

Welcome to  
**THRIVING THROUGH  
CHANGE**



Presented by  
Cynthia Scott, PhD, MPH,  
author of the *Mastering the Change Curve*

## Simple Truths

Our brains don't like change.  
It disrupts our patterns and  
comfort levels.



## Opportunity for Learning

We must learn how to harness our response to change to support a sustainable future.

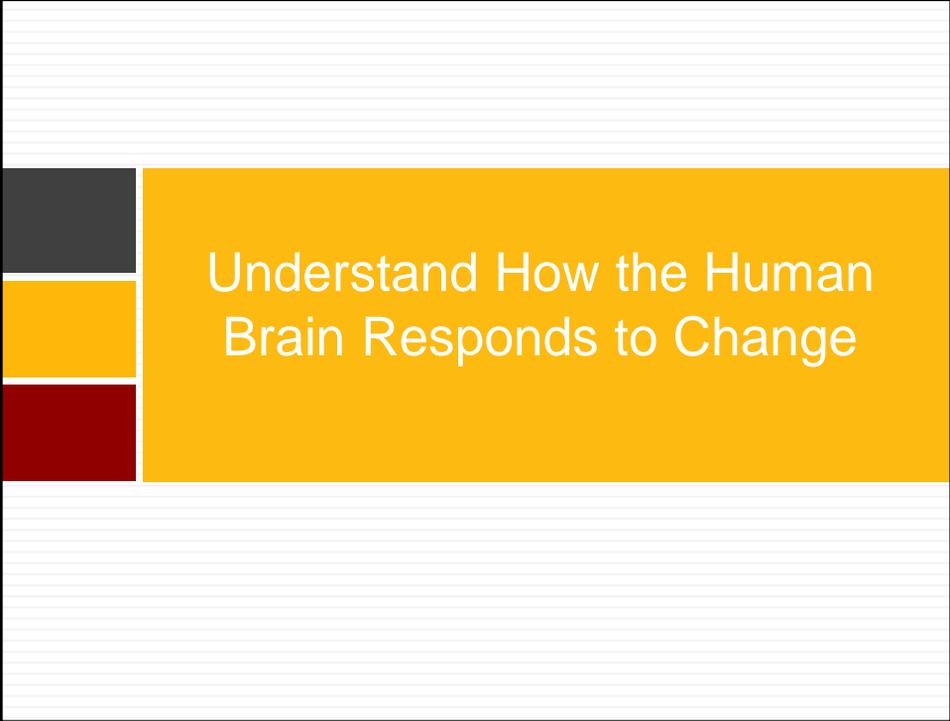
Leaders need to understand the predictable path of creating change in order to foster innovation and business agility.



## Today's Focus

- ✓ Understand how the human brain responds to change.
- ✓ Learn five ways to reduce threat and increase resilience.
- ✓ Identify a predictable path of responding to change.
- ✓ How to lead teams from resisting to performing.





## Understand How the Human Brain Responds to Change



## Imagine This!

Stand up, change seats,  
and take everything with you.

## How Did You React?

When we asked you to imagine changing seats, what was your first reaction?

Please use your chat window to tell us.



## How the Brain Works

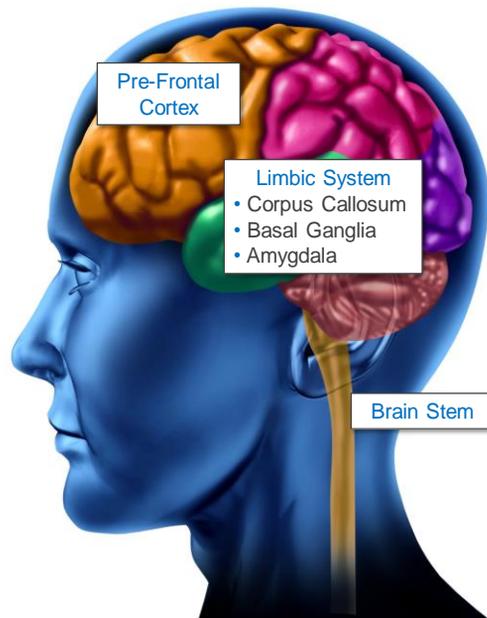
- Our brains are over 50,000 years old.
- Our brains like thoughts and actions that are repeated or emotionally charged. It will “hard code” them and push them into long-term memory.
- How we walk, talk, interact, and manage is habitual-unconscious.

## The Brain Avoids “Sticks” and Seeks “Carrots”

- “Sticks”: Predators, hazards, social aggression, and pain (physical and emotional.)
- “Carrots”: Food, sex, shelter, social support, and pleasure (physical and emotional.)
- Sticks are usually urgent, while carrots allow a longer approach.
- Sticks determine mortality. Fail to avoid sticks today, no carrots tomorrow!

## The Three-Part Brain

1. Brain Stem
2. Limbic System
3. Prefrontal Cortex



## The Lizard Brain Hates Change

- The “lizard” is a physical part of your brain, the pre-historic lump near the brain stem that is responsible for fear, rage, and reproductive drive. Why did the chicken cross the road? Because her lizard brain told her to.
- The “lizard” isn't going away; it is here to stay. Your job is to figure out how to quiet it.



~ Seth Grodin

## The Lizard is Fast

- Every interaction is based on how a person perceives danger and reward – processed in about 1/20 of a second. We make these decisions biologically. 90% of our brain processing operation is unconscious and not known to us.
- In most cases, the lizard brain reaches a conclusion faster than the PFC and before the PFC catches up with the logic.



## Understanding the Lizard

The limbic system is aroused by emotions and it makes “toward” or “away” decisions.

“Hot spots” are patterns of experience that are stored in your limbic system and tagged as dangerous.



## Calming the Lizard Brain

An overly aroused limbic system impairs cognitive functioning and dramatically reduces resources to the prefrontal cortex (PFC).

When aroused, trying to suppress it only makes it worse and takes a lot of energy.



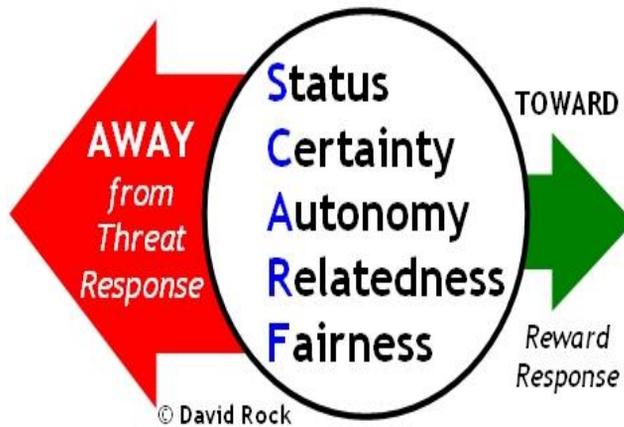
## Learn Five Ways to Reduce Threat and Increase Resilience

### Reducing Threat During Change

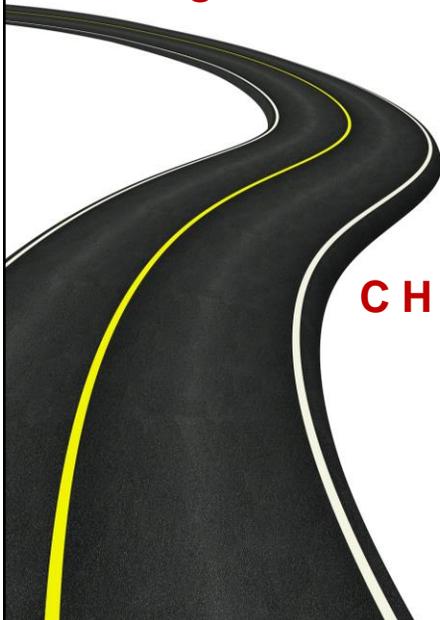
- The same brain circuitry gets activated by ***social threat*** as ***physical threat*** and it is stronger and more intense than physical threat.
- Therefore, we want to **AVOID WAKING** the lizard in people during change.



## SCARF Model of Social Threats and Rewards



## Change Puts People's Brains in Pain



**CHANGE =  
UNCERTAINTY**

## Balancing Threat and Reward

- In times of change, increase the sense of relatedness and fairness.
- When threatening one area, balance out with other areas.
- If several of these SCARF areas get affected, there is a really strong response. For example:  
*“English is now our global language”* creates threat in all five areas.

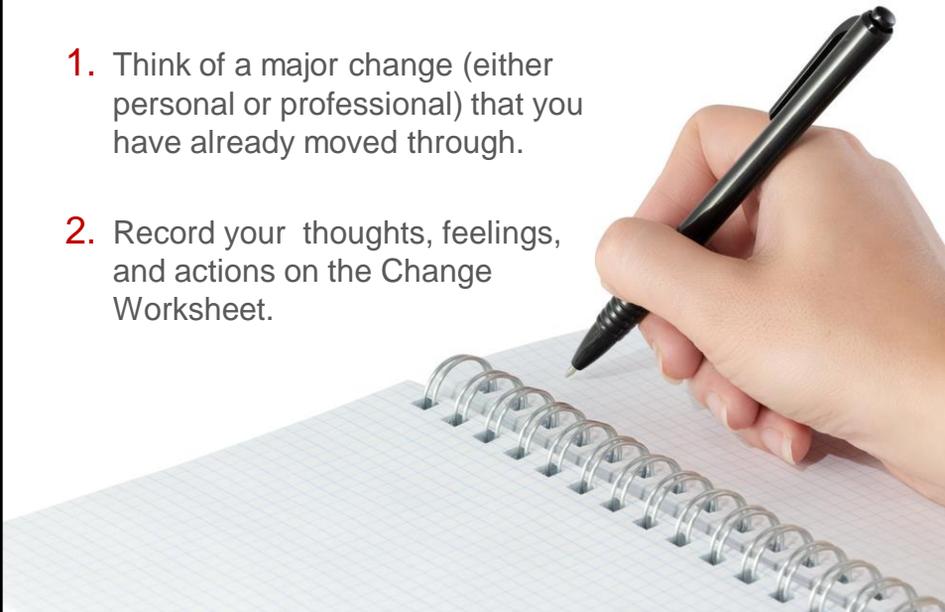
Identify a Predictable Path of  
Responding to Change

## Recall a Personal Experience of Change



## Change Exercise

1. Think of a major change (either personal or professional) that you have already moved through.
2. Record your thoughts, feelings, and actions on the Change Worksheet.



# Change Worksheet

A. Your first awareness of the change ...

Thoughts

Feelings

Actions

D. When it was over ...

Thoughts

Feelings

Actions

B. Early in the change ...

Thoughts

Feelings

Actions

C. When it was halfway through ...

Thoughts

Feelings

Actions

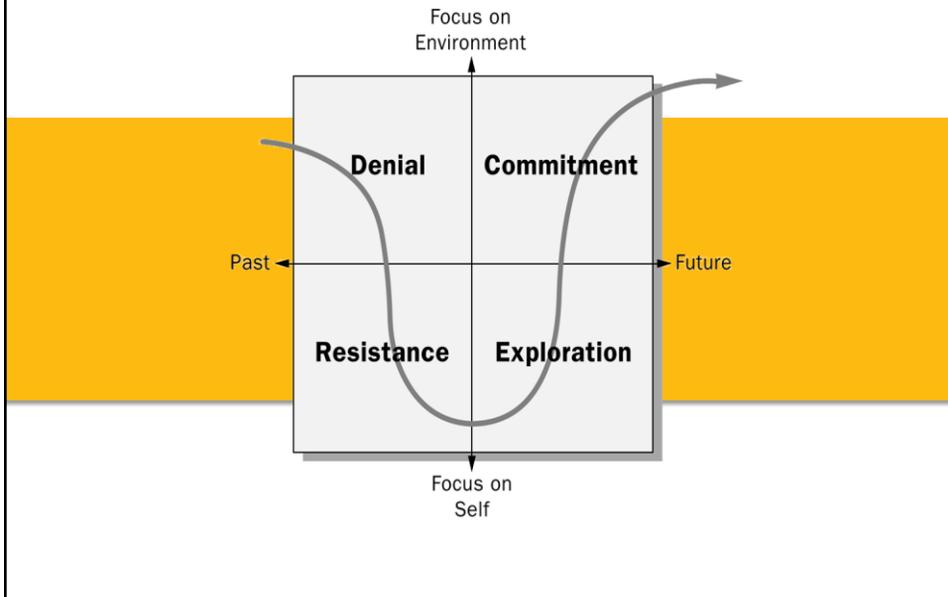
## Quick Poll

Which kind of change did you recall?

- a. A change that you initiated.
- b. A change that came from outside your control.



## Transition Curve Model



## Denying Behaviors



- Avoid the topic.
- Appear unconcerned.
- Refuse to take initiative.
- Act like nothing is happening.
- Do routine work only.

## Endings Take Time

“True, you’re a butterfly now, but you still think like a caterpillar.”



## Resisting Behaviors



- Show anger.
- Complain and blame others.
- Become passive.
- Become exhausted and overwhelmed.
- Become preoccupied with the change.

## Exploring Behaviors



- Experiment and seek new ways.
- Begin to create a vision of the possibilities of the future.
- Accomplish intermediate goals and celebrate milestones.
- Take risks.
- Generate lots of ideas.
- Have trouble staying focused.

## Committing Behaviors



- Experience a sense of control.
- Feel comfortable and easy.
- Take time to affirm and recognize what they have accomplished.
- Reflect on what they have learned.
- Start looking ahead to the next change.



# Personal Change Competencies

## Notice Your Denying

Identify the reality of the situation:

- What is changing?
- What are the causes?
- What are the effects?

## Focus Your Committing

Focus your energy where you can make a difference:

- Act on issues you can control.
- Let go what you can't control.
- Increase your influence.



## Feel Your Resisting

Recognize your feelings about the change:

- Listen to yourself talk.
- Acknowledge what you are losing or gaining.
- Express your feelings.

## Reframe Your Exploring

View the situation from a different perspective:

- Look for the opportunities.
- Imagine the outcomes.
- Make things better now.

## How to Lead Teams from Resisting to Performing

## Lead through Denying

- See beyond the dangers of change to the opportunities.
- Explain the realities of the marketplace.
- Create a vision of the future.
- Take time to communicate the vision, raise issues, and listen to concerns.

**Leadership Action: Communicate**

## Lead through Resisting

- Listen closely, be aware of individual reactions and validate them.
- Help the team identify losses and gains.
- Interact with other teams who have moved along in the process.
- Manage your own resistance and keep a sense of humor.

**Leadership Action: Listen**

## Wearing the Tomato Suit

Good change leaders create opportunities for people to surface concerns as well as listen to and acknowledge them.

Just because you surface a concern doesn't mean that you have to "fix" it. People who are experiencing Resisting often benefit from being able to tell someone and have their concerns acknowledged.

Listen to their concerns.

Don't let them go unexpressed.



## Lead through Exploring

- Encourage the exploration of new possibilities.
- Facilitate discussions about how to make the change work best.
- Implement team members' good ideas.
- Focus discussions from many possibilities to a few concrete steps.
- Provide tools and training for success.
- Be tolerant of management and staff mistakes.

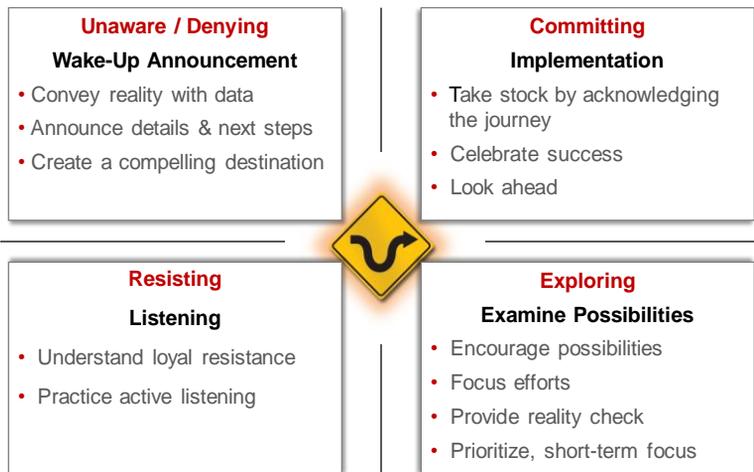
**Leadership Action: Facilitate**

## Lead through Committing

- Recognize and reward yourself as well as the team for success.
- Take steps to fully implement the change plan.
- Focus time and energy where you can make a difference.
- Set long-term goals.
- Look ahead to new situations and further changes.

**Leadership Action: Reward/Acknowledge**

## Change Communication Model



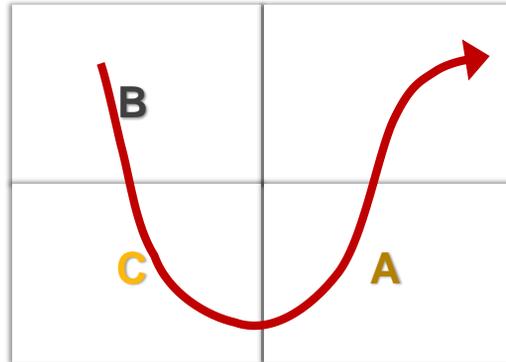
**It is possible to go through all four phases in one session!**

## Choosing Where to Start

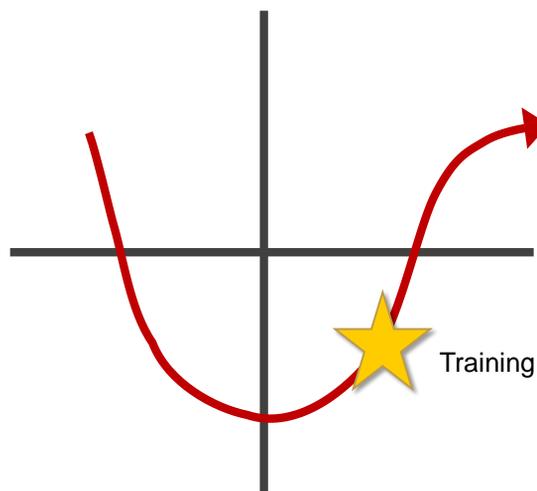
**A:** Go to first

**B:** Go to second

**C:** Go to third



## When to Do Training



## Tip Sheet

### Strategies to Increase Employee Involvement

- ✓ Meet regularly with employees and openly discuss why the organizational changes occurred.
- ✓ Constantly communicate clear goals and a vision of the new situation.
- ✓ Encourage people to discuss fears and concerns.

## Tip Sheet

### Strategies to Increase Employee Involvement

- ✓ Hold open “forums” where “loyal resisters” can raise concerns.
- ✓ Establish regular informal meetings to discuss the progress of the change process and next steps.
- ✓ Whenever possible, assign roles and responsibilities according to people’s interests.

## Tip Sheet

### Strategies to Increase Employee Involvement

- ✓ Encourage rituals and celebrate marker events.
- ✓ Involve the employees being affected as much as possible in making decisions about what affects them.
- ✓ Ensure training for new skills that are needed.

## Thank You for Participating

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Facilitator Set  
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