

Change Leadership: Preparation Questions

You're looking at leading a change, on your own or with others. Whether it's an experiment or a necessity, certain preparations can help reduce the inevitable performance dip and compress the time to successful integration of the change. Use the following questions to get ready.

- **What's the objective**, or intended outcome, of the change?
- **What will make us consider the change a success?** How and when will we know that?
- **Are people prepared for the change?** Do they understand it? Are they clear on what will change and what will stay the same? Are they aware of the chaos period that the Satir Change Model predicts?
- **Do people have motivation, bandwidth, and focus for the change?** What's wrong with the current state, and what's good about the target state? Would describing the change as eliminating some pain or problem ("away" motivation) or as achieving something desirable ("toward" motivation) move folks, or maybe a combination of the two? Will they commit to taking the change seriously, and is their commitment voluntary? Do they have the time and focus needed for the change?
- **Have the affected managers and stakeholders indicated their support for the change** (or at least their non-resistance)? Do they have the requisite education? How will we invite them to be part of it? Have we managed their expectations and allayed their fears?
- **If mind-set needs to change, are we setting ourselves up for success?** Do we have buy-in, and if applicable, permission? Are we leading by example? Are we making sure we don't make people feel bad about themselves prior to the change?
- **If the change turns out to be a good idea, will it stick?** Are we framing it in a positive way? Have we won hearts and minds, if the change calls for that? Will people feel safe? Engaged? Responsible for making it work?
- **What could impede the change?** Which habits, values, social and cultural norms, constraints, or reward and punishment mechanisms will get in the way?