



# Leading Teams Through Change: Kotter's 8 Steps

## Why Should I Read This Article?

With the implementation of PPI, you will likely be faced with challenges and disruption in your teams.

A common struggle during this period is understanding the process to achieve the forward momentum or the inertia required to execute change and achieve the vision of your future organization.

***The focus of this article is on describing the John Kotter's 8 stage model for change and what you as a leader or individual team member can do to influence change within your organization.***

## What Does This Article Describe?

This article describes John Kotter's model for how successful leaders have delivered change and describes them in an Eight Step Change Process.

This process allows leaders to follow sequential steps that build the required momentum to achieve your future organization along with some of the common pitfalls or mistakes that are made while delivering change.

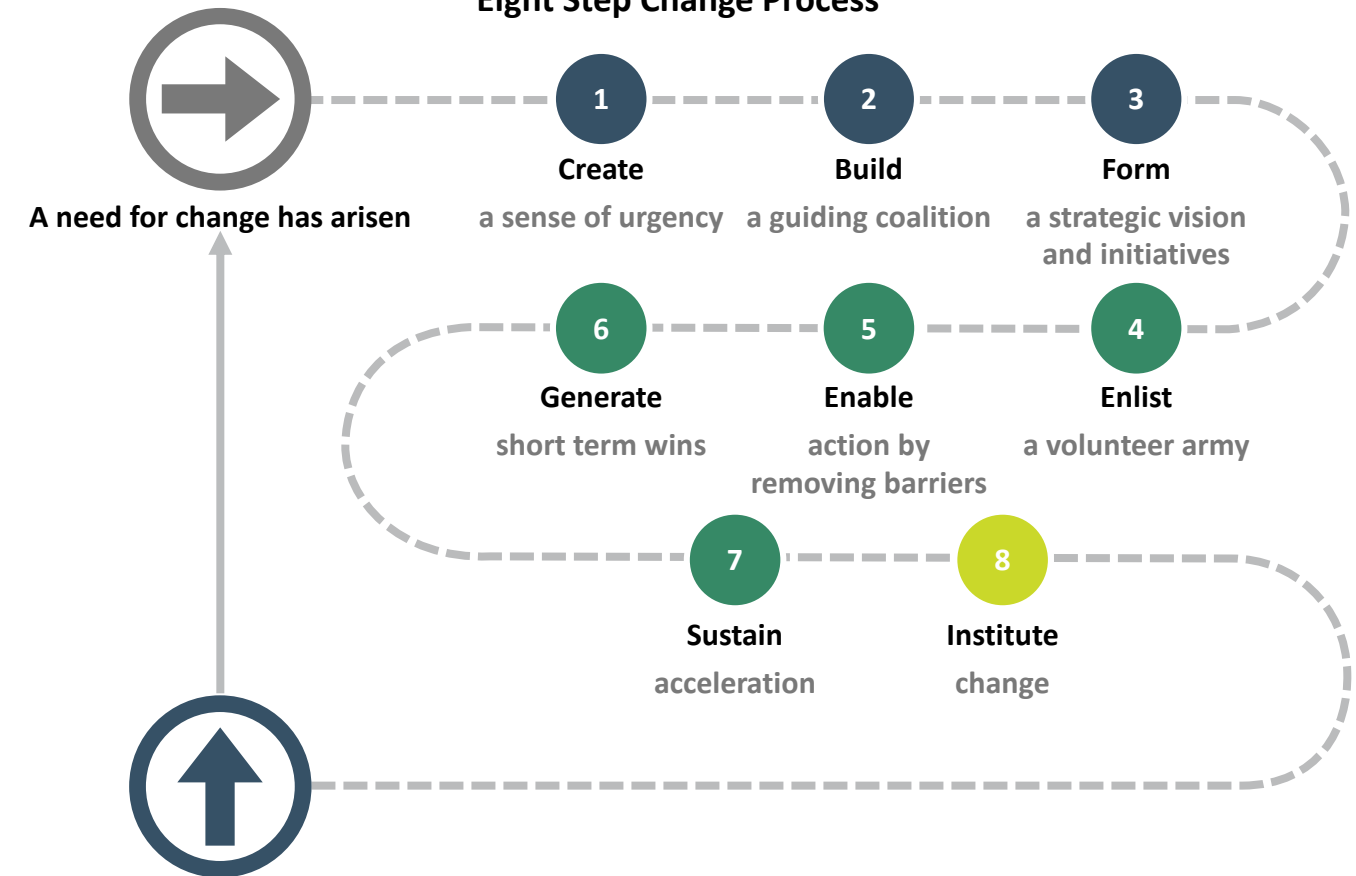


# Leading Teams Through Digital Change

## John Kotter's Eight Step Change Process

John Kotter's "Leading Change" describes how successful leaders achieved the vision of their future organization by following a sequential Eight Step Change Process that enables them to guide their organizations to successfully overcome resistance to change by defrosting the status quo, introduce new practices and then grounding them into their institutions so that they stick.

### Eight Step Change Process



**Successfully change continually improves upon itself**

### Three Phases of Change

- Defrosting the Status Quo (steps 1, 2 and 3):** Leaders define their future organization.
- Introducing New Practices (steps 3 - 7):** Leaders create the inertia to overcome opposing forces who will resist change.
- Ground New Practices in Your Organization (steps 3 - 7):** Ground changes in the corporate culture by creating accountabilities and succession plans that sustain the change.

Kotter's Eight Step Change Process is grounded in science and is built upon a large meta-analysis (review of common themes of empirically sourced materials) to determine the traits of successful change or the common mistakes that were made.

# Leading Teams Through Digital Change

## Building and Sustaining Inertia

**“The solution to the change problem is everyone modestly assisting the leadership agenda in their spheres of activity(.)”**

Kotter describes building inertia to overcome resistance to change as a fundamental component of the Eight Step Change process, and to achieve this the Eight Step Change Process must be followed in order or else it comes across as disjointed and prevents your people from assisting the leadership agenda.

The below table describes the Eight Step Change Process and the impact without this step being followed:

Step	Step Name	Description	Without this step
1	Creating a Sense of Urgency	Defining the business reasons or the case for their change provides a sense of purpose for those implementing change.	Those implementing change become complacent and anxious as they will feel they should not put in the extra effort required.
2	Build a Guiding Coalition	Creating a coalition that is powerful enough to implement the change creates the agility required to get past the current institutional behaviours that will resist the change.	Employees and managers will passively resist the change and quality programs will turn into bureaucracy.
3	Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives	Clarify how the future will be different from the past and how you can make that future a reality through initiatives linked directly to the vision.	Without a defined future state the smallest decisions create heated conflict and insignificant tactical choices dominate discussion.
4	Enlisting a Volunteer Army	Identifying a change network of those who are ready and willing to drive the change and then providing the tools needed to successfully implementing the change increases the acceptance and identifies resistance.	You will be unable measure change or uncover barriers or obstacles that will increase cynicism and prevent change.
5	Enable Action by Removing Barriers	Leaders taking action to reward positive behaviour and remove barriers blocking acceptance of their new vision no matter what or who they are (i.e. executives). W	Employees will feel disadvantaged by their leader and managers will feel they have been misled.
6	Generate Short Term Wins	Change takes a long time (on average 3-10 years), so it is important to have a plan with short term objectives that are celebrated along with the communicated along with the next objective	Urgency levels drop.
7	Sustain Acceleration	Pressing harder after each success to generate credibility as the vision becomes a reality.	You risk declaring victory too soon and your guiding coalition will revert to previous habits.
8	Institute Change.	Anchoring change into corporate culture by reinforcing the benefits of the change and establishing performance criteria for leaders to promote the change.	The organization will revert-back to their old ways once leadership changes.