

Equipping leaders to create and embed change

Properly equipping leaders is a critical step in the change process. Their role in creating and embedding change cannot be overstated. Even leaders not directly involved in the change can influence the desired culture through the values and behaviours that they model across the organisation.



Templates to help equip leaders to create and embed change
[Assessing your leadership skills](#)



Background information to help equip leaders to create and embed change
[Read about leadership diagnostic tools](#)

How to do it

The approach for equipping leaders to drive delivery is different for formal leaders and change champions. Change leaders have to develop their own capabilities as well as the capability of others to accept, embed and embrace change.

1. Equip formal leaders to create and embed change

Start by asking leaders if they have the skills, values and behaviours to lead change. On a large, complex change there are a number of formal diagnostic tools that can be used to establish their predisposition.

Leaders can also measure their own readiness to lead a particular change by using a simple self-assessment.

Regardless of their starting point, action is needed to equip leaders to drive each change. They have to understand the case for change and have the behaviours and skills to lead and model the change.

As with all roles, approximately 10% of leadership capability comes from formal training, 20% from coaching and the vast majority from learning on the job. However, while formal training is just a small part of overall learning, it underpins all other forms of learning.

On the job (70%)	Through others (20%)	Formal training (10%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> workplace tasks and activities assignments to stretch experience and skills self-reflection project work cross functional teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manager one-one-ones observation coaching and mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seminars workshops accreditations



It is important that leaders are equipped to deliver change via all three of these learning methods.

Learning on the job



Background information to help with learning on the job

[Read how to enhance learning on the job](#)

There are various techniques to help leaders learn on the job including:

- the challenges they are given
- the individuals they work with
- the areas they work in
- action learning techniques.

Before implementation it is also important to:

- equip leaders with key messages about the case for change and the change itself
- provide FAQs to help them respond to questions from employees
- clarify who leaders can call with any questions or concerns
- actively contact leaders throughout the change.

Learning through others



Background information to help with learning through others

[Read about helping leaders learn to coach, including the GROW coaching model](#)

Coaching is a powerful way of building leadership capability and should be built into your stakeholder engagement plan. There are two primary steps:

1. Help the leader to understand their own change approach
2. Conduct regular coaching conversations with others

Formal training

This involves providing useful models, frameworks and the theory of what makes change successful.



Background information to help with formal training

[Learn about managing immunity to change](#)

[Learn about managing individual reactions to change](#)

[Learn about helping people through the stages of change](#)

2. Equip change champions to create and embed change



Background information to help change champions

[Read more about defining leadership roles](#)



Templates to help convince change champions

[Simple stakeholder engagement plan](#)

[Communications plan](#)

Change champions require a different type of support. Rather than leading the change, they need to



influence people over whom they do not have formal authority. There are four primary activities to help them do this effectively:

1. Sell the benefits of change by aligning them to the South Australian public sector's values.
2. Provide training for facilitating change.
3. Support the change champions in their role.
4. Help change champions transition back to business as usual.

1. Sell the benefits of the change by aligning them to the South Australian public sector's values.

Change champions are unlikely to convince others that change is positive if they are not convinced themselves. Spend time planning interactions with prospective change champions and seek ways to align the benefits of the change with their own sense of meaning and values.

2. Provide training for facilitating change.

Change champions will have inconsistent experience and skill levels in facilitating change. Bringing them together for training is the most effective way of building supportive relationships across the cohort and developing change facilitation skills. This can be through an intensive program or through modules delivered at regular change champion meetings.

3. Support change champions in their role.

Change champions are taking a risk by publicly supporting the change to their peers and aligning themselves to something that may not work. Helping change champions to fulfil their role will avoid their potential disengagement. Other support mechanisms include:

Support	Why it's important	How to do it
Handbook for change	A change handbook can help champions extend and embed what they have learned about the change.	Develop a handbook based on the content you deliver in the change champion training. Provide it to champions at the training day. Leave space for change champions to document their ongoing learning.
Frequently asked questions	Change champions become go-to people for employees who have questions or concerns about the change. Champions need to feel confident that they can answer these questions quickly and accurately.	After initially brainstorming the more obvious questions, revisit the change impact assessment to get more ideas. Test the list with employees who have not been involved to identify more questions.
Easy ways for the network to seek help	There is no way to fully anticipate all questions and concerns that employees will raise. If change champions can't get answers quickly they can lose the respect of their peers.	Establish clear and informal communication lines between the champions and the core project team.



Support	Why it's important	How to do it
Frequent check-ins	Some change champions may not feel comfortable asking for help. They may also lose motivation for the change and slip back into business-as-usual. Check-ins can help them stay on track and identify areas where the project team can help champions in their role.	In addition to formal meetings, the project team should check in with change champions regularly one-on-one. Try to establish a relationship with champions early to make these check-ins more productive.

4. Help change champions transition back to business as usual.

The end of a champion's formal role can be a difficult time. Your organisation can help make this transition smoother and more rewarding by:

- having honest, clear career conversations with them before the change commences, ideally conducted by their line manager
- establishing ways for champions to maintain contact with their business-as-usual team through involvement in regular meetings, training and celebrations
- avoiding 'trickle-off', where the change peters out slowly – the team should plan a specific ending milestone so that champions don't feel forgotten
- rewarding champions for their efforts
- finding ways for champions to keep using their change skills, e.g. by giving them a genuine role in continuous improvement.

Adjust for scale

Scale of change	Guidance on how to apply this process
Small: Improving and refining methods, policies and procedures; the future state is not very different to the current ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders should already be equipped to implement these types of changes and may just need to be equipped with documentation and FAQs.
Medium: Distinct modifications to strategies, structures and management processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the existing leadership capabilities, there may need to be leadership development to enable leaders to deliver change effectively. This type of development focuses on change management skills that can be applied to any change project.
Large: Substantial realignment, restructuring and transformation of all or part of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process should be followed in full.



Success measures

Several levels of evaluation are used to evaluate the impact of capability building. As the scale of your change increases, the resources and time required to make the assessment continue to increase.

This is an amalgamation of models by Kirkpatrick (1974), Phillips, (1997) and Guskey (2000):

Level of evaluation	What to measure	Purpose
Reaction	Participants' reactions to the program and their levels of satisfaction	To improve program design and delivery
Learning	The extent to which individual participants have advanced their skills, knowledge and attitudes	To improve program content, format and organisation
Support to change	Enablers and inhibitors to the change effort	To inform the overall change efforts
Transfer of learning	Extent to which the learning has been transferred into more effective practice	To assess whether the intended results have been achieved and transferred to the work context
Results	Tangible results that have occurred as a result of participants' attendance at the program	To demonstrate the overall impact of professional development

