-out from them, have created huge pressures at work and at home.

So being able to empathise, put oneself in the shoes of those we are wanting to influence and persuade, is crucial if we are to achieve the goals we set ourselves.

The 3 models will you to do just that and will put you and your team on a good footing for success in the years ahead:



**Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's change cycle** - also known as the ' 5 stages of grief' - is a model that describes the common emotional responses that people may experience when faced with significant change or loss.



**Rosabeth Moss Kanter's theory on Resistance to Change** is a useful framework for understanding and managing resistance which can come from a variety of sources, including personal factors, group dynamics and structural factors. In this video you will find a number of strategies to help manage this.



**Patrick Lencioni's work on the 5 dysfunctions of a team**, which emphasises the importance of team cohesion, trust & effective communications to achieve common goals.

**As you go through the models, you'll be invited to take a few minutes to reflect on what they mean for you and your team and how you can use them. You could even read this paper or watch the accompany video, as a group, pausing occasionally to share your reflections and explore how you can apply what you're learning.**



# Leading through challenging times

Helping you lead successfully



## **Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's Change Cycle**

An introduction and questions for your team



**Dr Elisabeth Kubler-Ross was a Swiss-American psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. In the 1960s she developed what became known as the 'five stages of grief' cycle which was based on her observations of patients who were terminally ill and their reactions to the news of their diagnosis.**

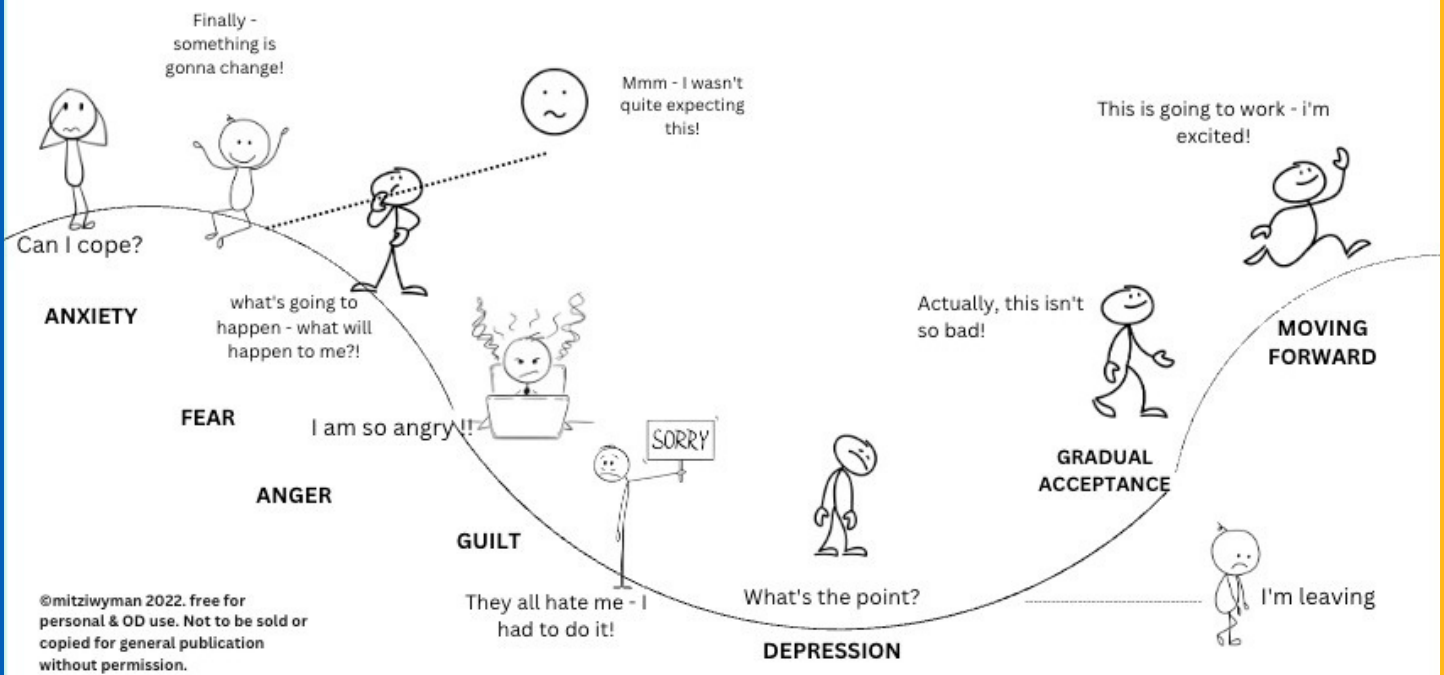
These stages were not meant to be a linear or predictable process, but rather a framework for understanding the range of emotions that individuals may experience when faced with a significant loss or life-changing event.

Since its publication, the change cycle has been widely accepted and used as a tool for understanding and coping with grief and loss, and has been applied to a wide range of situations beyond terminal illness, including divorce, job loss, and other major life changes.

**Lots of businesses use the change curve to help them understand and manage the emotional responses of employees during times of organisational change.**

For example, a company may use the Change Curve to anticipate and address the potential reactions of employees as they go through the process of adapting to a new business strategy, restructuring, or technological innovation. Let's have a look at what that might look like for team members.

## The process of transition- Kubler Ross's Change Curve



People will have a very different reaction to change – here we see someone wondering whether they'll be able to cope and another being really excited about the fact that, at last, something is going to change (only to find out later it wasn't quite what they were expecting!).

Surprisingly even changes that people think they were looking forward to can be de-stabilising – remember the first time you moved house? I remember for me the excitement was offset by the lack of familiarity and sense of overwhelm.

Fortunately these doubts were set aside as I found my footing and began to look forward. And it's the same in organisations.

**So anxiety is the first stage, and this can lead to fear and anger. What's going to happen? How will it affect me?**

And for those tasked with designing and leading the change there can be guilt, especially if the changes were unpopular – restructuring or redundancies for example.



The lowest point is depression where we feel things are at their worst and of course some people will choose to leave the organisation.

Eventually we begin to find our bearings and gradually accept the changes that are now becoming more familiar. We start to see ourselves in the new future and moving forward like the chap at the end there racing off into the future.

**So you can see how the change curve can be helpful in identifying the specific needs of employees at different stages of the change process.**

So the person who is worried that they cannot cope might be given extra training or support, another might have a coach to help them work their way through changes. The curve helps you to provide them with the support and resources they need to navigate the transition successfully.

The Change Curve can also help you to understand the importance of effective communication during times of change and how to tailor messaging to meet the needs of employees at different stages of the process.



But it's important to remember that change isn't linear – it's cyclical. As we reach the end of one cycle it's likely we are about to experience another, and we are always somewhere on this cycle! And of course we may have several on the go at once – in our personal and professional lives and we may be looking out for others too – how are our children adapting to new schools for example.

Understanding the change cycle, helps us plan for this.

**When we are at our lowest ebb we can look at the cycle and ask:**  
*Where am I?*

It helps us to understand that we are not alone and that what we are feeling is natural and that most of us will, with time, get through it.

And for those of us leading teams it is important to bear this in mind too.

And of course different members of your team will, like the figures in the drawing, be at different stages, some moving through the curve faster than others.



# Think it through

If you and your team are about to go through a change process, why not take the illustration into a meeting and talk it through. To help here is an exercise you can do before moving onto the next model.

- With your team, discuss a time when you personally experienced one of the stages of the change cycle – anxiety, fear, anger, guilt, depression, acceptance.
- How did you feel during that stage?
- How did you eventually move on to the next stage, or did you get stuck in a particular stage for a longer period of time?
- What helped or hindered your progress through the stages?

These questions encourage you to share your own experiences with the change cycle, reflect on your emotions and behaviours during each stage, and discuss what factors helped or hindered your ability to move through the stages.

They also allow for discussion of strategies or techniques that may be helpful in navigating the change cycle in the future.

