



LEADING SUCCESSFUL CHANGE

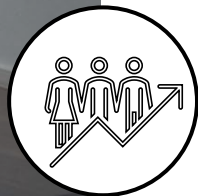
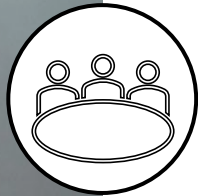
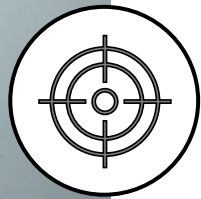
A practical framework for leaders at all levels.

Presented by:

Newberry College Master of Science in Organizational Development & Leadership (MSODL) Program

<https://online.newberry.edu/online-offerings/master-of-science-in-organizational-development-and-leadership>

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WHY THIS MATTERS

Organizations succeed
when everyone leads change.

MSODL-developed leadership strengths:

- **Strategic Adaptability** – Navigate uncertainty with research-based frameworks
- **Team Engagement** – Communicate, coach, and build trust through change
- **Sustained Growth** – Use reflection and evidence to improve results

Leaders at all levels formal and informal can turn strategy into everyday action through an evidence-based leadership approach that integrates data, reflection, and research into daily practice.



OBJECTIVES

Research Synthesis, Performance Assessment, and Applied Integration

Apply interdisciplinary research and OD theory to lead change effectively.

Analyze and consult on organizational performance systems using critical thinking.

Integrate applied research and reflection to sustain long-term improvement.

CLARIFYING ROLES IN CHANGE

Change involves three interconnected roles.

Role	Core Function	Leadership Behaviors
Leaders	Create vision and culture	Inspire, align, empower
Managers	Design and organize systems	Plan, allocate, evaluate
Supervisors	Translate vision into daily practice	Communicate, coach, reinforce



LEADERSHIP FROM ANYWHERE

- Leadership is a behavior, not a position.
- Influence can emerge from any level.
- Sustainable change depends on shared ownership and participation.



Change sticks when people feel agency, clarity, and connection.

Organizational Development Principles



Everyone can be a change leader within their sphere of influence.



UNDERSTANDING CHANGE

Human Response to Change

- People don't resist strategy; they resist *uncertainty*.
- Our brains are wired for stability; change feels risky by default.
- Resistance isn't defiance; it's a natural reflex to the unknown.
- Leaders who connect the vision to daily work reduce anxiety and build trust..



REFLECT

How do people in your organization typically respond to change?

What patterns of resistance or adaptation have you noticed in past initiatives?



CHANGE PROCESS

Before You Begin, Ask:

1

What are we changing, and why?

2

How saturated is the organization with other changes?

3

What support do employees need to adapt?

4

How will we measure success?

ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL CHANGE PLAN

Five Critical Elements



THE ROLE OF SUPERVISORS & EMERGING LEADERS

Supervisors are the bridge, translating vision into practice. Without this bridge, change stays abstract and doesn't stick.



With Engaged Leaders

Trust increases
Teams align around goals
Change sticks

What role do your supervisors currently play in guiding change?

Resistance grows
Disengagement spreads
Change stalls

How might clearer communication or coaching improve your team's success rate?



Without Engaged Leaders

KEY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

- Embrace change with optimism
- Create safe spaces for questions
- Lead by example (on-time, on-budget, on-purpose)
- Communicate often and positively
- Model accountability and self-awareness
- Build team ownership & celebrate progress



PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Change succeeds when people understand both why it's happening and what will change.

Preparation builds Clarity, Confidence, and Commitment; the foundation of team change health.



EMPLOYEE EMOTIONAL REFLEXES

These are reflexes, not resistance. They're the brain's first filter for new information.



First reflex: Status Quo

“How does this impact me?”

Fear of disruption.



Second reflex: Self-Interest

“What’s in it for me?”

Hope for benefits.





THE SUPERVISOR'S TRANSLATION ROLE

Supervisors bridge strategy and execution.

Translation means explaining how the change affects roles, schedules, and daily tasks.

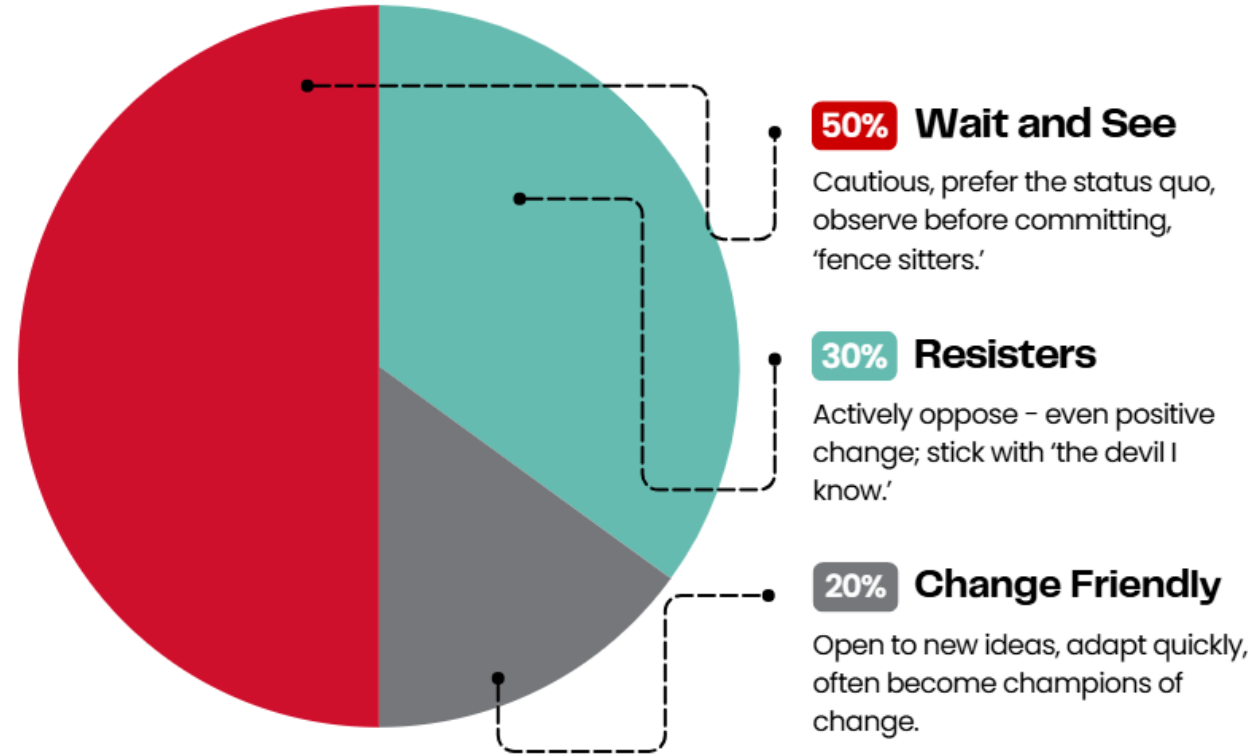
Clear communication lowers anxiety and builds trust.

Reflect...

When major changes are announced, how effectively do your leaders translate the vision into day-to-day action for employees?

Where might “translation gaps” exist between strategy and daily work?

RESPONSES TO CHANGE



Employee Question

“How does this impact me?”
(Status Quo Reflex)

Supervisor Response

Be specific about daily changes: schedules, tasks, tools, reporting lines, workload.
Show clarity and reduce uncertainty.

“What’s in it for me?”
(Self-Interest Reflex)

Connect the change to personal benefits: skill growth, less frustration, recognition, career opportunities, or greater stability.



IMPLEMENTING CHANGE AND EARNING BUY-IN

Acknowledge Reality: Change can feel disruptive.

Highlight Individual Benefits: growth, skill development, efficiency.

Show Organizational Benefits: competitiveness, stability, profitability.

Provide Support: training, coaching, resources.

Effective leaders answer the
question everyone asks:

“What does this mean for me?”



ANTICIPATING DISRUPTION

Ask early: “What parts of daily work could this disrupt?”

Change ripples through workloads, schedules, and processes.

Anticipation turns leaders into stabilizers, not messengers.



RECOGNIZING RESISTANCE

Each cue is data and an opportunity to rebuild clarity and trust.

Active Opposition

- Overt criticism
- Objections to process
- Scope/timeline challenges
- Priority/resource concerns
- Impact on operations.
Leadership 'doesn't get it'

Passive Resistance

- Skipping/derailing meetings
- Missing deadlines
- Absenteeism
- Foot-dragging
- Irrational nostalgia

Common Cues

- Sudden silence or withdrawal.
- Rising absenteeism.
- Sarcasm or cynicism.
- Delayed or missed deadlines.



TACTICS FOR SUPERVISORS

REPEAT

Repeat key messages often. People rarely absorb change the first time.

PHASE

Break big shifts into smaller, digestible steps to prevent overload.

ASK

Ask, “What questions do you have?” to open dialogue.

OBSERVE

Look for patterns: silence, withdrawal, or recurring pushback are signals to act.



PRACTICAL TOOLS



Share FAQs to reduce rumors.



Schedule short check-ins to sustain energy.



Pair fast adopters with hesitant peers (“change buddies”).

APPLICATION OF ODL
CONCEPTS
IN REAL ENVIRONMENTS.



Pilot new processes for safe practice.

SUSTAINING CHANGE

Change fades when wins go unnoticed and fatigue sets in.

How does your organization currently track whether a change initiative truly sticks?

What feedback or data could you collect to measure sustainability more effectively?

Continuous learning = Continuous leadership



CLARITY

We know why this matters.



CONFIDENCE

We have tools to succeed.



COMMITMENT

We believe it's worth the effort.



WHY CHANGE FADES & WHAT TO DO

Initial energy wears off; fatigue creeps in.

Old habits re-emerge quietly and pull people back.

Wins go unnoticed, leading to cynicism or “what’s the point?”

Pitfall	What to Watch For	Supervisor Lever
Energy Fades	Drop in engagement, less follow-through, fatigue	Keep the purpose visible; remind team of progress
Old Habits Return	“We’ve always done it this way” creeping in	Redirect to new process; model the right behaviors
Wins Go Unnoticed	Frustration, cynicism, “what’s the point?”	Celebrate small wins often to fuel momentum



A woman with short, curly hair is shown in profile, looking out towards a sunset. The background is a warm, orange-hued sky with a blurred cityscape in the distance. The woman is wearing a light-colored, striped shirt.

MODELING RESILIENCE & SELF CARE

Self-care is credibility.

Teams imitate what their leaders model, not just what they say.

Model resilience by celebrating small wins, setting boundaries, and recharging.

Reflect...

What helps you personally recharge during change?

What small actions could you model to demonstrate calm and confidence during change?

REFLECTIVE LEADERSHIP & APPLIED APPROACH

Sustaining change means closing the learning loop. This is the foundation of evidence-based leadership; using data, research, and reflection to guide organizational decisions and sustain change.

- 1 CLARIFY - What worked? What didn't?
- 2 ACTIVATE - What evidence shows impact?
- 3 REFINE - How will we refine next time?
- 4 REPEAT

Reflect...

What lessons from past change efforts could become research or case studies within your organization?

How might your team use reflection to build a stronger learning culture?



LEADERSHIP FROM ANYWHERE IN PRACTICE

Distributed Leadership in Action

A peer mentoring another through change

A frontline employee identifying process improvements

A mid-level manager modeling adaptive learning

A senior leader inviting feedback before decisions

These are all acts of **leadership**.



THE MS ODL ADVANTAGE



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- Interpret complex organizational dynamics
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Partner with us to develop your next generation of change leaders.



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Understanding Change

Human Response to Change

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Elements of a Successful Change Plan

Five Critical Elements

1. Clear **Vision** & Purpose
2. Manager & Team Engagement
3. Open Communication
4. Feedback & Adjustment
5. Connects Theory with Practice

Effective planning connects theory to practice; a key ODL competency.



The Role of Supervisors and Emerging Leaders

With Engaged Leaders

Trust increases | Teams align around goals | Change sticks

Without Engaged Leaders

Resistance grows | Disengagement spreads | Change stalls

Supervisors are the bridge, translating vision into practice. Without this bridge, change stays abstract and doesn't stick.

What role do your supervisors currently play in guiding change?

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Key Leadership Behaviors

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- Second reflex: *Self-Interest* → “What’s in it for me?” Hope for benefits.
- These are *reflexes*, not resistance. They’re the brain’s first filter for new information.



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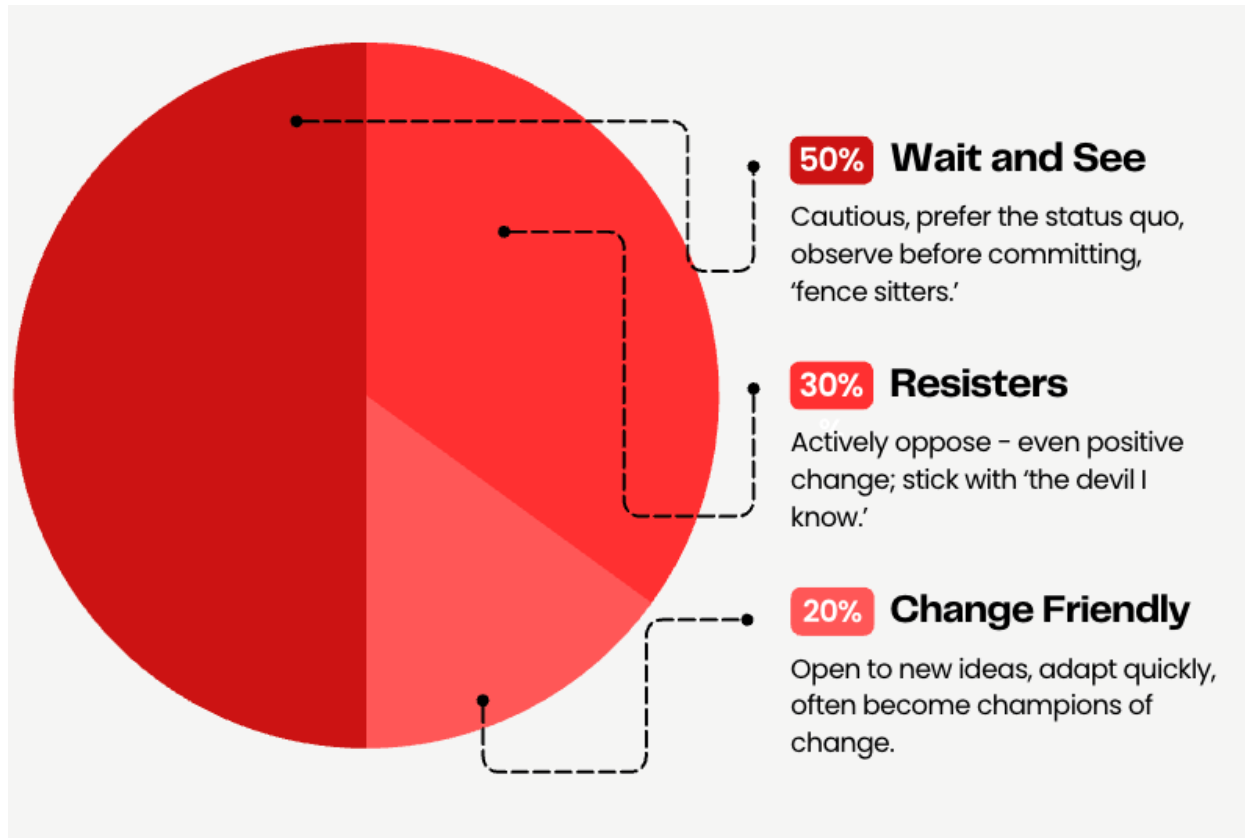
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Responses to Change

A clear response lowers anxiety and builds trust.



**Employee Reflex
Question**

**How Supervisors
Should Respond**

“How does this impact me?”
(Status Quo Reflex)

Be specific about daily changes: schedules, tasks, tools, reporting lines, workload. Show clarity and reduce uncertainty.

“What’s in it for me?” (Self-Interest Reflex)

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- Anticipation turns leaders into stabilizers, not messengers.

Recognizing Resistance

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Practical tools

Application of ODL concepts in real environments.

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- Share FAQs to reduce rumors.
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