



# PRINCIPLES TO POWER CHANGE

*lasting*

**IN DR. JOHN KOTTER'S 2014 BOOK ACCELERATE HE DESCRIBED THE FIVE CHANGE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE A HIGHLY FUNCTIONING DUAL OPERATING SYSTEM.**

# THE 4 PRINCIPLES

## SELECT FEW + DIVERSE MANY

More people need to be able to make change happen—not just carry out someone else’s directives. Done right, this uncovers leaders at all levels of an organization; ones you never knew you had.



## HAVE TO + WANT TO

Those who feel included in a meaningful opportunity will help create change in addition to their normal responsibilities. Existing team members can provide the energy if you invite them.



## HEAD + HEART


Most people aren’t inspired by logic alone, but rather by the fundamental desire to contribute to a larger case. If you can give greater meaning and purpose to your effort, extraordinary results are possible.



## MANAGEMENT + LEADERSHIP

In order to capitalize on windows of opportunity, leadership must be paramount—and not just from one executive. It’s about vision, action, innovation, and celebration, as well as essential managerial processes.





**WAIT,  
WASN'T THAT  
ONLY FOUR  
PRINCIPLES?**

Just as the steps in the 8-Step Process for Leading Change evolved to become the 8 Accelerators,

— how we think about the principles has also evolved.

*Accelerate* detailed the five principles that make the dual operating system – the hierarchy and the network – hum and sing. The fifth principle was described as an inseparable partnership between these two parts of the dual model. Yet, through the continuous observation that underscores every part of our practice, we realized something key: a seamless flow of information and activity between the network and hierarchy is a *result* of the other four Change Principles and the 8 Accelerators in effect. It's a bi-product

— and an extremely valuable one at that.

## Before *Accelerate*

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The Change Principles have been showing up in Dr. Kotter's research and writing for decades, long before they were coined together. *Management + Leadership* was explored in the 1982 publication of *The General Managers*. *Head + Heart* were, similarly, the focus of the 2002 book, *The Heart of Change*. The significance of *Accelerate* was the marriage of these *Change Principles* – the mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors needed for change – with the *8 Accelerators* – the structure, process, and sustainability engine for change. *Accelerate* brought the art and the science of driving change together — *for the first time.*



LET'S DIVE  
INTO EACH  
CHANGE  
PRINCIPLE

*one by one*

More people need to be able to help make change happen – not just carry out someone else’s directives. The more minds tackling a problem will always result in a better solution. Done right, this inclusion of many people in the change movement uncovers leaders at all levels of an organization, including ones you never knew you had.



**FEW + MANY**



## Expand Your Thinking

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To expand from the *select few* to include the perspectives of a *diverse many*

- Acknowledge who your usual suspects are so you'll know the circle you need to deliberately expand. As a leader, who do you go to for help when you need a good result? How can you drastically expand this group? (Hint – think even outside your team, function, or business unit.)
- Ask for volunteers from those closest to the work.

# the Key to the locker

In an effort to become more patient-focused, a large hospital convened multiple teams to solve their problem with low patient satisfaction scores. One team, that included administrators, doctors, nurses, and staff, identified the length of inpatient hospital stays as part of the problem. The longer a patient stayed in the hospital, the lower their satisfaction score, the higher their cost of care, and the more likely they were to be readmitted.

They uncovered that patients could not be discharged over the weekend, so any patient ready for discharge after 5pm on Friday had to wait until Monday to check out. When a puzzled administrator asked why this was the case, a nurse spoke up and said, “When patients are admitted, their personal belongings are kept in a locker. The Head Nurse, who works Monday through Friday, is the only one allowed to hold the key.” The policy had been created years prior to address security concerns, but the hospital had evolved since the policy was put in place, and the team found a solution that allowed others to access the lockers and was able to implement it within days.

We often hear, “**Why didn’t we think of this before?**” In this case, a diverse group of people – with many perspectives – were given the space, the time, and the permission to focus on and solve a problem directly related to the future of the institution. By intentionally creating these conditions, the most unexpected person contributed the most creative, yet simplest, solution.

How do you respond to being told you have to do something?

Do you bring as much energy to the task as ones you choose to take on without being told to? Those who feel included in a meaningful opportunity that matters to them to leap into a better future will help create change in addition to their normal responsibilities. We've seen it over and over and over. Existing team members can provide the fuel to turbocharge change...if you invite them.



**HAVE TO +  
WANT TO**

## Expand Your Thinking

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We get it – there are some things that just *have to* get done. That's part of work, that's part of life – it's ok. But where can you spark *want to?*

- Change, of any magnitude, is about changing behaviors. That change occurs more readily – and persists longer – when it stems from a realized desire to change instead of a mandate to change.
- The more people who have the opportunity to contribute to a solution, the more buy-in you can expect and the stickier the change then becomes.

# cultures by the dozen

The European division of a global agribusiness was experiencing a unique moment in time. Growth over the past decade had been scant and 2020 goals were looming. And yet, the organization – along with its main competitors – together formed a cartel that controlled 80% of the food exports around the world. Minimal competition had stamped out innovation...and welcomed complacency.

Kotter was asked to help them engage all 7,000 of their employees – across 20 countries and fifteen languages – to break down national and divisional silos and establish fundamentally new ways of working together. The time, leaders believed, was now. **“Take part, leave your mark”** became their call to action. We partnered with senior leaders to help them articulate a bold path forward - to make the opportunity before them vivid in the minds of every employee. And everyone was invited to help bring it to life.

The movement created a volunteer network of over 1,500 employees actively working on 119 initiatives across functions. Innovations were quickly born of this collaboration. One group discovered that an underutilized port could be subcontracted, realizing \$1 million in new revenue. Another took on the recalibration of quality measurement tools in a single plant, improving yield and saving \$400,000 annually. For the first time, the division had a way to share and scale these wins across a remarkably diverse region. A diverse array of individuals – finance managers, plant operators, grain traders – stepped up *by choice* to champion these strategic projects, uncovering leadership at all levels of the organization.

Most people aren't inspired by logic alone, but rather by the fundamental desire to contribute to something bigger than themselves. If you can give greater meaning and purpose to your effort – appeal to the real, human emotions of people – extraordinary results are possible.

A photograph of a small green seedling with two leaves and a bud, growing in a terracotta pot. A red heart-shaped marker is stuck in the soil next to the plant. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

**HEAD + HEART**

## Expand Your Thinking

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Facts are fine – good, even! Many need a *rationale* to consider why change is needed. But what's more likely to get them to actually change is to address why they should care, *emotionally*, about those facts.

- If someone appears to be resisting change, assume first that the “heart” of it hasn't been addressed, not that they are trying to stand in the way. Relatively few people resist for the sake of resisting.
- Take caution not to create fear for the sake of securing emotional engagement. Fear more often creates more “stop” and change is about “go.”

# the students behind the diplomas

Many higher education institutions in the U.S. are systemically facing a falling rate of student completion. The leaders of one university identified just how deep the divide was between people's rational understanding of the issue, versus the level at which people within the institution truly *felt* the impact of the problem. In an effort to capture the depth of this problem, the team decided to do something bold. As graduation approached and they were ordering diploma folders for graduates, they also placed an order for diploma folders for the students who should have been graduating, but weren't. They then created a display of those diploma folders, complete with the face of each student lost in the system, along a prominent hallway where faculty and staff were sure to see the display.

**Their message required no email, no formal communication, no memo.** In one visual display, they almost instantly shifted the attention of the university to what mattered most. Everyone understood – and *felt* – the opportunity in one glance – and immediately began to ask how they could help.

Many organizations are large and complex. Messages and communications become lost, diluted, or misinterpreted when relayed through traditional channels and media – even when well conceived and delivered with the best intentions.



In order to capitalize on windows of opportunity, leadership is paramount – and not just from one executive. Leadership produces movement, vision, innovation, and celebration. It's as essential as managerial processes like planning, budgeting, and staffing. It's not about better or worse, or one or the other – *both* are needed.



# MANAGEMENT + LEADERSHIP

Learning to embody both *management* and *leadership* characteristics takes intention.

## Expand Your Thinking

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- Many see leadership as an almost mythical trait, likely predicated on the charismatic, larger-than-life examples of people celebrated as great leaders. Yet, especially through the potentially disruptive stages of change, leadership is not found solely at the top of an organization or movement. People at all levels, roles, and of varying degrees of visibility have the potential to be leaders.
- Think of a strong leader in your life who has made an impact on you? How did they speak? How did they behave? In what ways did they foster connections with and motivate those around them?

# you never asked

A large manufacturing company was on the verge of losing several clients due to lack of consistency in delivery time. They needed to work in an entirely different way to ensure their top clients became satisfied, long-term partners. If they didn't innovate quickly, corporate would bring in new folks. The general manager knew that the change needed to transform was for every worker, at *every* station, taking ownership of the overall turnaround time of their parts. (*Not* just how quickly the part got through his/her individual station.) He honed this message so people would see and feel what success looked like. Equally critical - he didn't communicate how it would happen. Rather, he told people that he would be leaning on them to help figure it out together.

What did this general manager do? He realized that his third shift crew was not being impacted by exhaustive emails and cascading priorities from management. When asked how he had tried to connect with these folks in the past he said, "we take a video of the town hall speech I give and they watch it while eating leftovers from the food at the event." He connected the dots and decided to show up at midnight to give his town hall speech and bring fresh food. After discussing the strategic priorities and why they were so important now, the third shift immediately started sharing ideas of how they, at their individual stations, could immediately impact turnaround time. Instantaneous innovation. In just this single meeting, the third shift came up with tens of thousands of dollars of savings and shaved *days* off the turnaround time. When the general manager asked, "**Why haven't you all shared these ideas before?**" one veteran responded, "You never asked."

**HOW WILL YOU EMBODY EACH OF THE  
FOUR CHANGE PRINCIPLES IN YOUR  
WORK THIS WEEK?**

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# **INDIVIDUAL CHALLENGE**



THESE PRINCIPLES POINT TO SOMETHING VERY  
**DIFFERENT THAN THE DEFAULT WAY OF OPERATING WITHIN A HIERARCHY: TO  
DRIVE CHANGE THROUGH A LIMITED NUMBER OF APPOINTED PEOPLE WHO ARE  
GIVEN A BUSINESS CASE FOR A PARTICULAR SET OF GOALS AND WHO  
PROJECT-MANAGE THE PROCESS OF ACHIEVING THOSE.**

- john Kotter  
ACCELERATE





**DOES  
THAT  
SOUND  
LIKE YOUR  
ORGANIZATION?**

**THIS DEFAULT WAY OF OPERATING  
ISN'T WRONG OR BAD.**

*— it just isn't enough in today's world*



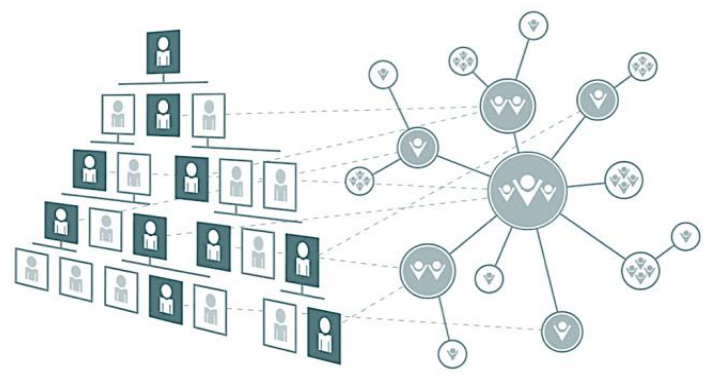
# How the principles fit in



**8 ACCELERATORS**  
*the change process*



**4 CHANGE PRINCIPLES**  
*mindsets and behaviors*



**HIERARCHY + NETWORK**  
*operating seamlessly together*





PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEVER SEEN A DUAL OPERATING SYSTEM WORK OFTEN WORRY, QUITE LOGICALLY, THAT A BUNCH OF ENTHUSIASTIC VOLUNTEERS MIGHT CREATE MORE PROBLEMS THAN THEY SOLVE – BY RUNNING OFF AND MAKING ILL-CONCEIVED DECISIONS AND DISRUPTING DAILY ACTIVITIES. HERE IS WHERE THE NETWORK STRUCTURE, **THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES**, AND THE ACCELERATING PROCESS ALL COME INTO PLAY.

- john Kotter  
ACCELERATE



Together, These  
Elements Create  
Conditions

*for people to...*


Generate not just ideas, but ideas grounded in data from all facets of the hierarchy – silos, functional levels and parts of the organization rarely involved in (because they're not asked) change.

Develop initiatives, but then also realize it is their responsibility to implement them.

Not only maintain the daily operations of running the organization, but improve these day-to-day processes.

Better cope with the speed and complexity of the world today.

**STANDING THIS UP IN AN ORGANIZATION IS SIMPLE**  
*but not easy*

A hand is pointing at a topographic map, which is overlaid with a teal color. The map shows various geographical features, including mountains and valleys. The text "NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN?" is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on the left side of the image.

**NOT  
SURE  
WHERE TO  
BEGIN?**

*we can help*

Solve business problems faster. Innovate at scale.  
Drive performance. Rise to the challenge of a faster-  
moving world and build momentum for the future.

Kotter works with organizations to build a movement  
grounded in shared purpose that creates  
business results and lasting impact.

Ready to learn more about implementing the change principles in  
your organization?

CONNECT WITH US AT [WWW.KOTTERINC.COM](http://WWW.KOTTERINC.COM) | [INFO@KOTTERINC.COM](mailto:INFO@KOTTERINC.COM) | @KOTTERINC 

