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HUMAN BEINGS:

KEY PARTNERS

FOR SUCCESSFUL

TRANSFORMATIONS

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HUMAN BEINGS: KEY PARTNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATIONS

The whole of our environment is radically changing. Changes and transformations in companies are taking place more often and faster.

And yet studies and the survey conducted for this issue of ADD show that almost half of transformation projects do not achieve the expected results.

That is why we wanted to give you a fresh look on things, as we always strive to do, and help you develop a new approach to transformation.

The study that we conducted with BVA shows this: change management is almost always taken into account but it is not always successful. So our experts have selected key elements that help accelerate transformation and make it sustainable:

- The type of change management must be chosen and implemented according to the nature of the change.
- Create the conditions for employee buy-in in order to lead a successful transformation.
- Support managers in fostering and sustaining motivation in their teams.
- Drive change using innovative and collaborative tools based on neurosciences.

In an interview, Dr. Soeren Fischer, Senior Vice-President Business Improvement & Quality, Airbus Group, explains how he successfully led a cultural change involving 30,000 employees by basing himself on the right people and the right tools of change.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and that it will give you fresh ideas on the transformations you consider implementing.

Yvan Salamon
President

ARGON
CONSULTING

# BUSINESS SECRETS **FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATIONS**

Transformation is more than ever at the heart of corporate concerns. And yet only half of all change projects reach their goal. What are the factors that make a transformation successful? Is it just a matter of method or do other intrinsic business characteristics come into play?

R esponses from business leaders, survey conducted in partnership with BVA[1].

1. Business in constant change

Businesses are changing: 93% of respondents have experienced at least one major change in the last few years (collapse of business model, reorganization, ERP project, competitive program, carve out) and 73% have experienced at least two major changes. Businesses of all sizes and sectors are affected.
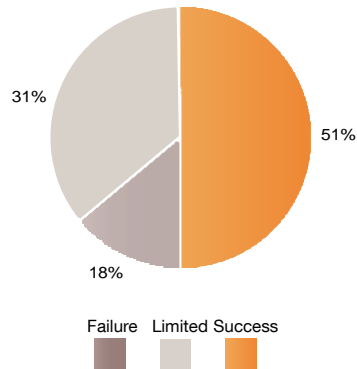
2. A successful transformation is difficult

But even if change becomes part of a company's day-to-day life, making these transformations a success is still difficult.

successful transformations: hard to achieve

31%

51%

18%

Failure   Limited Success

Just half (51%) say they managed to remove roadblocks. Nearly 20% failed to do so and 31% had mitigated results.

businesses in constant change

company of 0-250 employees	company of 250-5,000 employees	company of 5,000+ employees
87% / 67%	93% / 73%	96% / 76%

experienced at least one change
experienced at least two changes
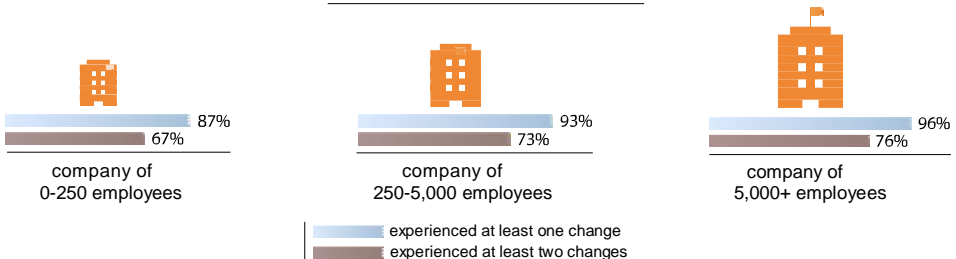
3. Key factors for the success of transformations[2]

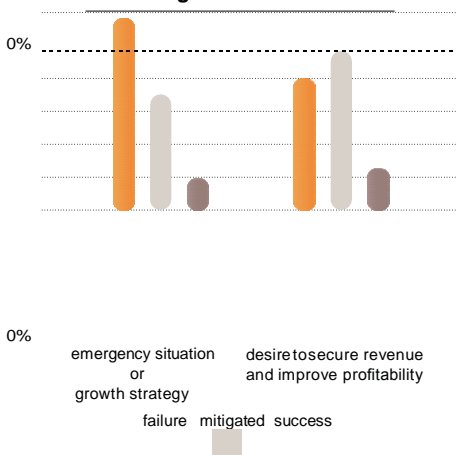The survey highlights three main success factors: taking into account the company's economic environment, the importance of the company's culture, and the organization of the change team.

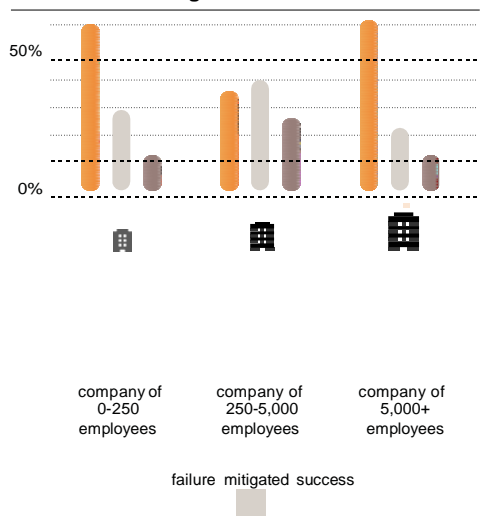### a. Adapting the approach to the company environment

Considering the company's economic environment in the approach to change is a crucial factor for success. Facing a critical situation or pursuing a growth strategy are more favourable to success than having stable revenue or profitability. 56% of companies committed to a growth strategy or having to deal with a critical situation are successful compared to only 36% of companies in a stable phase.

In the third case where these conditions do not exist, success is much less certain: more than 60% of companies said that their transformation project failed or had limited success. Companies must be in line with the 'why' behind the change, work on the messages, and invest more in sharing the vision before launching a transformation.

success according to business size

company of 0-250 employees | company of 250-5,000 employees | company of 5,000+ employees

failure mitigated success

It is also necessary to adapt the approach to the size of the company and the number of people concerned. Small companies seem to manage pretty well: proximity naturally favours exchange and information flow. Large companies are also successful: they have already been through change

success according to business context

emergency situation or growth strategy | desire to secure revenue and improve profitability

failure mitigated success

and that there is no alternative.

In the first two cases, it is likely that employees understand the need for change

mations, which will have enabled them to develop the necessary skills, and demon-

strated to them the need to invest in order to manage change.

(2) The following data should be taken as qualitative analyses or trends given the limited availability of correlating data

Medium-sized companies, on the other hand, experience real difficulties. They still have to realise the need to change scales, methods, and to structure the approach while keeping management proximity in order to drive change.

b. Adapting the approach to the company's culture

Company culture influences the success of transformations.

Most companies view themselves as being result-focused and customer-focused. But this does not help making transformation projects successful.

Transparency, empowerment and entrepreneurship make the difference between success and failure. If these values are not high up in the company culture, the change management approach should strongly promote them within the scope of the project.

c. Using innovative tools

Some initiatives, like support for the management teams and collaborative strategies (co-building, gamification etc.), help promote these cultural dimensions. In fact, cooperation is most telling about whether the company will succeed or fail.

The characteristics of businesses that succeed and those that fail their transformation programs
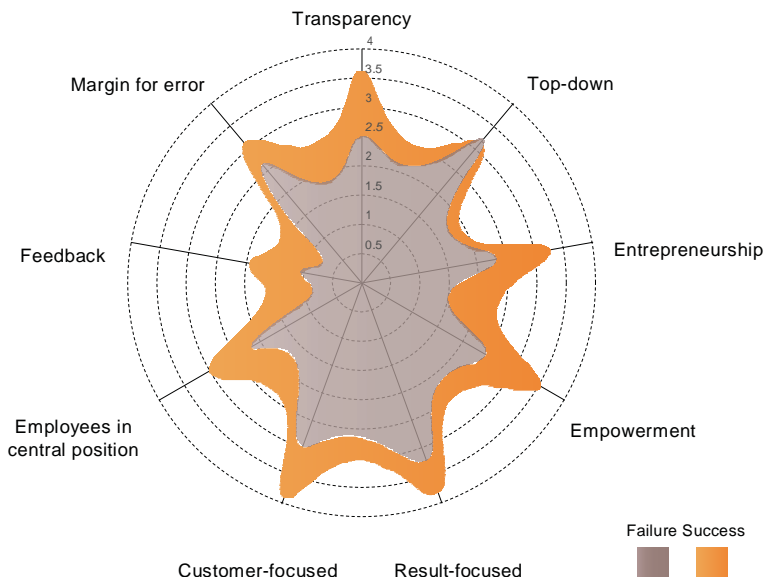
Communication and training, on the other hand, do not make the difference on their own.
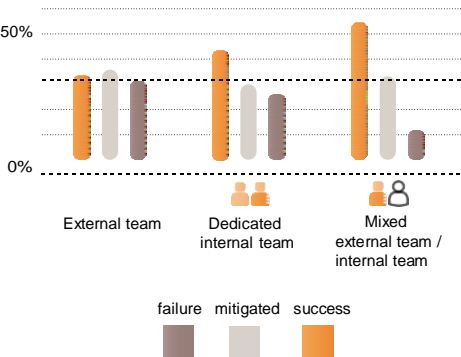
Change tools used by businesses

An internal-external system, in which internal teams lead the change and external teams provide expertise and methodology, is the best for succeeding in enabling change and reducing the risk of failure. Only 12% of companies using this structure failed, as opposed to approximately 30% of companies in other configurations.

Even though businesses give themselves the means to drive change (dedicated change teams, communication, training), the transformation success rate remains mitigated. The survey shows two main reasons for this: the company's environment and its culture.

d. Combining internal and external change teams

84% of organizations understood that support is needed for a successful change.

Make-up of change teams

Depending on the company's environment, it may or may not be necessary to boost the sharing of the 'why', and it will affect how you strike the right balance between individualization and industrialisation. Culturally, change management should promote transparency, empowerment and entrepreneurship via structured collaborative practices.

We invite you to explore some of these key factors of success in the following articles.

ENGAGEMENT
FOR BETTER
TRANSFORMATIONS

Elise Blanc, Director, Argon Consulting

There are numerous transformation plans but only half of businesses say they carried them out successfully[1]. So what is the secret of success? Emphasize transparency, empowerment, and entrepreneurship among employees, and remember to take into account how they perceive the change in order to adapt the pace. Here is what it really means.

Employees are not reluctant or passive participants in change. This simple truth defuses companies' tricky dilemma when embarking on a transformation program: "Should we select a top-down approach to be more effective, which means imposing on employees, or a bottom-up approach, which banks on a more complex work on employee engagement?" Although the top-down approach has the apparent merit of simplicity and speed, its highly prescriptive nature generates more resistance than engagement.
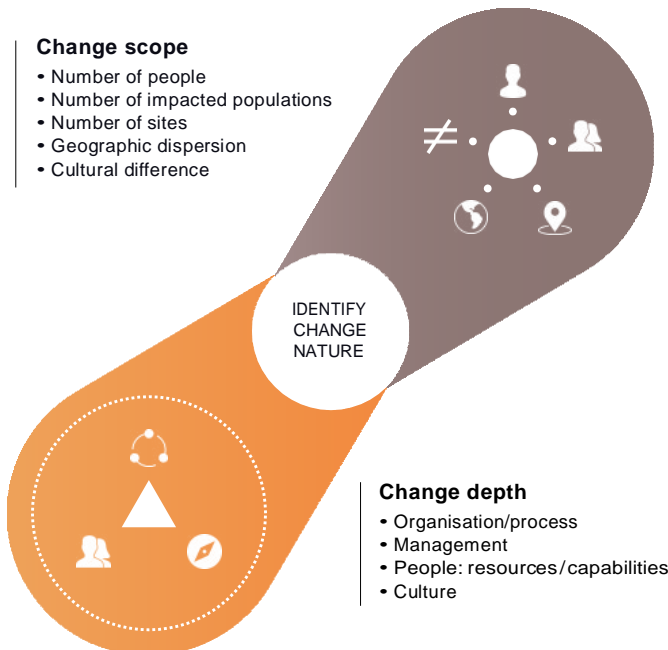
The reason for this is that most employees refuse to support a project if they do not feel involved. Having no say prevents them from taking ownership of the project. These days, individuals are actually increasingly reluctant to let other people make decisions on their behalf. The business world is particularly affected by this trend.

To make transformation fully effective and sustainable, it is essential to get employees to buy into the project. Engagement can therefore be practically defined as the voluntary decision of an employee to participate in a project or initiative that the company announces.

This means that businesses can now measure and carry out detailed analyses of their engagement thanks to engagement surveys[2]. Engagement is crucial insofar as it promotes the organisation's potential, creativity and capacity to change.

**Match project and support:
tailor the approach**

To generate employee engagement, change support must be tailored to the project and its precise scope. There are two main criteria to take into account:

Change scope
• Number of people
• Number of impacted populations
• Number of sites
• Geographic dispersion
• Cultural difference

IDENTIFY CHANGE NATURE

Change depth
• Organisation/process
• Management
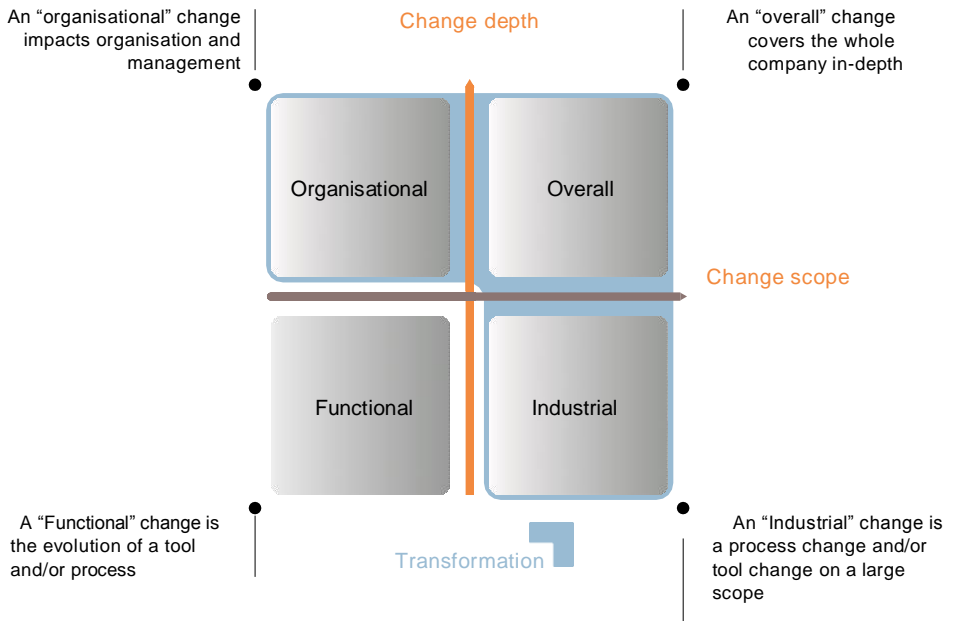• People: resources / capabilities
• Culture

[2] *In October 2017, Gallup released its latest employee engagement survey*
http://news.gallup.com/topic/employee_engagement.aspx
The study shows an engagement crisis with only 13% of employees engaged at a global level (in particular 8% in the United Kingdom and 32% in the United States).

Crossing these two criteria shows four main types of change

An "organisational" change impacts organisation and management

Change depth

An "overall" change covers the whole company in-depth

Organisational

Overall

Change scope

Functional

Industrial

A "Functional" change is the evolution of a tool and/or process

Transformation

An "Industrial" change is a process change and/or tool change on a large scope

Supporting each type of change

Each of the four main types of change requires specific support. A 'one size fits all' approach must be barred.

A 'one size fits all' approach does not work, particularly when it comes to change management support

Functional change: a simple process of training and communication

Functional change concerns the deployment of a tool and/or process in a service or department. The stake: making sure employees understand the changes.

The standard support methods – training and communication – are generally sufficient. They can be implemented by the project's technical teams. This is not a true transformation program as such.

Industrial change: anticipate support needs

This type of change impacts a much broader group of employees, which makes the transformation more complex. The challenge is to control the speed of deployment of a new tool/process while at the same time bringing the impacted employees on board and ensuring large-scale skill improvement.

In this case, the scoping phase lets you assess existing skills and identify further skills to be developed. Another objective is to assess the employees' capacity to evolve so as to anticipate support needs. Changes in ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning), for example, fall into this change category.

Organisational change: mobilising the whole company

This type of change has an impact on work organisation, management methods, leadership, possibly company culture. Its success lies in the employees' clear understanding of the stakes, the appropriation of the change and being in line with the target, particularly for the evolution of roles and responsibilities.

Organizational change generally concerns cross-company projects such as changes in human resources processes to promote internal mobility or the implementation of S&OP (Sales & Operations Planning). It may also affect a single function, such as Procurement or Supply Chain.

In this case, it is important to keep in mind that each function interacts with the company's other services and businesses.

Consequently the philosophy behind the change must be understood and accepted by all.

Overall change: be consistent

Typical in mergers and acquisitions, overall change affects all aspects of the company – processes, tools, organisation, management methods and culture – over a very broad scope.

So, what is the main challenge?

Taking ownership of the change, but also the consistency of the deployment. In these situations, concurrent projects participate in changing the company. It is crucial for employees to sense that all concurrent projects are consistent with the same goal. Transformational leadership qualities are essential to bring all employees on board in this new adventure[3].

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[3] *Bass & Riggio - Transformational Leadership - 2006*

Four drivers to engage employees in the transformation

1. Consider both the human and technical dimensions

Co-workers are the ones who are going to bring the change to life. Working upstream with them, as well as with their managers, helps prevent resistance.

Even more than this, it helps to develop commitment to the future project. It is a question of considering the technical aspects (models, structures, processes) and the human aspects simultaneously, and not one after the other.

**Collective intelligence is the intelligence of the work teams. It refers to the intelligence used at various levels of the organisation, possibly throughout the entire organisation.
It is therefore not simply the sum of the individuals' intelligence.**

2. Focus on collective intelligence

Change is everyone's business and everyone's responsibility, as long as every employee feels involved and motivated. Accompanying transformation is therefore the art of leading a team toward an ambition.

Helping all employees understand the change allows you to move further and faster.

Tools focused on development of collective intelligence are highly valuable. The capacity of a team to understand and act exceeds the sum of the individuals' intelligence.

3. Bank on user experience

User experience must be at the heart of any change approach to foster employee engagement. Employees must be able to see themselves in the change, both individually ("*What does the coming change mean for me?*") and collectively ("*What's going to change in how we work together day to day?* "). Being able to picture the future in this way reduces uncertainty, which is otherwise a source of fear and therefore resistance.

In practical terms, this comes down to user experience. There are various solutions to enable employees to express their expectations regarding change, whether it relates to a tool, a process or new

management rules and routines. Gamification[4] is a good example. It encourages employees to picture the change dispassionately through the emotions of the game. In this way, positive and negative perceptions are expressed before the users – the employees – find themselves in a real change situation.

4. Adopt the right pace for the change

Lastly, the change management approach must take into account the pace that is acceptable to the company to ensure that all employees can be engaged. This rhythm will depend on the history, culture and values of each company.

The time needed to take ownership of the change also differs, depending on whether you are considering the individual or collective dimension. But it is important for all initiatives to move forward together. The support actions will therefore set the pace for the transformation, in accordance with each individual's capacity for taking ownership. It is necessary to give teams and co-workers the time to accept the vision, to understand what will change for each individual and for the group, to ask questions and to get people motivated. Users' perceptions must be measured throughout the project in order to adapt the pace of the transformation if necessary.

Engagement cannot be forced. It grows out of motivation and is developed in situations where there are four guiding principles.

By activating these four drivers, it is possible to engage all employees in the transformation. A collaborative and co-creative approach allows you to implement the change effectively and sustainably, enabling the business to meet its objectives, supported by its most precious resource: its talented people.

[4] *Read our article on page 25*

**The four guiding principles of the support approaches
that nurture employee engagement**

Concurrent actions
Transforming means addressing simultaneously technical dimensions (models, structures & processes) and human dimensions.

User experience
User experience allows to regulate emotions because positive and negative perceptions are expressed before the user / employee is in the actual change position.

UX
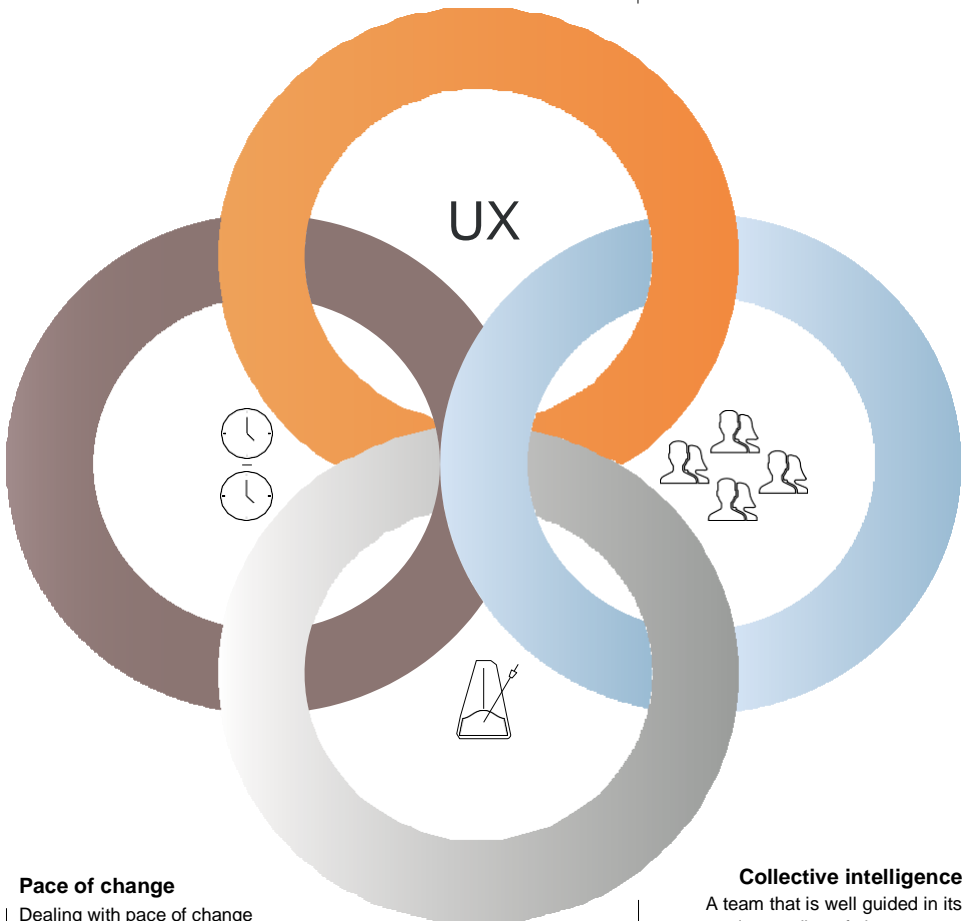
Pace of change
Dealing with pace of change equals dealing with the momentum of organisational change.

Collective intelligence
A team that is well guided in its understanding of change goes faster and farther than each team member.

MANAGERS: KEYSTONES TO TRANSFORMATION

Sabine Cousin, Director, Argon Consulting

Management teams play a key role in the success of any transformation. They are the front-line ambassadors for the project and the essential go-betweens with the teams. What they say and do is absolutely critical. This complex, subtle and demanding role is still sometimes undervalued. How can managers best be supported so that they fully contribute to the success of a transformation? Looking deeper: analysis and concrete answers.

How do you measure the success of a transformation? By being able to give meaning in a given technological and economic context and by creating sustainable change that empowers co-workers. Managers play a central role in this process.

Managers can share a vision and explain the expected benefits, which is a *prerequisite* for mobilizing teams and fostering their engagement. In other words, managers – particularly direct managers – ensure the right conditions for the transformation, which helps the teams.

The problem is that too often, the transformation project is developed within the circle of top managers. The lack of middle management mobilisation in the definition and preparation phases of transformation projects gives rise to difficulties in the implementation phase.

What is even worse is that direct managers often encounter difficulties in their normal duties: cascading to employees the objectives set by top management, and explaining them in practical, operational terms.

Add to this a sense of urgency, pressure, uncertainty and, sometimes, contradictions, and you will have all the ingredients for a transformation project that is doomed to failure.

Another phenomenon that must absolutely be taken into account is that our world is changing. New lifestyles shake up our society and our businesses. Society is increasingly enthusiastic about the collaborative values of the Web (sharing, access to information, transparency etc.) and is averse to top-down communication.

These principles are becoming more widespread, driving forward companies' shared future, but businesses often have a hard time demonstrating the same kind of flexibility and agility.

How to drive change

The success of a transformation is based on three pillars: giving meaning, engaging in the change and empowering employees.

Generally speaking, sharing the ambition and vision, and explaining the expected benefits, helps everyone to understand the issues at stake and the target of the transformation. Creating the right conditions so that teams become mobilised also ensures engagement. Empowering employees guarantees sustainable results.
That is why managers have a key role.
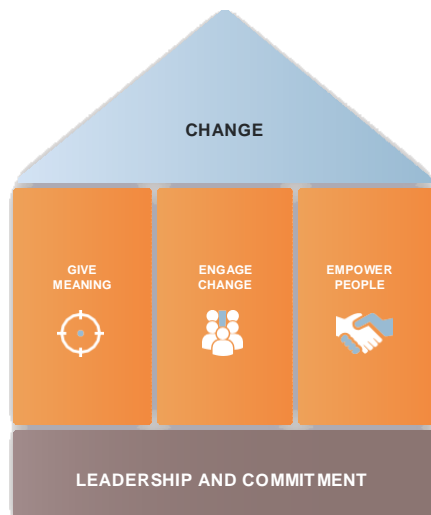
On the transformation journey, being a manager is a complex and ever-changing responsibility
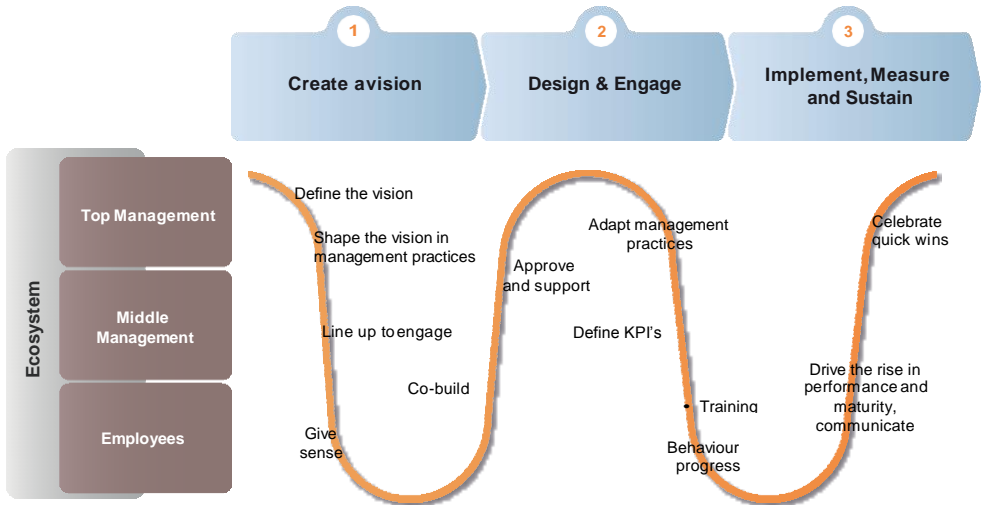
Top and middle management play a key role in the success of transformations

Managers therefore play a very important role. They are both the keystones of the transformation structure as well as the gatekeepers of change for their teams.

What do we mean by this? They create the right conditions for success for their teams, in particular, by preventing excessive workloads – the leading cause of resistance – and by putting the right people in the right place, to give just a few examples.

A transformation project unfolds in three phases that involve all levels of the hierarchy. On the transformation journey, several steps are unavoidable. The manager plays a crucial role in each of them.

1. Envision

To lead the change, managers must first understand the ambition of the proposed transformation. They need to understand the overall vision induced by the change.

Practically, it means the underlying principles of the program, macro-planning, key milestones and project steering. To be effective, this organisation must use a common language. It is then over to the managers to give meaning to the vision, bringing it to life through their managerial activities and translating the ambition into team and individual objectives.

17

2. Identify in order to engage

During the appropriation phase, managers must clearly identify the changes and their impacts. Considering that their own scope may evolve with the transformation, managers must know what they cannot influence and where they have leeway. They will then be in a position to cascade the strategic objectives set by top management. They should be allowed to co-build the operational work streams of the road map. This will also help identify potential recruitment and training needs.

What is the best practice at this stage of the transformation? Promote a consistent level of information between top and middle management to prevent any imbalances within the teams and to encourage the engagement of all employees.

3. Implement, measure and sustain

In order to ensure a sustainable implementation of the transformation, managers must build confidence in the success of the transformation. This is achieved by ensuring that teams remain focused on strategic priorities and by quickly arbitrating between possible sticking points.

For a successful transformation, the 'why' must be understood

Managers therefore take on a complex, ever-changing role within transformation projects. All too often, they are insufficiently trained and do not receive enough support to lead change in an effective manner. Support is critical for them to be able to play their part in full.

Support managers to make your transformation a success

Suitable tools and devices are available to give middle managers all the skills they need to become effective go-betweens without wasting any time. Here are just a few:

Make the transformation a priority

Managers suffer from a chronic lack of time. This is a reality and often a euphemism. Planning is critical: managers must systematically be given the right information at the right time – or even ahead of this right time - so that they can get organised and plan the next steps with their teams. Investing time and resources in this way is a must to strengthen commitment to the change and ensure its proper deployment.

Supporting the evolution of the manager's role

Against a backdrop of general societal change, the manager's role is changing quickly. Managers must adapt, use their time differently and reposition themselves. First and foremost, managing means translating and implementing strategic objectives at an

operational level. But managers are also expected to have a vision, to know how to get people on board, how to empower teams and, where necessary, how to coordinate a network.

Taking the example of planning a department's activities: it is not useful for the manager to organize the individuals' activities if they have the tools and know the rules to do it themselves. The manager's time is much better spent supporting their team and monitoring how individuals have planned their own activities.

In the context of transformation, managers must demonstrate great agility, adapt constantly, and reposition themselves and their actions. Internal or external mentoring is a simple and effective way to share best practices between experienced managers who have already gone through transformation phases and their younger colleagues who are facing these issues for the first time. It is a good exercise for the one sharing technical and soft skills, as well as a great way to express questions and fears for the one who is leading a transformation for the first time. The perspective of another manager who is not involved in the transformation can add a lot of value to the manager who is.

Train them to share and to listen

Managers must ensure that free speech systems are implemented, to enable the identification of teams' weak signals, fears, roadblocks or unspoken issues.

Feedback enables to ingrain desirable behaviours and do away with the others.

'Gemba walks', which involve managers going to the field to solve problems in a concrete way, or 'go, look, and see' or 'live my life' approaches, which allow them to take on the others' point of view by putting themselves in their shoes for a specified period, are excellent ways to strengthen managers' relationships and guide them in their decision-making. Another solution is managing teams in a more collaborative and empowering way by delegating certain tasks – such as leave management – where appropriate. Transparency is an additional advantage. Innovative team management techniques can then be employed using collaborative tools and techniques, such as design thinking.

Encourage transparency and sincerity

Managers are the keys to successful transformations when they do not just simply supervise change but when they enable co-workers to find solutions. They must help them grow and become agents of change. To achieve this, the manager combines high standards and supportiveness in organizing the work, which empowers the entire team and establishes real team dynamics.

Co-workers find renewed confidence, meaning and happiness at work. They become mobilised, and change takes place almost naturally.

PEOPLE MUST BE AT THE CORE OF CHANGE

In order to meet the quality standards of one of the world's most demanding industries, Airbus Group launched its Quest initiative in 2013. In three years, the European leader in aerospace managed to cut non-quality costs by half. Let's review this very human adventure, where success relied on the engagement of its 140,000 employees.

How did the Quest initiative start?

As Airbus' quality rate was lagging slightly behind industry standards, we launched in 2013 an action plan to improve performance, which we named Quest. In the aerospace sector, the notion of quality is truly essential to conquer markets. Furthermore, reworking a poorly assembled part or discovering at the end of the chain that another part is missing, leads to significant extra costs, as well as customer dissatisfaction.

Once you had discovered this, where did you start?

Our action plan was based on two directions. The first, the technical one, was to define the very notion of non-quality in order to address it more effectively. The second direction – and undoubtedly the most ambitious – focused on the human element. We sought to change attitudes to engage the whole of our 140,000 employees.

Dr. Soeren Fischer

Senior Vice-President Business Improvement & Quality
Airbus Group

21

After defining these two directions, we implemented a number of pilot projects in 2014. They confirmed our first observations and enabled us to deploy the project in the field. Then we began to train the first Quest initiative ambassadors. Their mission was to effect transformation throughout the Group's entities because improving quality is a truly collective effort.

What role did these ambassadors play in changing attitudes?

A crucial role. It seemed obvious to us that we couldn't reach 140,000 people without ambassadors in the field. It wasn't possible to focus solely on top-down communication. By training these ambassadors, we were hoping for a ripple effect. The strategy worked well as we had fifty ambassadors when the project was launched and several hundred by the end.

How did you choose and train these ambassadors?

We asked all divisions to propose volunteer agents of change. We then trained them in *bootcamps*, in short and intense training sessions. Over three days, they enriched their reflection through fun, hands-on exercises. They were able to question all aspects of the notion of quality: attitude, culture, change management, coaching etc. This training naturally created a network of solidarity and action within the group.

Along with this network of ambassadors, what other initiatives did you implement to bring teams together?

Training programmes, of course, both online and 'classroom', and communication actions, such as awareness-raising articles published on the intranet. We also created a mobile forum for discussion. This *road show*, called 'Mobilo Quest', offered literature, testimonials from customers sharing their feedback, and the opportunity to speak with ambassadors or experts.

Through these training and communication initiatives, we managed to reach nearly 50,000 people directly! We also saw employees become aware of the large-scale impact of a missing screw, a faulty finish, an imperfect colour or a poorly machined part...

Coming back to the more technical aspects, how did you make it easier to measure quality?

We went from 21 initial quality indicators to 5. We wanted to simplify their use throughout the entire value chain, at all levels of the group. We also implemented forums for discussion and steering tools. In these spaces, multifunctional teams regularly met to discuss the evolution of indicators and other initiatives to make further progress.

Still, you must have met some resistance?

The production teams bought into to the project quite well as soon as they understood the real impact on business. However, things were more difficult with middle management, often considered as the 'guardians of the temple'... I often heard: "Why should we change our methods when we've always done it like this (or like that)?"

There was one thing that seems to have really helped: top management desire for transparency. I remember in particular a working session when we were examining employee feedback on the progress of the Quest program. All indicators were green (good) or amber (average). The Managing Director of the division concerned then walked into the room, looked at the indicators and told us that they did not reflect the informal feedback he had got: they were far more negative. With this, he prompted us to question the relevance of the assessment tools and to identify inconsistencies by going back to field visits. Thanks to him, we overcame what I call the "watermelon effect": green on the outside, red on the inside!

So, did you meet the objectives?

Real, sustainable change is measured over ten to fifteen years. But I think I can say two things: the first is that in just three years we met our main objective, which was to halve non-quality costs. The second is that we introduced a significant, in-depth change. We have several projects in progress, which means that quality improvement is a long-term commitment at Airbus.

To make this initiative sustainable, we are continuing with communication initiatives, introducing the notion of quality into the new staff orientation program and into managers' objectives and we are also developing other initiatives. For example, we 'pushed' the APQP (Advanced Product Quality Planning) quality standard until we made it a global standard in aerospace, including for our subcontractors.

Lastly, do you have any advice for your industry peers?

Transformation – whether digital, operational or technological – features on the agenda of all manufacturers, in all sectors. To succeed in meeting this challenge, people must be at the core of any project. It is not enough to just think in terms of processes. Your employees must be engaged! Solutions quite often come from them. Sometimes you just need to ask them the right questions and give them the opportunity to try out their ideas.

ACCELERATE CHANGE IN BUSINESS THROUGH NEUROSCIENCE

Sabine Cousin, Director, Argon Consulting
Elise Blanc, Director, Argon Consulting

Over the last few years, management, leadership and change management have become fields of research within neuroscience. By helping us to understand how the brain works, neuroscience provides the keys to overcoming resistance to change within organisations. In this way, neuroscience provides scientific insights and greater effectiveness through dedicated tools. Here is what it means and some practical exercises.

C hange often requires swift decision-making amid a backdrop of uncertainty. Yet, faced with complexity, the brain prefers to keep the status quo. It is a creature of habit, to the extent that 99.9% of its work is pure habit[1].

Fearing change, the brain works using shortcuts which, on the whole, are useful in that they let you save time and energy, but they can lead to unfounded decisions.

The brain is actually made up of three parts: the neocortex, the limbic and the reptilian. Before making a decision, the logical brain (the neocortex) consults the limbic brain (memory and emotions) to establish a link between the current and past situations. It looks for emotional content.

The reptilian brain is also called the primary or primitive brain. Base instincts, such as the protection instinct, are found in the reptilian brain. It is the source of primitive behaviours that meet fundamental needs. Among other things, it ensures the conservation of the individual and the species.

It is necessary to develop the adaptive resources of those who will be impacted by change

When we make a decision, our three brains establish a dialog between reason, emotions and gut feelings. Reason cannot govern the choice all by itself.

Decision-making calls upon gut feeling and taking past experiences into account. Logic alone would never let us choose a spouse or a profession, or let us decide if we can trust someone. Without emotions, we struggle to make the simplest of decisions. The result is that any change is based on activating these three parts of our brain.

As it studies the way the brain works, neuroscience has become an important contributor to various fields of research, particularly cognitive sciences, such as psychology, artificial intelligence, philosophy, linguistics, sociology or anthropology. It is also starting to make contributions, though still modest, to concrete areas such as politics, economics, marketing and organisational management.

Neuroscience has thus provided scientific evidence to support certain management professionals' 'intuitions'. Communicators, for example, have long believed that in order for messages to be memorized, they must be repeated. In fact, Austrian psychiatrist and neuroscientist Eric Kandel has demonstrated the existence of and difference between short-term and long-term memory. In 2000, he actually won the Nobel Prize in Medicine for this discovery.

Change pathway: five-step transformation
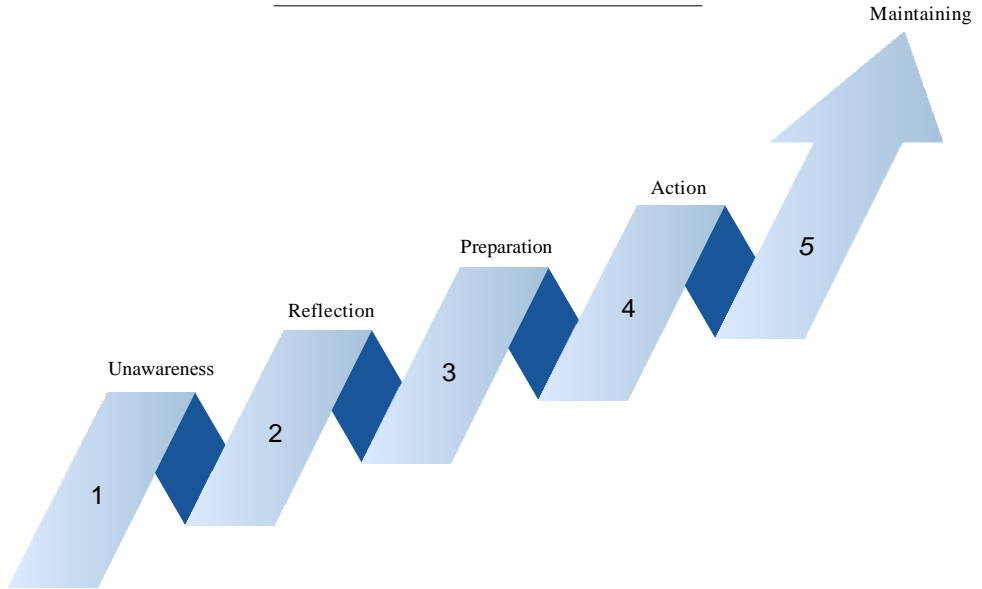
Awareness and recognition of the principles of neuroscience are essential when designing an approach to change support

Another example: Human Resource Directors have long observed that emotions are contagious. That intuition was confirmed in 1990 by Giacomo Rizzolatti, professor of physiology in Parma (Italy) with the discovery of mirror neurons. Mirror neurons fire when we see someone carry out an action. They activate the parts of our brain that are usually activated when we carry out this action ourselves.

Neuroscience has also enabled us to model the stages of a change and explain the journey undertaken by employees during a company's transformation.

Being familiar with this model lets us speed up the journey from the starting point to the target of the change. Based on the understanding of an individual's behaviour, this model assumes that change is the result of a long journey made up of a series of five key stages.

- **First stage: unawareness.** It is necessary to develop the adaptive resources of the people who will be impacted by the change.

- **Second stage: reflection.** People start preparing, start recognising the need for change and consider the benefits and limits of change.

- **Third stage: preparation.** People make obvious changes in their behaviour, either by giving up old habits or by adopting new ones. This is undoubtedly the most critical phase of the change.

- **Fourth stage: action.** People start taking small, measured but tangible steps towards a change of behaviour.

- **Fifth stage: sustaining change.** People are able to make their new behaviours sustainable by stabilising them in the medium term.

Opening up to curiosity, acceptance, stepping back to observe, seeking feedback and opinions: all this strengthens an organisation's agility and the people's embrace of change.

3 tools grounded in neuroscience to accelerate change

The model above presents the journey that each individual will have to make in order to change. Support tools, based on the principles of neuroscience, act as accelerators on the journey of collective transformation.

As an example, here are three tools that you can implement straight away within your organization.

1. Collaborative **What-If** workshops that provide the opportunity to ask any question regarding change. Practically, these are co-building sessions for the design of educational supports enabling all parties to project themselves into the future change. One person plays devil's advocate to challenge the collective response.

The outcome of the workshop is a set of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), whose aim is to reassure teams and engage them in the change. The tool is designed to help change habits.

When used as a group, the tool brings out positive emotions that will enable the implementation of the change.

To work collectively, you must ensure that the individuals involved understand the 'why' and do actually have the ability to change

2. **Gamification** uses game mechanisms to go from a complex representation of change to something that is simpler and easier to comprehend. Using a game that everyone knows (e.g. a card game) touches the positive emotions of the individuals. Working as a group encourages the emulation needed for implementing change.

3. **Storytelling** is a communication method based on a narrative discourse structure that is similar to that of tales and stories. This technique lets you shift the complex change into a universe that can be understood by everyone – as we've all read tales – to

Collective engagement makes it possible to anticipate resistance and tackle barriers to change

communicate with employees in a practical way, from person to person, so they can come on board the change train with more confidence.

These practical applications demonstrate how useful neuroscience can be for change management. As they are based on a deep understanding of how the brain works, they overcome the resistance that so frequently prevents transformation from being successful.

Tools based on the principles of neuroscience should therefore be considered as early as the design phase of a transformation program.

SUCCESSFUL CHANGE IN DISPERSED ENVIRONMENTS

Alix Langlais, Senior Manager, Argon Consulting

Of the many kinds of transformations that companies face, a change in tools – such as an ERP – over an extended geographical area (regional, national or even international) is quite common, and is challenging to manage. Adom[1] is a B-to-C company that supplies and maintains e-infrastructures. It recently experienced this type of change when it changed its ERP and customer relationship management (CRM) tool. The challenge was to ensure the ownership of the new tools and associated processes by all teams throughout France, i.e. nearly 2,000 employees spread across 60 agencies, a customer relationship centre and a back office.

The solution chosen: the industrialisation of a user-focused change process. Here is the feedback.

ERP and customer relationship: a change in tools with high operational stakes

Changing ERP at Adom impacted all operational functions (sales, customer relationship, field actions, supply chain etc.) as well as the economic steering and master data management teams. The new CRM system affected all employees in contact with customers. This was therefore a major project that affected many employees.

[1] *The name is fictitious in order to safeguard project confidentiality.*

Broad scope, wide area:

- **2,000** people impacted
- **5** regions
- **60** agencies
- **1** customer relationship centre and back office

This project brought significant changes to tools and processes and influenced the structure of certain business lines (e.g. supply chain). The implementation of the CRM tool fostered greater cooperation, enabling each person to see the other co-workers' interactions with the customer. This meant that the ways of working of each person also changed.

What was the main challenge of the project?

Ensuring business continuity at the switchover. To do so meant ensuring in advance that teams had taken on board the changes in processes and ways of working, and that this had been done consistently across the country. Another key point was devoting the first few days following go-live to getting teams up to speed with the processes and use of these new tools.

**Engaging operational teams throughout the project**

From the very beginning of the transformation, the engagement of operational teams was identified as an essential success factor to achieve this transformation. Change management framing was launched at a very early stage of the project with strong emphasis on involving operational staff throughout the project.

From the design phase onwards, a large group of operational team members was called upon to describe the target processes and capture the whole of the cases.

In the implementation phase, the change methodology put the user at the core of the change and learning experience. This was led by operational staff to speed up the assimilation of new processes and new tool functionalities. This methodology was then industrialised to ensure consistent change methods and messages.

The design of the user-focused change experience addressed the three dimensions of an employee's intrinsic motivation[2]

[2] *Daniel H. Pink - Drive the surprising truth about what really motivates us - 2011*
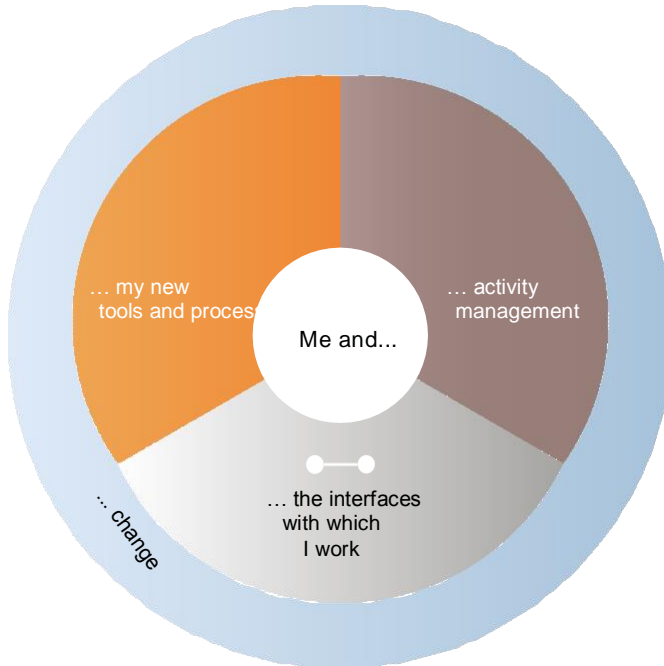
To ensure that the changes are assimilated by the users in the deployment phase, Adom put the employees at the core of their approach. To do so, they proposed a journey built on four different styles of learning relating to three dimensions of intrinsic motivation: sense of belonging, skills and autonomy.

• **Video and sharing — e-learning to understand the change as a whole**: each employee watched a video that described the specific impact of the project on their daily work. It showed that special attention had been paid to their role. This video formed the basis of an exchange between teams and managers.

• **Gamification — appealing to both emotional and rational side of individuals to understand one's role in the entire customer service chain**: teams were invited to play a collaborative game[3]. The principle was to feature the various Adom services interacting with the customer at each step of the business. Participants could win only by exchanging information. This was an opportunity for everyone to understand the constraints of each type of job and to define the working methods and behaviours to be adopted in the future with other users of the new tools.

[3] A collaborative game is a game in which all of the players win together or lose together.

• **Peer-to-peer training, understanding processes in detail and learning how to use the tools**: each co-worker was trained by business experts who used practical and relevant examples. The modules were a combination of one-to-one sessions for the initial training, memos and e-learning for perfecting practices, before and during the switchover.

For the deployment in dispersed environment, messages given to teams must be consistent

• **Managerial co-construction, owning the new management methods made possible by the tools:** during workshops, managers co-developed new monitoring standards. Thanks to their corporate social network, they continued to refine them throughout the deployment. The network allowed people to exchange daily on their best practices and managers who had already moved to the new system could share feedback. As the deployment continued, managers were able to use this network of peers to find answers helping them steer their activities.

Industrialising change management to obtain better results

In order to ensure consistent messages and to optimize the overall system, the change management method was designed with an industrialisation approach.

A cascade approach supported by change experts
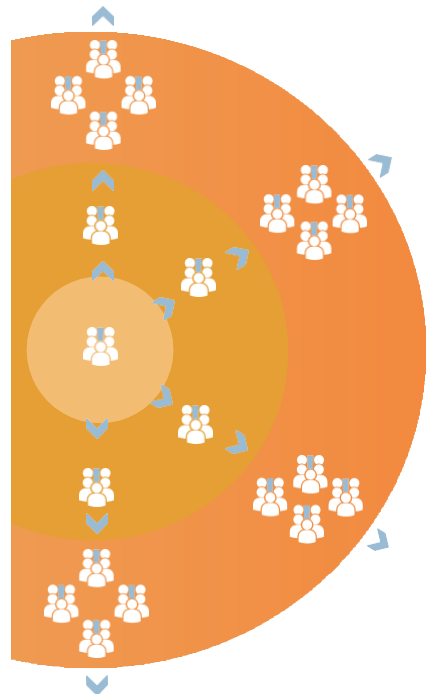
Practically, this industrialisation was based on:

1. Distributing standalone materials to let teams be self-sufficient in their appropriation of the contents, with messages that could not be misinterpreted or modified. For example: animated videos or board games with substantial stakes and explanations concerning the project so the people could play by themselves.

2. A cascade deployment by the managers who experienced the switchover before introducing it to their team.

This approach was supported locally by a network of change experts. As local specialists, they had been coached to explain the project and its deployment in various situations, from the most favourable to the toughest ones. They then co-constructed the change approach and adapted it to each group of people.

This community of change experts met through conference calls and corporate social networking.

In addition to this, a more traditional internal communication plan was deployed. Its objective was to explain the context and meaning of the project, provide visibility and full transparency on its impacts, and describe in detail the main stages and progress so that field teams could anticipate them. Ownership and understanding of key messages was measured via internal surveys.

Ultimately, the implementation of the new tools began with high levels of confidence and engagement from the teams. In this positive context, skills improvement was completed at fast pace. Thanks to human-focused, tailored support, this technical change was a full success!

Impact: 10-20% of the total budget

The change management budget when supporting the implementation of a new technical solution represents **10% to 20% of the overall project budget**. This budget must be planned for the whole of the scope, in addition to the training budget. This is a key factor for the success of a project, as it enables – or not – team ownership.

List of contributors

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