Creating Alignment During Change Efforts

The Bridge Between Vision and Execution
This will be great work.

What are you thinking?

Fun!

Wow, this is needed!

Stressful!

It will never work!
Change is an Emotional Process

- Threat-Anxiety-Defense Mechanism
  Even positive change can evoke a fight or flight response
- Resistance is often a sign of caring

THOUGHTS - FEELINGS - ACTIONS
Defining Alignment

Rational and emotional commitment, such that...

Individuals:

- Know what’s going on
- Know what they need to do
- Agree the effort is a great decision
- Are willing to help make the initiative succeed
Alignment Efforts as the BRIDGE

Based on “The Work of Leaders” by James, Straw, Scullard and others. 2013.
When Alignment is Missing

As part of the target group or as the change agent:
- What was it like?
- How did it impact the initiative?
Creating Alignment

Three Drivers:

I. Clearly communicate purpose and vision
II. Create discussion opportunities
III. Inspire others to move with you
I. Clearly Communicate Purpose & Vision

Start with the big picture!
I. Clearly Communicate Purpose & Vision

- Be concise. Plan a few key messages.
- Target the message for distinct stakeholder groups: “Station WIIFM”
- Use simple language. Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Repeat the points in different mediums.
I. Clearly Communicate Purpose & Vision

Common mistakes:

- Skip the “why” because you assume they already know
- Overwhelm with technical details
- Create the message in the moment
- Communicating rationale only once
- Assuming the same rationale appeals to all stakeholders
II. Create Discussion Opportunities

*Show people that their opinions count.*
II. Create Discussion Opportunities

- Make it safe!
- Use multiple types of engagement opportunities.
- Track and address concerns.
- Practice active listening.
- Say “tell me more.”
- Thank people for sharing.
II. Create Discussion Opportunities

Common mistakes:
- Thinking you have all the answers;
- Doing more talking than listening;
- Minimizing concerns;
- Focusing only on executive leadership; and
- Soliciting input but not sharing outcomes or resolutions.
III. Inspire Others to Move With You

Use your presence to reach the heart!
III. Inspire Others to Move With You

- Clarify why you’re excited and passionate about the initiative;
- Find 2-3 points that speak to people’s emotions;
- Create a slogan;
- Celebrate contributions and progress; and
- Know what motivates different audiences.
III. Inspire Others to Move With You

Common mistakes:

- Thinking that showing enthusiasm will cause people to disengage;
- Forgetting to thank people;
- Being so optimistic that you ignore or minimize others’ concerns; and
- Assuming that what motivates you is the same thing that motivates others.
What Questions do you Have? What Stands Out?

Three Drivers:

I. Clearly communicate purpose and vision

II. Create discussion opportunities

III. Inspire others to move with you
Free Resource: (for presentation attendees)

- Take a card on your way out
- Use within 1 week (by 11/3)
- Save your profile (PDF document)
- Normally a $90 value
Thank you!

Feel free to contact me with reactions, questions and experiences.

Thanks in advance for completing an evaluation!
I’d love to hear from you...

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