CourageousHR's Transformation Model

courageous hr

CourageousHR works with HR leaders and Communities to identify their distinctive contribution and then make it, both culturally and operationally, an organisational reality.

# CourageousHR's Transformation Model

The success of Organisational Transformation hinges on how effectively individuals involved with the change are able to cope with, accept and embrace the uncertainty of the transition from the 'old' to the 'new'.

CourageousHR's Transformation Model recognises the complexity of change through adopting a three dimensional approach:

Change Framework Dimension

Successful Transformations require purpose, direction, a road map, resources and stakeholder support. Therefore, it is essential HR has a good enough understanding of what its starting point is ('As Is') and its end point ('To Be') in order that it can effectively plan its Transformation Programme.

The Change Framework Dimension is in effect the 'needs analyses' for HR and reflects the strategic requirements of the business and determines the value HR needs to deliver and create. Based on the outcomes of this analysis will determine the focus, content, priorities, timescales and resources required to effectively complete the transformation.
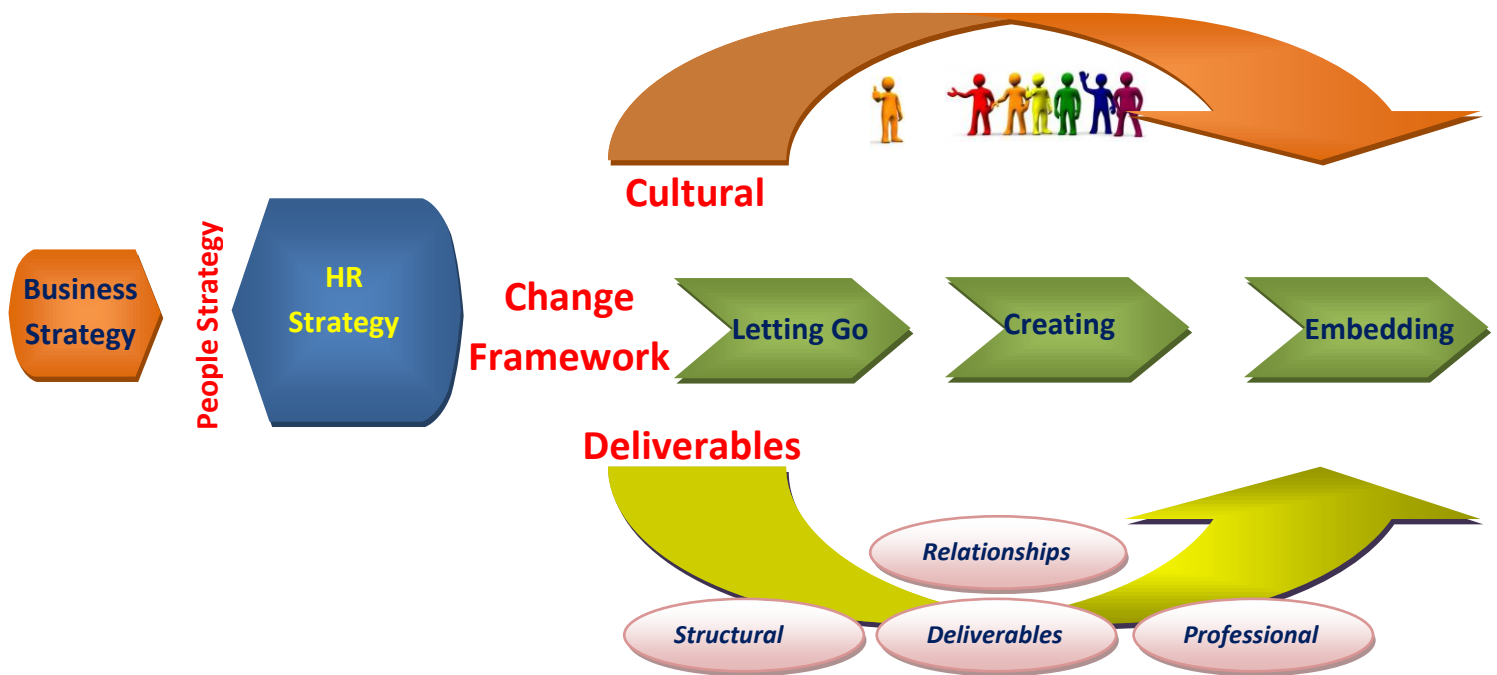
Deliverables Dimension

Content is measured by the appropriateness of the 'end product' being changed. HR Transformation, in essence, involves four 'end products', which we refer to as 'Transformation Zones of Activity':

- Structural (S); HR Deliverables (D); Professional (P) and Relationships (R).
- The scope and focus of each of these Transformation Zones will be determined by the outcomes of the Strategic Axis.

The nature of transformation is such that for each of these Transformation Zones there is a process of transition needed to go through to ensure the correct quality is achieved.

- The three phase process of transition begins with 'Letting go' which relates to identifying what needs to be stopped, discarded, improved or created. The activity and content will be informed by the outputs from the Framework Axis.

- Creating Phase is the most challenging stage as it is 'incubator' of change. Therefore, the certainties of the 'old' have disappeared but the new is not fully operational. There is a lot of pressure to "deliver results", "cut costs", and "make it work". Most change programmes come unstuck during this phase – which ultimately affects the quality of the outputs – as individuals rush ahead too fast, compromise quality for speed, fail to invest sufficient time, resources and efforts across the four Transformation Zones which results in a lack of alignment and synergy. The result is a failure of the transformation programme to achieve the original goals set and agreed along the Framework Axis

- Embedding Phase is the 'new beginning'. It is when all the different elements of both the Framework, Deliverables and Cultural Axes come together. This is when the success of the transformation programme can truly be measured. This is when people associate themselves with their new role, experience the new energy that the change sought and when the four Transformation Zones of Activity become aligned and deliver the business results set out at the beginning of the Transformation Programme.

Cultural Dimension

Change happens to individuals. However, how individuals respond to change relies on a range of individual and team/organisational factors such as:

- Individual influences:

  - Personal commitment to the 'new beginning', having the skills and knowledge required to function in the 'new beginning', personal attitude to change, level of feeling of being part of the transformation process, overall level of stress and uncertainty in an individual's life, previous experience of change, change knowledge (process, timescales etc), engagement in team and wider organisation.

- Team / organisational influences:

  - Clear rationale for change, involvement and attitude of key influencers and decision makers, open and transparent communication, open sharing of information, widespread involvement of all individuals in the change process, support for those positively and negatively impacted by the change, recognition of the timescales involved.

The 'new beginning' will not be embedded until the individuals (and therefore the wide team / organisation) are behaving in ways that are consistent with the 'to be' state.

Lasting change requires investment

Change of any sort – even though they may be justified in economic or technological terms – finally succeed or fail on the basis of whether the people affected do things differently.

- Do the employees let go of the old ways of doing thing, go through the difficult time between the old way and the new, and come out doing things in the new way?
- Leaders tend to forget the *Letting Go* and *Creating* phases and go straight to the final phase of transition.

With change you naturally focus on the outcome that the change produces. Transition is different:

- The starting point is not the outcome but the *letting go* you will have to make to leave the old situation behind.
- Situational change hinges on the 'new thing', whereas psychological transition depends on letting go of the old reality and the old identity people had before the change took place

The most important change initiatives seem to have these qualities:

- They are connected with real work goals and processes
- They are connected with improving performance
- They involve people who have the power to take action regarding these goals
- They seek to balance action with reflection
- They allow people space to think and reflect without pressure to make decisions
- They are intended to increase people's capacity
- They focus on learning about learning, in settings that matter

Leading people through the 'Creating' Phase

One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time. Andre Gide, French Novelist

People can find change stifling. They are caught between the demands of the conflicting systems and end up immobilized, or systems break down and everyone wants the changes implemented ASAP. In effect what is happening is the old clarities break down and everything is in a state of flux. Nothing is a given anymore and everything could happen. No one knows the answers; one person says one thing and someone says something completely different.

The dangers presented in the Creating Phase

- People's anxiety rises and their motivation falls. They feel disoriented and self-doubting. They are resentful and self-protective. Energy is drained away from work into coping tactics. Research seems to indicate that people's effectiveness can fall by 50%!

- People miss more work than at any other times. At best, productivity suffers, and at worst, there is a sharp rise in medical and disability claims. Absenteeism can escalate.

- Old weaknesses, previously patched over or compensated for, re-emerge with a vengeance. If Customer Services has always been weak, it gets even worse. The old resentments take on new energy just when greater trust is needed

- People get overloaded, they frequently get mixed signals and systems are in flux and therefore more than normally unreliable. Priorities get confused, information is miscommunicated and important tasks go undone.

  - People lose their confidence in the organisation's future and employee turnover begins to rise.

- It is easy for people to become polarised: some want to rush forward and others want to go back to the old ways. Under this pressure, consensus easily breaks out and level of discord rises. Teamwork is undermined, as is loyalty to the organisation itself.

  - Managed properly this is only a temporary situation. But left unmanaged, polarisation can lead to terminal chaos.

- Organisations are vulnerable to attack from outside. Disorganised and tired, people respond slowly and half-heartedly to competitive threats.

Create temporary systems

What can you do to give structure and strength during a time when people are likely to feel lost and confused?

- Try hard to protect people from further changes while they're trying to regain their balance. It may be possible to cluster any new changes under part of a larger change that you're already going through. People can deal with a lot of change if it is coherent and part of a larger whole

- Review policies and procedures to see that they are adequate to deal with the confusing fluidity of this phase. The 'rules' under which you operate were set up to govern ongoing operations when things weren't changing as much as they are now.

- What new roles, reporting relationships, or configurations of the organisation do you need to develop to get through this phase? Hierarchy often breaks down and mixed groupings, like task forces or project teams, are often very effective.

- Set short-range goals for people to aim toward and to establish checkpoints along the way toward longer-term outcomes that you are seeking. Now is the time when people get discouraged very easily so it is crucial to give people a sense of achievement and of movement. This helps to counter the feelings of being lost, of meaninglessness, and of self-doubt.

- Don't set people up for failure by promising that you will deliver high levels of output. Everyone loses when such ambitious targets are missed: you look bad, people's self-confidence falls even further and your boss gets upset!

- Find out what Supervisors and Managers need to learn to function successfully and if necessary provide extra training in these areas.

Using the Creating Phase innovatively

- Establish by word and example that this is a time to step back and take stock, a time to question the 'usual', and a time to come up with new and creative solutions to the organisation's problems.

- Provide opportunities for others to step back and take stock, both organisationally and individually.

- Encourage experimentation. People always have ideas that they have been wishing they had the chance to try.

- Embrace losses, setbacks or disadvantages as 'entry points' into new solutions.

- Look for opportunities to brainstorm new answers to told problems.

- Restrain the natural impulse in times of ambiguity and disorganisation to push prematurely for certainty and closure

About courageoushr

At CourageousHR we work with HR Professionals to guide and inspire you and your HR Community to move from being 'followers' to leaders.   We bridge the gap between academic vision and consulting rhetoric to help you unlock your potential.

Our passion and thinking comes from our experiences, research and a belief that 'tomorrow doesn't have to be the same as today'. Our reach is global and we happily work with clients throughout the world and across a wide range of industries.