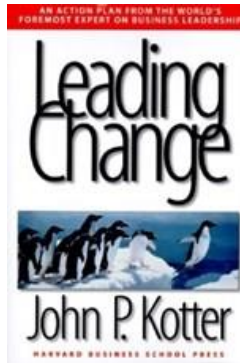


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Leading Change***¹

Author: **John P. Kotter**

Publisher: Harvard Business School Press

List Price: \$24.95 (PDF: \$11.95)

Format: 196 pages, soft cover or PDF

Publication Date: 1996

ISBN: 0-87584-747-1

Reviewer: **Meshva Desai, PMP**

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Introduction

John P. Kotter's *Leading Change* offering a clear and actionable roadmap for leaders looking to navigate their organizations through the complexities of transformation. Originally published in 1996, the book remains highly relevant today, with its principles being applied across various industries and sectors.

Overview of Book's Structure

Kotter, a professor at Harvard Business School, identifies eight critical steps that organizations must follow to successfully implement lasting change. He begins by highlighting the urgency of change in the rapidly evolving business environment, emphasizing that complacency is the enemy of progress. From there, Kotter outlines his eight-step process for leading change:

1. **Establishing a Sense of Urgency:** Kotter argues that without a sense of urgency, people won't give the necessary effort or attention to the change initiative. This step is about creating a compelling case for why change is necessary.
2. **Creating a Guiding Coalition:** Change can't happen in isolation. Kotter stresses the importance of forming a powerful, cross-functional team to lead the change effort.
3. **Developing a Vision and Strategy:** A clear vision guides the direction of change, and a well-thought-out strategy ensures that the vision can be achieved. Kotter explains how a compelling vision can rally people behind the cause.
4. **Communicating the Change Vision:** Successful communication is key to

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overcoming resistance. Kotter outlines strategies for ensuring that the vision is understood and embraced by everyone in the organization.

5. Empowering Employees for Broad-Based Action: Obstacles to change, whether they are structural, cultural, or human, must be removed. Kotter discusses how empowering employees can help break down these barriers.

6. Generating Short-Term Wins: Short-term wins build momentum and justify the change effort. Kotter highlights the importance of celebrating early successes to keep morale high.

7. Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change: Change is not a one-time event but a process. Kotter advises leaders to build on the momentum of early wins to drive deeper, more systemic change.

8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture: For change to be sustainable, it must become part of the organization's culture. Kotter discusses how new behaviors and processes can be institutionalized to prevent regression.

Highlights

Kotter's *Leading Change* is both insightful and practical. His eight-step model is well-structured and easy to follow, making it accessible to leaders at all levels of an organization. The book is filled with real-world examples and case studies that bring the concepts to life, showing how the principles can be applied in various contexts.

However, I would argue that Kotter's model is too linear, change is often more chaotic and requires flexibility. While Kotter acknowledges this to some extent, readers may need to adapt his model to fit the unique challenges of their organizations.

Highlights: What I liked!

Its emphasis is on the human side of change. Kotter recognizes that organizations are made up of people, and that their emotions, motivations, and behaviors must be addressed for change to be successful. His focus on creating a sense of urgency, building coalitions, and empowering employees highlights the importance of leadership and communication in the change process.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Although the book is geared towards the leaders, it can be beneficial for anyone involved in leading or managing change within an organization.

Conclusion

Kotter's eight-step process provides a comprehensive and practical guide to overcoming the challenges of change and achieving lasting results. The book's

enduring relevance and widespread application are testaments to the strength of its insights and the clarity of its advice. Whether you are a seasoned executive, an emerging leader or project manager, *Leading Change* offers valuable lessons on how to guide your organization through the complexities of transformation.

For more about this book, go to: <https://store.hbr.org/product/leading-change-why-transformation-efforts-fail/R0701J> or <https://archive.org/details/leadingchange0000kott>

About the Reviewer



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Meshva Desai, PMP, PSM I, CPIM, is a seasoned project manager with over 13 years of experience specializing in supply chain transformation. Her expertise lies in driving innovation, process improvement, and automation to enhance operational efficiency and reduce costs. Meshva is a natural planner with a talent for organizing and coordinating cross-functional teams and vendors to ensure the success of complex projects. Certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP) since 2018, she is dedicated to her profession and is an active member of the Dallas Chapter of PMI. Meshva can be reached at desai.meshva@gmail.com.

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