Leading Change in AIDS Service Organizations: A Resource for Executive Directors

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1. Introduction

Change is a reality – in life, in work, in organizations. As a leader in an AIDS service organization (ASO), you know this and sometimes, change feels constant and never ending. In your position, you are required to both lead and manage change. The challenge is how best to do this while also carrying out the day-to-day functions of running an organization. This resource aims to help.

The goal of *Leading Change in AIDS Service Organizations: A Resource for Executive Directors* is to increase the capacity of leaders in ASOs to effectively lead change in their organizations. It provides a framework for understanding change and practical strategies for implementation. It incorporates the work of change experts such as John Kotter, and utilizes the Leading Change Model developed by Lucy Shenouda and Kerry Woodcock, systems-oriented leadership coaches and co-founders of LeadingChangeSpecialists[1].

The Resource contains the following three sections:
   a. Understanding Change, Leadership and Management
   b. Leading Change Model
   c. Action for ASO Leaders

2. Understanding Change, Leadership and Management

Change can take different forms and it is important to know which type of change you want or are experiencing to be successful in your change process. According to Anderson and Ackerman Anderson (2010)[2], there are three (3) types of change in organizations today: (1) developmental, (2) transitional, and (3) transformational. The figure below describes each of them.

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[1] See Leading Change Specialists at http://www.leadingchangespecialists.ca/.
[2] Anderson, D. and Ackerman Anderson, L. (2010) *What is Transformation, and Why Is It So Hard to Manage?* http://changeleadersnetwork.com/free-resources/what-is-transformation-and-why-is-it-so-hard-to-manage. .

Figure 1: Three Types of Change

Types of Change	Characteristics
1. **Developmental**	• Incremental; planned or emergent. • Improves what you are currently doing rather than creates something new; improves existing skills, processes, methods, performance standards or conditions. ❖ *Example: redesign of support program.*
2. **Transitional**	• Radical; planned and episodic. • Replaces 'what is' with something completely new; requires designing and implementing a 'new state' while dismantling and emotionally letting go of the old way of operating. • Destination is determined in detail before implementation begins thus transition can be managed. • People are largely impacted only at the levels of skills and actions, not the more personal levels of mindset, behaviour and culture. ❖ *Example: eliminate separate education and support teams to create an integrated health promotion team*.
3. **Transformational**	• Radical. • Future state is unknown at the start and is determined through trial and error as new information is gathered. • Future state is so radically different than the current state that the people and culture must change to implement it successfully; new attitudes and behaviours are required. • Can result in an organisation that differs significantly in terms of structures, systems, processes, culture and strategy. • Can be stressful as operating in the unknown and emotions can run high. • *Example: merger of two organizations.*

For developmental and transitional change, a change management approach can be used but for transformational change, it is change leadership that is needed. The terms change management and change leadership are often used interchangeably but they are fundamentally different. According to Kotter (2011), "**Change management**, which is the term most everyone uses, refers to a set of basic tools or structures intended to keep any change effort under control. The goal is often to minimize the distractions and impacts of the change. **Change leadership**, on the other hand, concerns the driving forces, visions and processes that fuel large-scale transformation…[It] is much more associated with putting an engine on the whole change

process, and making it go faster, smarter, more efficiently."[3] The figure below further illustrates the difference between leadership and management.

Figure 2: Difference Between Leadership and Management[4]

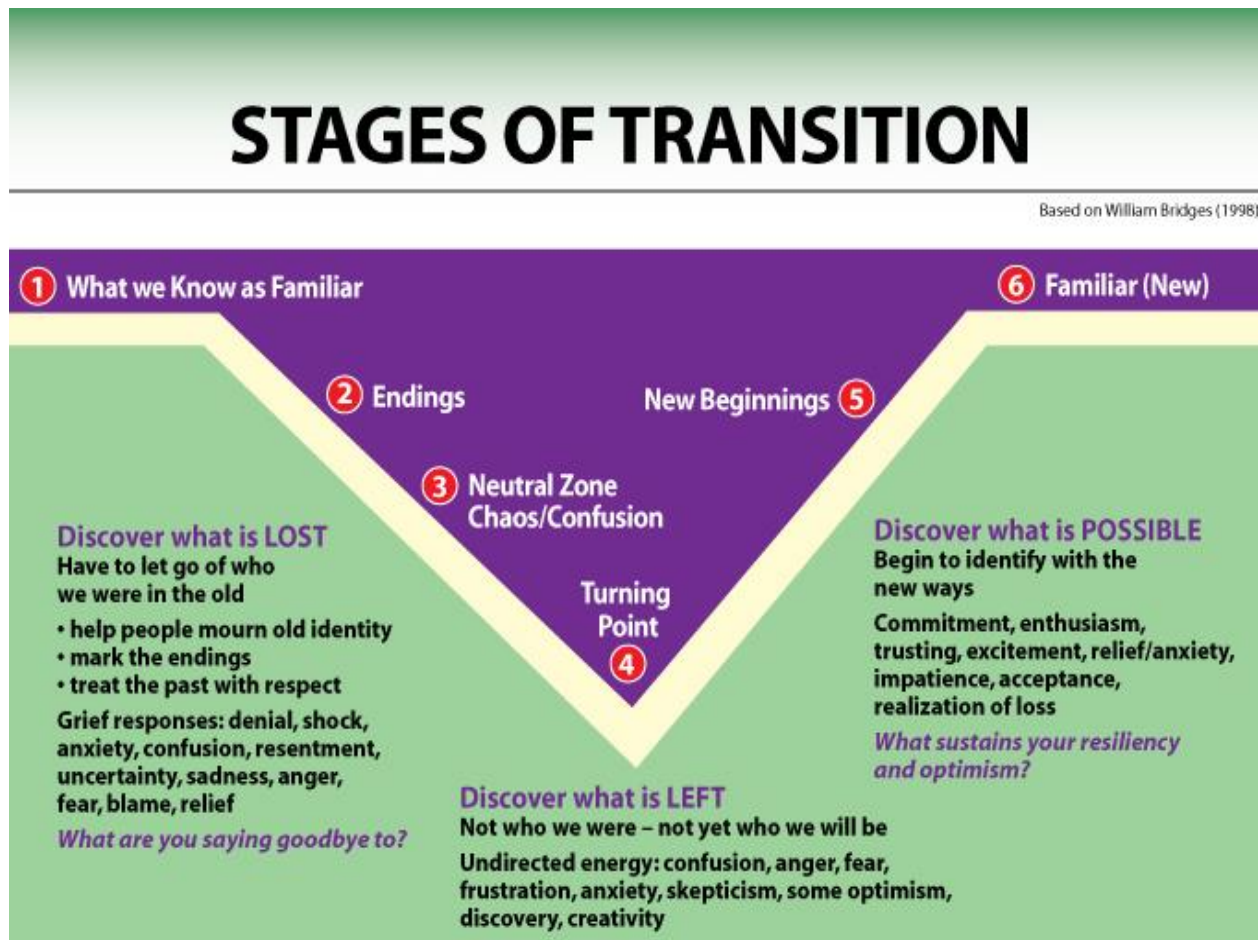|	Leadership is about… Coping with change	Management is about… Coping with complexity
What are we setting out to do?	➢ **Establishing Direction** Developing a vision and strategies to achieve that vision; setting high but reasonable standards.	➢ **Planning and Budgeting** Establishing detailed steps and timetables and allocating resources.
How do we deliver results?	➢ **Aligning People** Communicating direction to influence creation of teams and coalitions that understand vision and strategy.	➢ **Organizing and Staffing** Establishing a structure to achieve the plan; delegating authority and providing policies and processes.
How do we make it happen?	➢ **Motivating, Mentoring, Inspiring** Energizing people to develop and overcome barriers to change.	➢ **Controlling and Problem Solving** Monitoring and organizing.
What are the outcomes?	➢ **Producing Change** Often to a dramatic degree, such as cultivating new services and new approaches.	➢ **Producing Predictability and Order** Consistently achieving budgets and targets.

Source: Based on materials in John Kotter's "What Leaders Really Do" *Harvard Business Review,* December 2001.

Change, by definition, means a difference in what was before. The type of change that is planned or occurring will have a differential impact on staff. For example, a transformational change, with its many unknowns, will be a far more emotional experience for staff than a developmental change. As such, attention must be given to supporting staff through the transition, namely the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new, the change. The figure below was developed by the Ontario Organizational Development Program (OODP) and AIDS Bereavement and Resiliency Program of Ontario (ABRPO) and can be used to better understand and address transitions.

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[3] Kotter International (2011). *Change Management vs. Change Leadership – What's the Difference?* Accessed at http://www.forbes.com/sites/johnkotter/2011/07/12/change-management-vs-change-leadership-whats-the-difference/.
[4] Accessed at http://www.americanbar.org/publications/law_practice_home/law_practice_archive/lpm_magazine_articles_v34_is3_pg30.html

Figure 3: Stages of Transition

STAGES OF TRANSITION

Based on William Bridges (1998)

① What we Know as Familiar

⑥ Familiar (New)

② Endings

New Beginnings ⑤

③ Neutral Zone
Chaos/Confusion

Discover what is LOST
Have to let go of who
we were in the old

• help people mourn old identity
• mark the endings
• treat the past with respect

Grief responses: denial, shock,
anxiety, confusion, resentment,
uncertainty, sadness, anger,
fear, blame, relief

What are you saying goodbye to?

Turning
Point
④

Discover what is POSSIBLE
Begin to identify with the
new ways

Commitment, enthusiasm,
trusting, excitement, relief/anxiety,
impatience, acceptance,
realization of loss

*What sustains your resiliency
and optimism?*

Discover what is LEFT
Not who we were – not yet who we will be

Undirected energy: confusion, anger, fear,
frustration, anxiety, skepticism, some optimism,
discovery, creativity

Source: Ontario Organizational Development Program and AIDS Bereavement Project of Ontario (2008).
Understanding and Managing Change in Organizations workshop materials.

3. Leading Change Model[5]

When it comes to leading change, there are a variety of models to choose from. For this resource, the Leading Change Model is used and it weaves together John Kotter's work on Leading Change and the Process Work of Arnold Mindell, as adapted to Organization and Relationship Systems Coaching by CRR Global. The Leading Change Model asks leaders to consider the change process as a full-body experience such that they would ***inspire change*** from the gut, ***lead transition*** from the heart and ***emerge transformation*** from the head.

Stage 1: To *inspire change* requires that ASO leaders articulate why the change is needed to staff. It is about creating a climate for change within your organization by identifying champions for change, clearly communicating the opportunity for change, developing a change vision (what the future will look like once change has been achieved), providing the rationale (why we need

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[5] The Leading Change Model was developed by Woodcock and Shenouda. Accessed at:
http://www.leadingchangespecialists.ca/leading-change-model/.

to do this), promoting the benefits (what we will gain) and establishing a true sense of urgency (proactive pace of work and timelines required).

Stage 2: To *lead transition* requires ASO leaders to be mindful of the emotional processes of change. These processes are quite often invisible or hidden forces related to change, such as feelings, expectations and assumptions. With this awareness, ASO leaders are better able to respond to the hopes and fears of change, to empower change tolerance and to clearly communicate how the change can be achieved within the organization. It is about ensuring a change mindset and plan is in place that will achieve the change, empower overall direction for implementation and celebrate short-term wins. The plan must also provide regular, clear and transparent communication to all staff to report on progress and impacts as needed.

Stage 3: To *emerge transformation* requires that ASO leaders showcase what has been accomplished. You must demonstrate that concrete, tangible and sustainable actions have been taken to achieve the new reality, incorporating a change culture within the organization. It is important to highlight the benefits and what has been gained as well as acknowledge what has been lost, where needed.

At each stage, maintaining a true sense of urgency is fundamental. The empowerment in true urgency is the engagement of people and resources to be alert, focused and aligned. The figure below reflects the Leading Change Model through the lens of Mindell/CRR Global and Kotter.
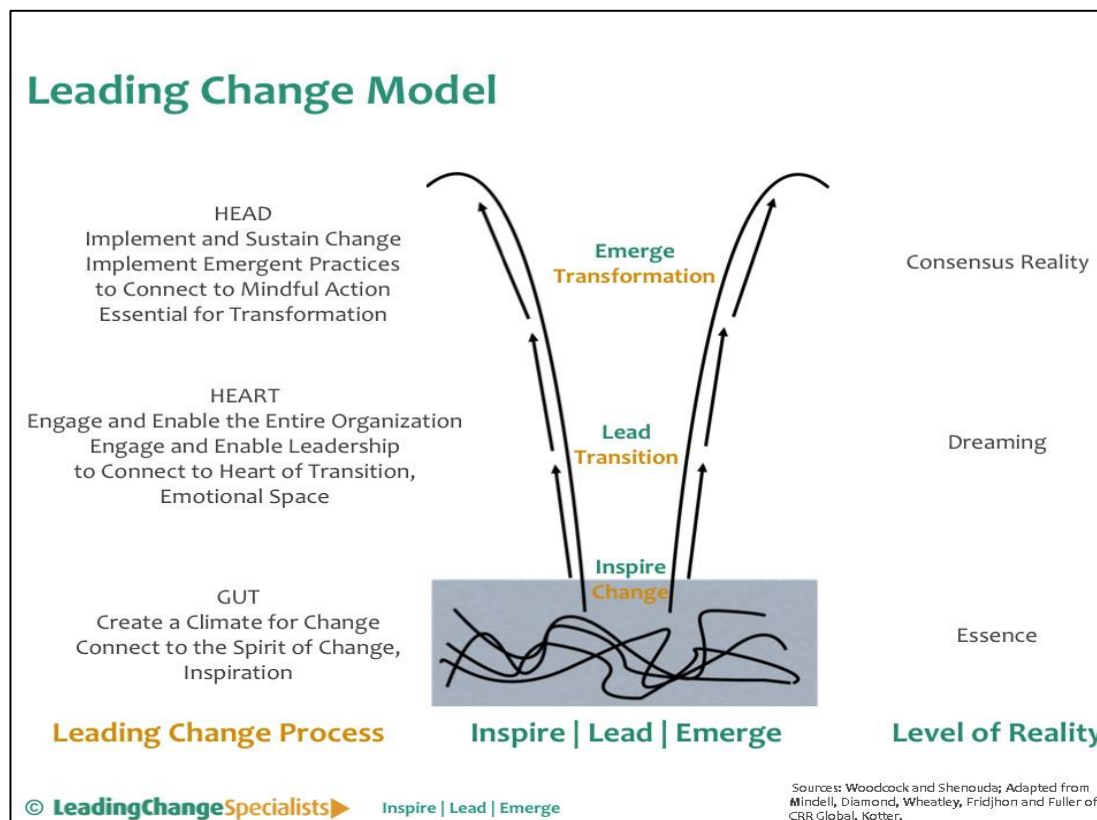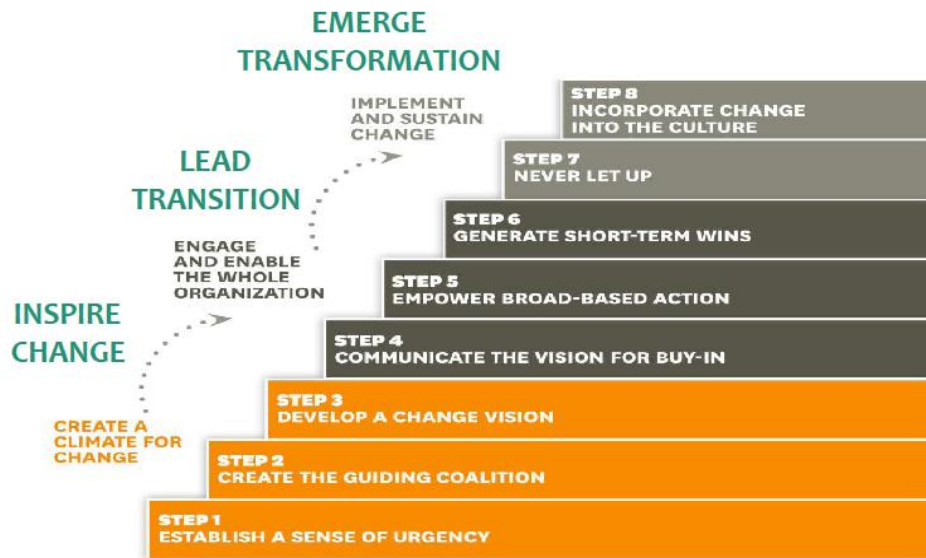
Figure 4: Leading Change Model

Figure 5: Kotter's 8 Steps with Leading Change Model

4. Action for ASO Leaders

Using the 3 stages of the Leading Change Model and Kotter's leading change 8-Step process, the figure below identifies the actions for ASO leaders to lead change in their organizations. It also provides a concrete example from the HIV sector. To achieve success, each step must be carried out in sequential order and sufficient time, effort and resources must be given to the change process.

Stage	Step	Action for ASO Leaders	Example
	1. Establish a Sense of Urgency	✓ Identify why change is needed – what is the significant risk and opportunity driving the	There will be a funding cut in the next fiscal year that will result in the loss of a manager, 2 staff and a program for

Stage	Step	Action for ASO Leaders	Example
1. *Inspire Change* – Create a Climate for Change		immediacy for change.	people living with HIV. The 3 positions represent a quarter (¼) of the staff.
	2. Create the Guiding Coalition	✓ Assemble a diverse team with the right amount of expertise, power, credibility and energy to lead the change. Do not be limited by the hierarchy.	The Executive Director pulls together a team that includes senior management, frontline staff, a union steward and a person living with HIV. Consideration is given to include potential champions, potential resisters, long-serving staff, fairly new staff and staff who have influence among their colleagues.
	3. Develop a Change Vision	✓ Craft the energizing and inspiring image of the desirable shared future and identify the initiatives to achieve that future.	The team generates a 2 – 3-sentence change vision and what will be done to achieve it. The change vision honours the organizational values, including GIPA/MEPA and anti-racism/anti-oppression.
	4. Communicate the Vision for Buy-in	✓ Develop a communications plan to effectively convey the change vision to relevant	The team prepares and executes a communications plan. The plan includes clear messages about

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Stage	Step	Action for ASO Leaders	Example
		audiences clearly, consistently and frequently through various methods.	expectations – what the organization expects of staff and what staff can expect of the organization.
2. *Lead Transition* **– Engage and Enable the Whole Organization**	5. Empower Broad-based Action	✓ Identify and remove obstacles to change while providing resources to support the change process. Encourage taking initiative and risks.	The team does an assessment, including an e-survey of staff, and discovers that the obstacles include existing policies and practices as well as staff fears and anxiety about losing their jobs and colleagues. A process is initiated to revise the policies and practices, training is conducted to deal with the transition, individual issues are addressed during supervision meetings, and discussion about what is unfolding takes place at staff meetings.
	6. Generate Short-term Wins	✓ Produce quick wins that can be publicized and track, monitor, evaluate and celebrate small and large accomplishments .	The organization is successful in getting some funding to support the transition. A celebration ritual is collectively identified.

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Stage	Step	Action for ASO Leaders	Example
3. *Emerge Transformation* – **Implement and Sustain Change**	7. Never Let Up	✓ Consolidate gains and maintain the momentum to keep changing.	The organization is restructured, policies are updated and programs are streamlined.
	8. Incorporate Change into the Culture	✓ Reinforce the changes, communicate them and link them to the organizational success.	Two staff who were resistant to the changes leave the organization, one manager went for leadership training and one staff is promoted internally.

As you lead change, expect bumps on the road. As Kotter notes, "In reality, even successful change efforts are messy and full of surprises." This is ok. The messiness and surprises hold opportunities for learning and growth – for the organization and for the individuals within it.

Appendix A

Communications Plan Template

Type of Change	Key Messages (What)	Target Audience (Who)	Message Delivery Method (How)	Timing/ Frequency of Delivery (When)	Lead for Delivering Message	Intended Impact (Why)
Developmental	*Example:* Staffing resources will not be affected.	• Staff • Managers • Board	• Email • Staff meetings • Supervision meetings • Board meetings	• Immediate • At each meeting • As occur • At each meeting	• ED • ED • Supervisor • ED	• Information • Information • Support • Information
	Changes to service delivery will be required.	• Staff • Managers • Board	• Email • Staff meetings • Supervision meetings • Board meetings	• Immediate • At each meeting • As occur • At each meeting	• ED • ED • Supervisor • ED	• Information • Information • Support • Information

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