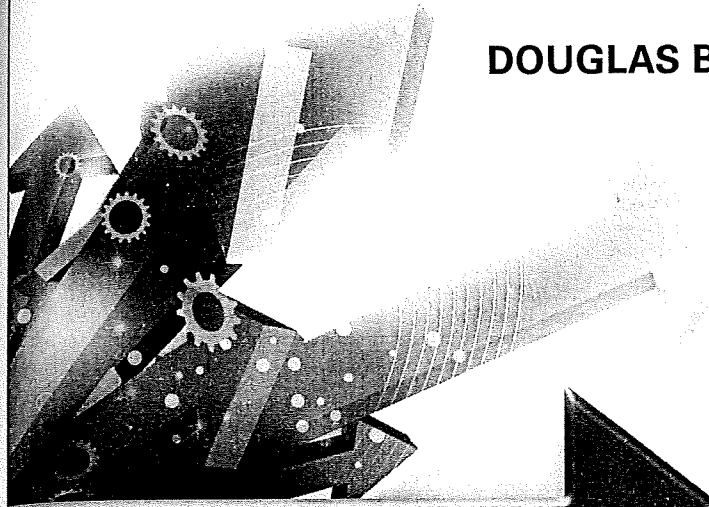


DOUGLAS B. REEVES



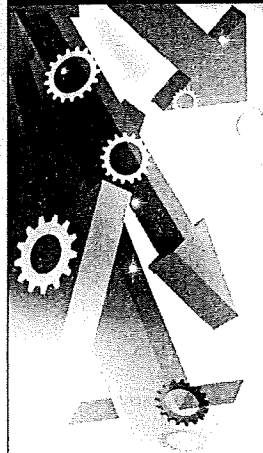
LEADING Change

IN YOUR School

How to Conquer Myths, Build
Commitment, and Get Results

ASCD

Alexandria, Virginia USA



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The Organizational Change Readiness Assessment

In Chapter 2 we considered your personal change experiences. In this chapter we review your experiences with organizational change and then integrate these two sets of experiences to complete your personal Change Readiness Assessment.

Remember, the physical act of writing is important, so please complete all of the work in this chapter, including the written responses and the scoring of your change experiences. If you prefer to enter your responses on a computer, you can complete the Change Readiness Assessment for free by using the online service at www.ChangeLeaders.info.

Consider three organizational changes that you have experienced in the past five years. These changes could represent change in a single team or for the entire organization. Perhaps it involved a strategic plan, a quality improvement, a technology implementation, or other systemic changes. You will be asked to evaluate each change on various criteria, using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 representing no evidence of the characteristics described and 10 representing an exceptional reflection of those characteristics. For example, if the organizational change you

were considering was a technology initiative for improved computer security, then a score of 10 for "Planning" might be associated with the fact that your organization created an extensive list of planning steps, including training, technology support, hardware changes, and personal follow-up for every person who was affected by the change. A score of 10 for "Sense of Urgency" might be associated with the fact that, had you failed to complete the computer security initiative, your organization might lose a great deal of time and money, but if you successfully completed it, you would be able to not only safeguard your computerized information but also accomplish more for a mission you believe to be very important. With regard to "Personal Support," a score of 10 could be related to the fact that your family and friends knew that sometimes this important organizational initiative would require extra time at work and limit your flexibility to spend time with them. They knew that this time was important to you and that once the computer security initiative was completed, you would be able to spend more time with them. When you score a 10 on "Stakeholder Support," you observed comprehensive stakeholder engagement at every level, including elected officials, community members, students, parents, teachers, administrators, and a broad cross section of interest groups that would be affected by the proposed change. Finally, when you score a 10 on "Effect on Results," you are able to say that you and your team were more effective because you are not diverted by the risks, costs, and time required by lapses in computer security.

These descriptions could, of course, make a score of 10 seem out of reach, but that is precisely the point. Honest 10s are rare, and therefore you should be equally fair in awarding low scores. The very fact that you are reading this book suggests a solid commitment to, and interest in, change. That does not mean that every change effort you have engaged in has been successful. Chances are that some have been

more successful than others, and that is precisely what this opportunity for personal reflection is all about.

Please take a few minutes to complete the following paragraphs. Again, I ask that you resist the temptation to skip over this interactive exercise and instead recognize its importance—not only for you, but for the school or system you wish to lead. Like the stories of personal change you recorded in Chapter 2, your stories of organizational change will give you credibility and will also help you reflect on how to best lead others.

1. Think of several organizational changes in the past five years that have particular relevance for you. Please list them briefly here.

Change #1:

Change #2:

Change #3:

Change #4:

Change #5:

2. Think of the organizational change for which you exercised the greatest degree of *planning*. This means that you identified the steps

that you would take and you knew clearly how to make the change. Identify just one change and list some of the most important steps in the planning process:

Change:

Step #1:

Step #2:

Step #3:

Step #4:

Step #5:

3. Think of the organizational change for which you had the greatest *sense of urgency*. Describe why the price of failure was high—much higher than the price of change.

If I failed to make this change, then . . .

If I succeeded in making this change, then . . .

4. Think of the organizational change for which you had the greatest *stakeholder support*. Your friends and family knew that your organization was making a change, and they supported you completely.

How organizational stakeholders (employees, leaders, policymakers) supported the proposed organizational change:

How community stakeholders (businesses, senior citizens, parents, and other groups) supported the proposed organizational change:

5. Think of the organizational change for which you had the greatest *leadership focus*. Describe how you devoted time to initiating and maintaining the change despite your busy schedule.

6. Think of the organizational change that had the greatest *effect on results* for you or for your organization. Describe these specific and measureable results in as much detail as you can remember.

As a result of the change I successfully completed, I achieved the following results:

Based on these reflections, complete the Organizational Change Readiness Assessment in Figure 3.1, listing the three most important changes in the left-hand column and entering a score from 1 to 10 for each column, with 10 representing the highest level of change effectiveness. The Organizational Change Readiness Assessment considers the capacity of the organization and the leader to engage in significant change.

Figure 3.1 | Organizational Change Readiness Assessment

Directions: For each change, enter a score of 1 to 10 in each column, with 1 representing no evidence of the characteristic described, and 10 representing an exceptional reflection of that characteristic.

Organizational Change	Planning Plans were clear, detailed, and effectively communicated.	Sense of Urgency Widespread sense of the immediate need for change was apparent.	Stakeholder Support Employees, clients, and the community understood and supported the change.	Leadership Focus Senior leadership made the change their clear and consistent focus long after initiation.	Effect on Results The change had a measurable and significant effect on results.
1.					
2.					
3.					

Finally, complete your Organizational Change Score:

Total for Change #1 _____

Total for Change #2 _____

Total for Change #3 _____

Total for the *two highest changes* _____

The total for the two highest changes in your Organizational Change Score represents the *horizontal* score.

Going back to Chapter 2, enter the total for the two highest changes in your Personal Change Score: _____. This total represents the *vertical* score.

Use these two scores to enter an X in the appropriate box of the Change Readiness Matrix (Figure 3.2). For example, if you have a horizontal score of 80 and a vertical score of 70, then you will place an X in the upper right-hand quadrant. If you have a horizontal score of 20 and a vertical score of 60, then you will place an X in the upper left-hand quadrant. (If you prefer to let the computer do this for you, go to www.ChangeLeaders.info and take the Change Readiness Assessment online.)

Figure 3.2 | **Change Readiness Matrix**

0 Leadership Change Capacity 100	Ready for Learning	Ready for Change
	Ready for Resistance	Ready for Frustration
	0 Organization Change Capacity 100	

Now that you know the quadrant that best represents your change readiness, let us consider in greater detail the implications of your Change Readiness scores.

Ready for Learning

If you scored in the upper-left quadrant, you are Ready for Learning. Here the leader demonstrates a history of successful change, with a strong capacity for planning and executing change. The organization can learn from the leader's personal and professional example. Before undertaking a new change initiative, however, the leader must attend to the learning needs of the organization. Specifically, the organization may need work on planning, communicating, and executing change. Moreover, the organization must create an evidence-based culture in which a clear and compelling case for change leads to a sense of urgency by every stakeholder. Finally, a commitment to clear and public displays of data must be in place so that the results of the change can be widely shared, reinforcing the commitment and hard work of every person contributing to the change effort.

Ready for Resistance

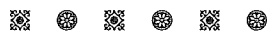
If you scored in the lower-left quadrant, then you are Ready for Resistance. When neither the leader nor the organization has a history of successful change, then the most likely result of any new change initiative will be resistance, anger, undermining, or simply ignoring the effort. Without stakeholder support or leadership execution, these organizations will simply "out-wait" every new change initiative and the leaders who attempt to implement them.

Ready for Frustration

If you scored in the lower-right corner, then you are Ready for Frustration. When an organization with a strong history of change is led by someone who either is reluctant to engage in systemic change or lacks the personal capacity to do so, then the potential for frustration is strong. Each time the organization gets ahead of the leader and the ensuing change fails to be supported by senior leadership, change becomes less safe. Eventually, the organization will stop taking the risks and migrate to the left-hand side of the matrix. The next leader will inherit an organization with severely compromised change readiness, and it will take time to rebuild trust and regain change capacity.

Ready for Change

If you scored in the upper-right quadrant, then both the leader and the organization have exceptional change capacity, and the organization is a model of resilience. This organization can adapt to environmental and cultural shifts, change strategies and form, innovate services and resources, and create an atmosphere of excitement and engagement.



Now that you know your readiness for change, we turn our attention to the factors affecting school culture. Although it is tempting to address such a challenge with the imperatives of what must change, we will consider the counterintuitive principle that the first duty of leadership is defining what does *not* change. Only when you meet your colleagues' needs for stability will you be able to challenge them for successful change.