

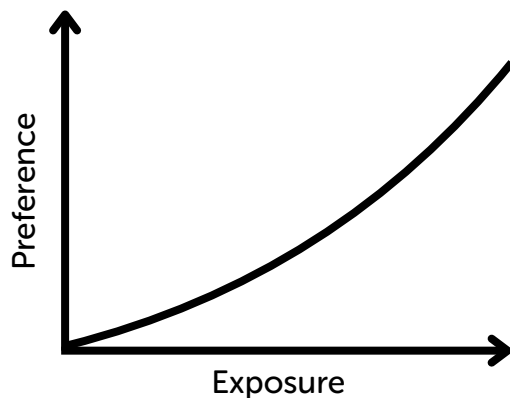
The Impact of Change



Change is an inevitable part of life, but whether positive or negative, it can disrupt our sense of familiarity and predictability - a core element of psychological safety that helps us feel in control. Even exciting changes like a new job, moving to a better home, or starting a relationship can introduce stress because they challenge our routines and require mental and emotional adaptation. Recognising how change impacts our wellbeing allows us to respond with greater self-awareness, manage our responses more effectively, and seek support when needed.

In organisations, good change management reduces resistance, increases employee engagement, facilitates innovation and growth, minimises disruption and builds organisational resilience. Outside of the workplace, awareness of the impact of change can help you to better understand your own reactions, or help you to provide practical support to others.

Mere Exposure Effect



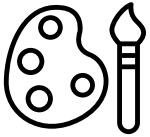
Imagine you hear a new song on the radio, and at first, you're not impressed - it's kind of annoying, actually. But then you hear it again in the car, and again on a friend's playlist. Before you know it, you're humming the chorus in the shower and adding it to your own queue. You didn't love it the first time, but repeated exposure made it feel familiar and suddenly, you like it!

That's the Mere Exposure Effect: a psychological phenomenon where we tend to develop a preference for things simply because they become familiar to us.

Understanding this can help us manage change by reminding us that discomfort is often temporary and tied to unfamiliarity - not necessarily to something being bad or wrong. When faced with change, our brains naturally resist because new situations feel uncertain and unfamiliar. But the Mere Exposure Effect shows that with repeated exposure, even things that initially feel strange or uncomfortable can start to feel normal over time. This insight encourages patience and persistence during transitions. It helps us trust that as we spend more time in a new environment, routine, or mindset, it will likely become easier and more comfortable simply because it becomes more familiar.

Creative Coping Tools

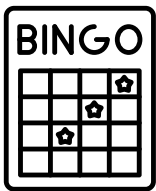
Change is a natural part of life, but that doesn't always make it easy. These creative tools are designed to help you stay grounded, build resilience, and even find a bit of joy in the process of adapting and growing.



"Bad art" therapy - Draw how you feel without worrying about the result. Scribbles actively encouraged!



Gamify - Create a level up plan where each step you take towards change is a completed quest or level.



Bingo! - Create a change bingo card with things like "Talked to someone about how I feel" or "Tried something outside my comfort zone." Have a reward ready for when you complete a row.



Movement as medicine - Get out of your head and into your body by having a 5 minute dance party, practicing yoga or tai chi or going on a "walk and wonder" mission: pick a route, observe 5 new things, and let your thoughts wander.



Build a change soundtrack - Make a playlist that reflects how you feel (sad, nostalgic, excited, anxious) and encourages strength or hope. Why not include a few songs you loved during other changes in life.

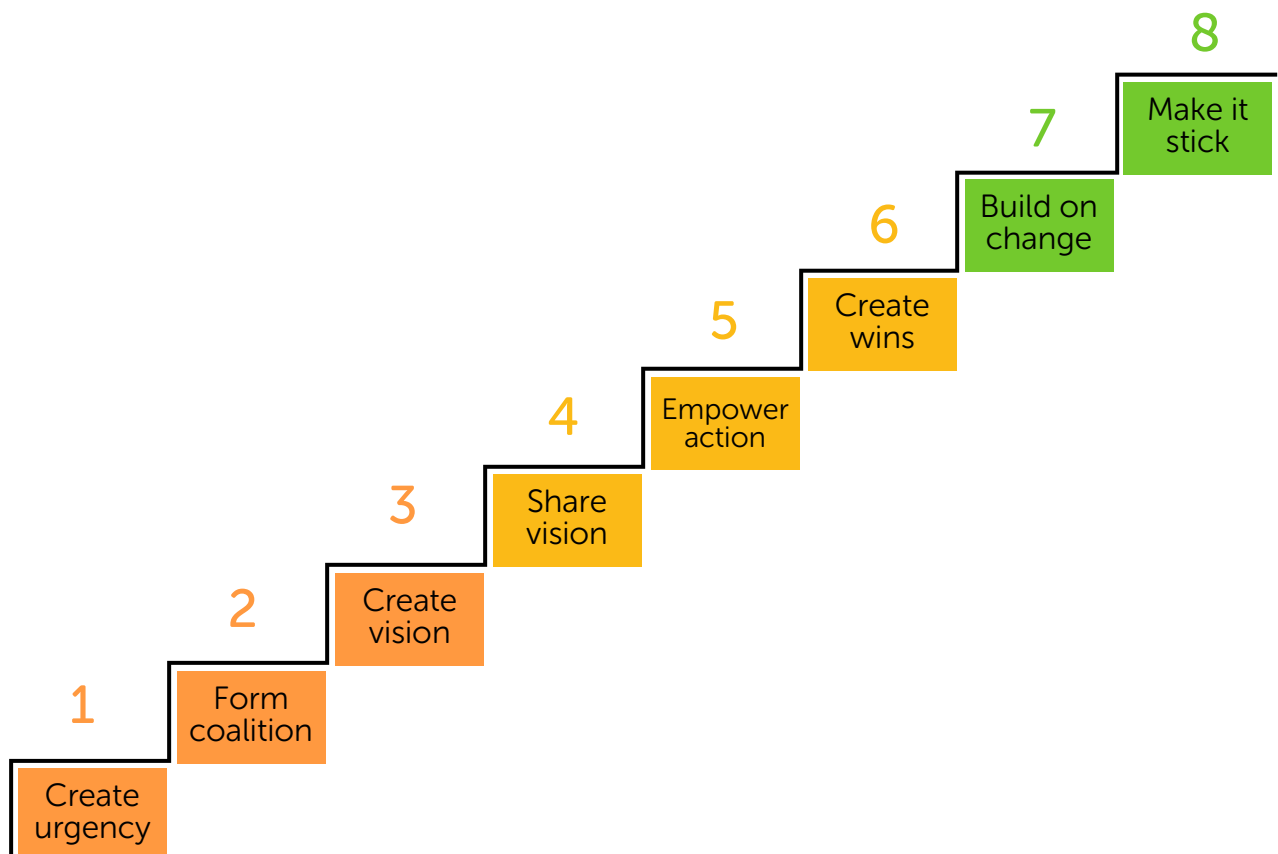


Write a letter to your future self - Offer encouragement, predictions, and some humour. Consider what would 8-year-old you (or 80-year-old you) would say?



Create a change survival kit - Include fun and comforting items like a cozy blanket, a "permission slip" to rest or cry, notes of encouragement (from yourself or friends) or a sweet treat.

Supporting others through change - John Kotter's Eight Step Model



Create the climate for change	Engage and enable the organisation	Implement and sustain the change
1. Outline why the change is needed. This is key as moving ahead without buy-in can cause issues later. 2. Form a strong coalition to help inform the change. This means a range of voices are heard and helps to build trust in the process. 3. Create a clear vision of what the change is trying to achieve with a timeframe and opportunities for review.	4. Clearly communicate the vision and strategy to all stakeholders. 5. Remove obstacles to the change by reviewing what might impact implementation. If individuals are resistant, engage with them to understand their concerns. 6. Celebrate short term wins to help generate momentum and enthusiasm.	7. Build on progress to implement further changes. 8. Make the change stick by embedding it throughout practices.