



**WHITE PAPER**

# The Research Basis for the PCI<sup>®</sup> Methodology



*A closer look at the  
research behind the  
PCI® Methodology*

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## A note to fellow change leaders

“ Very often in our work with clients we find ourselves in fairly detailed discussion about the **PCI Methodology**, its origins and more specifically how certain aspects have been developed. More often than not these discussions include references to key research stretching back as far as 60 years, more recent peer reviewed field work and our own research data and practical experience.

*It struck us that it would be useful to bring all of this information together into one, single document that acts as both an introduction and a useful reference guide for those using PCI. That is the aim of this paper which takes a closer look at the 6 Critical Success Factors (CSFs) contained in PCI and considers the key principles and guiding beliefs Changefirst has about each. It then widens the discussion out to consider how the research views them.*

*I hope you find it practical and useful in your work around change implementation. We would very much welcome any feedback you have regarding the paper itself.* ”

*Andra Proctor*

**Head of Learning, Research & Development, Changefirst**

# Introducing PCI® and the 6 Critical Success Factors

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*Introducing PCI® – our proven, structured and sustainable approach to implementing effective change*

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**People-Centred Implementation (PCI®)** is our own change implementation methodology which is based on nearly two decades of field research and practical, ‘hands on’ application with our clients.

**Figure 2:** PCI® Methodology



## Introducing PCI®

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*PCI® focuses specifically on the people aspects of change and describes 6 Critical Success Factors that key change leaders in organisations need to adopt if they want to successfully execute change*

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### Our 6 Critical Success Factors explained

■ **SHARED CHANGE PURPOSE**

Create and share a compelling case for change that creates the early urgency, buy-in and commitment needed for success

■ **EFFECTIVE CHANGE LEADERSHIP**

Build a network of skilled, accountable change leaders who will provide direction, guidance and support for the change

■ **POWERFUL ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES**

Develop and implement the processes needed to involve, communicate with, reward and develop your people

ORGANISATIONAL

■ **COMMITTED LOCAL SPONSORS**

Provide Middle and Front Line Managers with the skills, tools and motivation to work with their people during the change roll-out

■ **STRONG PERSONAL CONNECTION**

Support managers to deliver personal commitment, skill building and behaviour changing action plans to their people

■ **SUSTAINED PERSONAL PERFORMANCE**

Enable managers to help people to adapt personally to the change, minimising disruption and maximising performance in a way that ensures the change really sticks

LOCAL

We can now take a closer look at these 6 Critical Success Factors including the research and rationale behind them in more detail.



*How to create and share a compelling case for change that drives the early urgency, buy-in and commitment needed for success*



# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

**What Changefirst believes  
are the 3 key components  
of a powerful case  
for change**

The starting point for delivering successful organisational change is to create a powerful case for change that can be communicated to the organisation, because it is only when the conversation starts that the change process begins. This first communication achieves more than awareness – it creates energy, buzz and clarity of purpose among the people who will need to adapt their behaviour for change to be successful.

There are three components of a strong change purpose:

- 1. Imperative** – people are dissatisfied with their current ways of working and understand the cost of not changing
- 2. Vision** – people have a positive and clear picture of the outcomes of the change
- 3. Solution** – there are a set of milestones to show people how progress will be made and the time that is allowed for change to happen

You need the right balance of messages, especially between the way you communicate the imperative and the way you discuss the vision:

- *too much imperative without a vision* and people can start to feel fearful without knowing what to do about it
- *whereas too much vision without the imperative* and people can become over-optimistic and ignore the true cost of changing
- *and too much vision without a solution* and the change can appear rhetorical to people

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

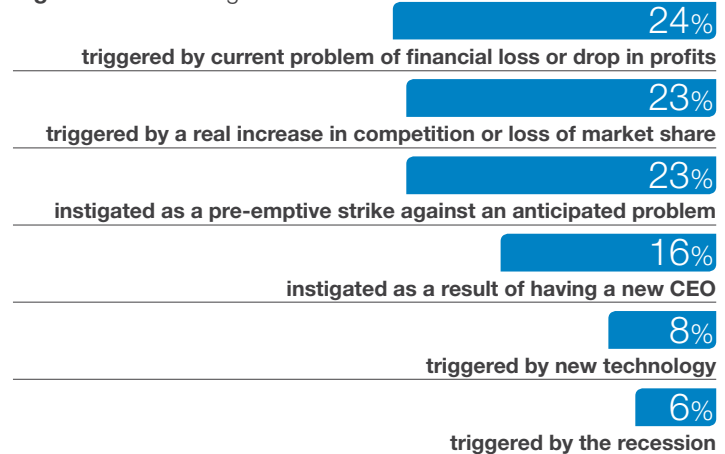
### What the research says:

The research indicates the fact that change often needs a process of movement through a series of distinctive phases that each require a concerted effort and considerable time. These phases correspond with *Lewin's (1951)* three-phase change process of unfreezing, moving and freezing.

In the *unfreezing* phase, what people need most is to be made to feel sufficiently dissatisfied with the status quo, such that there is actually a sense of urgency (*Kotter 1995*) to move away from the comfort the current state brings.

*Edgar Willie* of the *Ashridge Research Group (September 2003)* investigated 178 organisations from around the world to identify exactly what the triggers for change were. What he found is shown in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1:** % of changes were...



# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

With the possible exception of the impact of a new CEO, all other triggers originated from the realisation that the status quo is no longer good enough, and may no longer bring success. As this applies to an individual, we know that it is the status quo that provides a sense of comfort and control. And so, to focus on an attractive vision in itself does not necessarily help people see that the status quo is no longer viable for them or the organisation.

In the moving phase, people's support is actively sought (*Armenakis & Bedeian 1999*). They are keen to understand the vision, they are invited to participate in crafting and refining change solutions for that vision, and their ideas and concerns about the change are taken seriously.

In 2010 an *HBR Advisory Council* survey asked respondents to agree or disagree with a number of statements. 59% of respondents agreed with the statement that "*there is an imaginary line in my organisation chart. Strategy is created by people above the line, while strategy is executed by people below the line*".

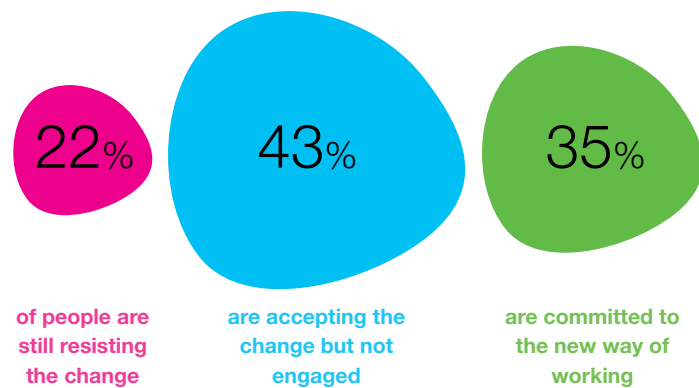
The data from this survey also went on to say that people involved in strategy development are most likely to buy into it. The moment people hear about change they start talking, reacting to it and forming views and ideas. There is a huge advantage if these people can be enlisted to help build the solution; it can create some early commitment to change rather than resistance.

The *freezing* phase is when the "*new ways*" are becoming the norm, with a level of comfort and control returned to the individuals involved. This is what *Jaffe, Scott & Tobe (1994)* refer to as the commitment that takes place as organisational members embrace the future.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 1 Shared Change Purpose

Our own research also tells us that people's commitment to change, which is necessary for change success, is difficult to develop and sustain. The data in Figure 2 is taken from *Changefirst's Change Legacy Assessment database* and considers how individuals are behaving 6-9 months after a specific change. It is cumulative data collected from 2005 to date from change managers who attended our change training workshops and is a composite of nearly 2,400 participants from over 52 companies in 30 countries around the world.

**Figure 2:** How people behave 6-9 months after change implementation\*



What is interesting about the data is that it shows that *less than 40% of individuals* are committed to the new way of working after this time.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

### What Changefirst believes about communicating the case for change

Change can become necessary without a solution being ready, yet we know that energy and urgency for change is assisted if people can see the change as possible, and understand their role in it. If you don't know what the solution is, then you need to at least be able to tell people how the solution will be designed and the role they will play in the solution creation – because one of the most powerful ways to create commitment to change is by involving people in its creation.

### What the research says:

The research supports the idea that lack of participation and involvement is a major cause of disappointing results with organisational renewal (*McNabb & Sepic, 1995*). In their research about cynicism of organisational change, *Reichers et al. (1997)* indicated “*employees must believe that their opinions have been heard and given careful respect and consideration*” for them to see themselves as active agents and believe they have control over their environment and their personal successes.

At the root of the research on involvement and participation is the concept of “*locus of control*”. In most studies *locus of control* is perceived as one of the most influential personal characteristics affecting innovative and change behaviour. *Rotter (1966)* and his colleagues define *locus of control* as “*the perception by the individual of his or her ability to exercise control over the environment.*”

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

### What Changefirst believes about the importance of the word “shared”

The word “shared” is a very important component of this success factor and is visible in two ways

1. By top management taking a decision and then being of “one voice” in their communication of that decision to the wider organisation, in a top-down fashion
2. By getting key people across the organisation together and asking for their input on the way forward

### What the research says:

Lack of information and rumours make it easier to conclude that the change effort is failing (*Reichers et al. 1997*) and decreases the commitment of employees to the change process.

The style and process of communication, categorised as either programmatic or participatory has a crucial role to play in launching a change. *Schweiger & DeNisi (1991)* suggest that realistic communication with affected people actually helped them cope better with change, and the longer the change went on (supported by realistic communications) the more beneficial its effects were.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

*Fairhurst (1993)* describes programmatic-based change campaigns as “planned, organised efforts to mould corporate images, manage issues, and articulate values”. In this sense, programmatic approaches emphasise the cognitive aspects of change implementation efforts – that is:

- helping people to understand the essence of the change leaders’ vision
- emphasising the importance of people perceiving the vision as being relevant, practical, and urgent in relation to their job and immediate responsibilities

*Lewis (1999)* explores how programmatic communication activities are typically used to disseminate information in a one-way fashion. The objective of using programmatic activities is not to solicit input, but, rather, to convince the target population of the merits of a planned change and to communicate what ‘right’ looks like – i.e. you need programmatic communication to initially share information about the imperative, vision and solution ideas for change.

There’s no doubt that programmatic activities also have the appeal of communication efficiency and are likely to have a significant positive impact on planned change efforts by disseminating formal, quality information from organisational leadership. However, *Fidler & Johnson (1984)* maintain that “employees’ ultimate acceptance of an innovation often rests on the extent to which communication can actually act to reduce uncertainty by ameliorating such factors as risk and complexity”. And, programmatic communication can actually overwhelm people with information – thus adding to their sense of uncertainty and complexity.



# PCI® Critical Success Factor 1

## Shared Change Purpose

Participatory approaches to communicating change make up the largest category of existing research, even though they are used less frequently in organisations than programmatic approaches (Lewis, 2006), and are associated with low communication efficiency. In contrast to programmatic efforts, participatory approaches invite input, using involving and empowering methods to gain the insights of various stakeholders to shape the change programme and not merely to 'receive it'.

Participatory approaches are grounded in the basic assumption that employees should be active participants in the change process. This approach is not necessarily about the basic act of participation, but is about whether employees, in the end, have a voice during planned organisational change; i.e.:

- Employees can test their level of comprehension and understanding of the change leaders' vision
- Employees can (through exploration) perceive the vision as being urgent, practical and relevant to their job and immediate responsibilities

Research from Lines (2004) and others would suggest that a combined approach of programmatic and participatory approaches to creating a shared change purpose across the organisation, can be perceived as "*the catalyst for implementing organisational change in a more sustained fashion*".

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*How to build a network of skilled, accountable change leaders who will provide direction, guidance and support for the change*

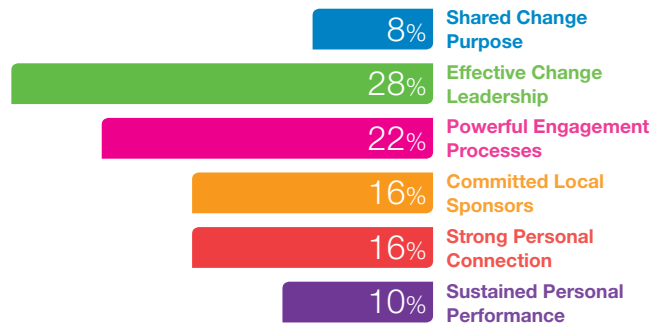
# PCI® Critical Success Factor 2

## Effective Change Leadership

### What Changefirst believes about effective leadership of change

Concerns about how to secure effective change leadership are echoed by most of the research over the last thirty years, and it is often cited as the number one risk factor in major change. In 2009 we commissioned *Change in a Downturn* – a survey sent to 2000 participants across 20 countries. The results indicated that effective change leadership is very often seen as the root problem of unsuccessful change (see Figure 1 below) and this is something we consistently see in both our research and work with clients.

**Figure 1:** Currently, the biggest risk to change being successful is the lack of:



*\*Source: Changefirst research – Change in a Downturn 2009 and similar analysis in 2010 and early 2011.*

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

### What the research says:

*Fishman & Kavanagh (1989)* suggest that the culture of an organisation, and how people respond to innovation and change is shaped substantially by the behaviours of leaders. The influence of leaders rests on how others regard them. Leaders are lent prestige when employees believe in them and what they are doing and are willing to accept their decisions (*Weber 1978, 1992*).

A recent longitudinal study of merger-evoked change, done by *Kavanagh & Ashkansky (2006)*, places the emphasis on leaders as being essential to the outcome of change, and any merger process. Results indicate that changing an organisation boils down to four things that you need to direct energy and effort towards:

- the behaviour of leaders
- the selection and execution of change management strategies
- an understanding of the organisations basis systems and structures and culture
- actions taken by leaders affecting acceptance of change by individuals who play key roles in both formal and informal systems.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

### What Changefirst believes needs to be in place for effective change leadership

Effective change leadership happens when the leaders of change provide direction, guidance and support to the people who are implementing change, as well as those affected by and working with the change on a daily basis.

#### What the research says:

*Nadler, Thies & Nadler (2001)*, suggest that for effective change to occur there is no substitute for the active engagement of the CEO and executive team; top leaders must assume the role of chief architect of the change process. *Conger & Kanungo (1988)* go on to say that leaders need to understand that management is the process of planning, organising and controlling change, while leadership is the process of motivating people to change.

Establishing and *communicating* a need to change is one of the first important steps for leaders to follow in implementing a change initiative (*Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Galpin, 1996; Judson, 1991; Kotter, 1995*). Organisational members will not take change efforts seriously, if top management does not actively support the change process in both their words and subsequent action. If employees get the feeling that those in power lose interest in the on-going process, their belief in the transformation efforts will also fade.

Work by *Schneider, Brief & Guzzo (1996)* have indicated that the decision process of top management plays an important role in the creation of a climate and culture for sustainable organisational change. Mutual trust and the possibility for people to participate in the change decision process are central in the development of a change-friendly climate. *Conger (1998)* has also found that leaders, who are considered

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

to be trustworthy and fair, establish credibility, and this credibility is a prerequisite to successfully introducing organisational change. This perception of two-way communication, consistency of decisions across subsidiary units, transparency of the decisions and the possibility to challenge top management views is positively related to emotional involvement and commitment to change.

**Changefirst believes there are 3 main roles in organisational change**

In most change projects there are three main roles that are necessary and need to work together to provide effective change leadership:

- 1. Sponsors** – often multiple people who are accountable for successful implementation in their area of responsibility, networking the change and cascading it down through the organisation
- 2. Influencers** – individuals and groups who cannot direct someone to do something but who wield significant informal power
- 3. Change agents** – individuals and groups who work with sponsors to plan and execute the tasks or activities that enable people to adapt to the change and ensure it is fully implemented. They rarely have sufficient formal power and so rely on persuading and working with others to make things happen



## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

### What the research says:

While there's no specific evidence of the inter-relationship between the three change roles that we describe, *Kotter's work (1995)* does indicate that leaders need change champions who can assemble and motivate a group, with sufficient power to lead the change effort. In addition, *Harrison's typology of culture (1972-75)* does appear to draw some parallels.

*Harrison's* culture instrument (validated in a number of studies) measures organisational culture, which in itself is useful when tracking change in organisations. *Harrison* stated that there are four main types of organisational culture; and by implication, four types of leadership, because as *Fishman & Kavanagh (1989)* suggest, "a culture of an organisation, and how people respond to innovation and change is shaped substantially by the behaviours of leaders". These four types of culture are:

- 1. Power** – as exercised by, and through, the management layers in the organisation – which can be extrapolated to the power of sponsorship
- 2. Role** – emphasis on the positioning of people in the organisation into key roles – which can be extrapolated to the positioning and roles of influencers
- 3. Task** – emphasis on the tasks that people are skilled to accomplish in the organisation – which can be extrapolated to the skills of project managers and change agents
- 4. Person** – the regard given to individuals in the work place

*Harrison's* typology has subsequently been validated in a number of studies including *Ashkanasy, Broadfoot & Falkus (2000)* and *Ashkanasy & Holmes (1995)*. It is important to say that while there's a point of similarity

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

between our hypothesis and the research, there is divergence on this point. We stress the importance of people in key change leadership roles understanding the limits of their power, and as such needing to work together to provide effective change leadership. *Harrison's* typology describes that while cultures are one or more of the four leadership types, as change unfolds they move through the different types. So for example, leadership that comes from a role and task emphasis might move on to become a power culture during a major change.

### **What Changefirst believes about creating committed and effective change sponsors**

Sponsors are the most important of the three leadership roles and effective change is only possible when change sponsors are actively involved and their commitment is clear to others. Even sponsors with the best intentions can be ineffective. If they are unclear about their role during implementation they may not be able to provide the guidance, motivation and support that people need.

The power of leaders, rests on how others regard them. So, we advocate the tracking and development of twelve dimensions of effective sponsorship – e.g. great sponsors lead by doing, strong sponsors communicate consistently and congruently about the change, successful sponsors build a strong network of other sponsors, motivational incentives and reward people's extra efforts during change.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

### What the research says:

One of the most comprehensive theories of change orientated leadership is that of *Burns (1978)*, and the theory of transformational and transactional leadership. He defined *transactional leadership* as providing rewards in exchange for employee performance, while *transformational leaders* motivate employees to identify with the leader's vision and sacrifice their self-interest for that of the group, or the organisation.

Almost a decade later *Bass (1985)* built on the definition of *transactional leadership* with the inclusions of:

- **charisma or idealised influence** (followers trusting in, and emotionally identifying, with the leader)
- **intellectual stimulation** (employees encouraged to question their own ways of doing things)
- **and individualised consideration** (assignments being delegated to employees providing them with learning opportunities)

Five years later, literature from *Tichy & Devanna (1990)* showed transformational leaders engaging in a change process which not only includes key stages such as recognising and describing a need for change, creating a new vision and institutionalising a new change solution, but also features leaders displaying the appropriate behaviour at the appropriate stages in the process to facilitate that institutionalisation.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 2 Effective Change Leadership

Also in 1990, *Senge* spoke of organisations where transformational leaders stimulated learning and innovation by rewarding risk taking. Two years on, *Burke & Litwin* provided a model of organisational performance and change where the organisation's reward process was considered the most important subsystem of a corporation's policies and procedures. *Schneider, Brief & Guzzo (1996)* also stressed that how incentives and rewards are handled by leaders would determine whether there is a climate for sustainable change or not because people do what they get rewarded for doing, and reward systems that focus on risk taking and pay-for-performance are positively related to emotional involvement and commitment to change.

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*How to develop  
and implement  
the processes  
needed to involve,  
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# PCI® Critical Success Factor 3

## Powerful Engagement Processes

### What Changefirst believes about effective engagement processes

A fairly standard definition of engagement is the self-motivation that comes from a person's involvement in, support for and satisfaction with something, such that they feel a sense of commitment and are moved to take action or perform in the service of that thing. The engagement processes we describe in this section of the PCI methodology are expressly designed to develop motivation to commit to a new change situation and performance in new ways. We have rarely seen commitment built without engaging people in some way or another – and without commitment the user adoption and behaviour change we need for change success is difficult to achieve and maintain.

### What the research says:

The research suggests that at the heart of any discussion on engagement is the concept of motivation. By way of definition, to be *motivated* is to be moved to actually *do* something. This feeling of wanting to do something is derived from two places:

- 1. Intrinsic motivation** which comes from the interest, satisfaction and enjoyment that one feels that is likely to drive them to action on their own volition
- 2. Extrinsic motivation** which comes from value and usefulness a person places on an external goal – e.g. the reward one would get for doing something.

In the 1970's research from *Lepper, Greene & Nisbett (1973)* on Self Determination Theory evolved from studies comparing intrinsic and extrinsic motives, and from a growing understanding of the dominant role that intrinsic motivation played in an individual's behaviour. Self Determination Theory focuses on the degree to which an individual's



## PCI® Critical Success Factor 3 Powerful Engagement Processes

behaviour is self-motivated; and with regards to intrinsically motivated actions, probably less visible at work. The concept here is that organisms increase their options and choice by “*engaging in exploratory, playful and curiosity driven activity that extend and exercise their capabilities*”.

Studies have connected high levels of employee engagement to self-motivation and, in turn, to better organisational performance. UK researcher *Nancy Lockwood*'s work, published in *HR Magazine in 2007* found that employees with the highest level of commitment performed 20% better than their colleagues and were 87% less likely to leave their organisation.

### What Changefirst believes are the 4 components of powerful engagement

The four components of powerful engagement are **learning, involvement, rewards** and **communication**.

Effective communication during change gives people guidelines so they know exactly what is expected of them and how to focus their efforts for maximum success. The problem with communication in isolation is that it is often the only thing that leaders have been known to apply – and over use – when it comes to creating engagement. This over-use springs from a mindset that if you put a case as logically as possible then people, being rational will buy into it and take appropriate actions.

People involved in change become more committed to it because they feel a sense of ownership and control during change. In addition, feeling that there will be sufficient time to learn, and appropriate training during change gives people the confidence that the change is real and critical. This, coupled with rewards for working in the new way soon emphasises that continuing to stick to the status quo is unacceptable.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 3

## Powerful Engagement Processes

### What Changefirst believes about learning

Let's now take a closer look at the four key components in more detail:

- 1. Learning** – Changefirst believes most changes require new skills and attitudes that people need to learn; and by giving people enough time to learn you reduce change anxieties and allow individuals time to adjust and improve to the point where they no longer feel threatened by change.

### What the research says:

Learning Theory (*Hull 1943*) suggests that people are motivated to act by physiological needs which are focused on competency, autonomy and relatedness. Competence refers to a person adopting as their own an extrinsic goal, because they feel they can be successful in achieving it. Research shows that people are more likely to adopt an extrinsic goal if they understand it and have the relevant skills to succeed at it. Support for competence (e.g. offering training, optimal challenge and feedback) facilitates internalisation of new skills.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 3

## Powerful Engagement Processes

### What Changefirst believes about involvement

**2. Involvement** – Changefirst believes people value what they choose more highly over something given to them without their input. Plus, control matters and involvement can be a very powerful way to give people a sense of control.

### What the research says:

In 1975 a famous study led by *Ellen Langer* demonstrated the importance of self-selected involvement. Researchers sold \$1 lottery tickets to a selection of participants. In one group the tickets were handed to the participants randomly while people in the other group were allowed to choose their own. A few days later, *Langer* returned to the subjects and asked to buy back the tickets. The ticket holders who had been given a random ticket were willing to sell their ticket, on average, for \$2. Those who had chosen their own ticket, on the other hand, wanted an average of \$9 for their \$1 ticket. *Langer* attributed this to the illusion of control caused by “*an expectancy of a personal success probability inappropriately higher than the objective probability would warrant*”.

*Vanderheyden & Ven den Broeck (2002 – 2011)* reviewed the process literature in search of the variables most likely to be related to change commitment. On the basis of this review they identified four variables; support of top management, line leadership, time and participation.

Lack of participation is a major cause of disappointing results with organisational renewal (*McNabb & Sepic, 1995*). In their research about cynicism of organisational change, *Reichers et al. (1997)* indicated that employees must believe that their opinions have been heard and given careful respect and consideration. More substantive forms of participation in the change process (i.e. shared decision-making) tend to be associated with higher commitment.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 3

## Powerful Engagement Processes

### What Changefirst believes about communication

**3. Communication** – Changefirst believes the primary purpose of communication in change is to create clarity – ensuring that everyone at least understands what is to be achieved. Well planned communication can help people feel positive about the change and lessen the impact of resistance. However, the reverse is also true as poorly planned or executed communication will cause or heighten resistance.

### What the research says:

The research stresses that in order to participate in change, employees must have access to the necessary information. *Kotter (1995)* stressed the importance of credible and timely information to capture the hearts and minds of employees. He advocates that Change Agents must prevent employees getting their information through the grape vine, and as supported by *Reichers et al.(1997)*, lack of information and rumours make it easier to conclude that a change effort is failing, and actually decreases the commitment of employees to a change process.

Research has also found that for leaders to be seen as effective at disseminating formal, quality information is itself an important variable during planned change efforts. *Fidler & Johnson (1984)* maintain that employees' ultimate acceptance of an innovation "often rests on the extent to which communication can act to reduce uncertainty by ameliorating such factors as risk and complexity"; and communication about change from organisational leaders can:

- decrease uncertainty and increase understanding about the change (*Armenakis et al., 1993; Lewis & Seibold, 1996; Washington & Hacker, 2005; Allen et al., 2007*)

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 3 Powerful Engagement Processes

- help reduce anxiety about change (*Miller & Monge, 1986; Smeltzer, 1991; Washington & Hacker, 2005*)
- decrease negative feelings about the change effort, including cynical expectations that the initiative will fail (*Washington & Hacker, 2005*)
- lower resistance while increasing participants' willingness to implement the planned change (*Washington & Hacker, 2005; Lewis, 2006*)

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 3

## Powerful Engagement Processes

### What Changefirst believes about rewards

**4. Rewards** – Changefirst believes most change initiatives require extra efforts from people to establish new goals and different ways of working. Therefore, we should reward behaviour change, milestone achievement, active involvement in change and the willingness to pilot new approaches to work. We also need to send a strong message that old ways of working and resisting change will not be rewarded.

### What the research says:

The essential nature of change inside organisations looks to be operating at three levels:

- the individual level
- the unit or team level
- the organisational level

And for each level *Vanderheyden & Ven den Broeck (2002-2011)* selected a number of valid and measurable variables (or factors), based on a theoretical relationship between that variable and commitment to change. One of the organisational level factors is rewards. How incentives and rewards are handled will determine a climate for sustainable change (*Schneider, Brief & Guzzo 1996*).

In 1990, *Senge* spoke of organisations where risk taking was rewarded as stimulating learning and innovation. Two years later, *Burke & Litwin* provided a model of organisational performance and change where the organisation's reward process was considered the most important subsystem of a corporation's policies and procedures. Bringing this all together, *Vanderheyden & Ven den Broeck* proposed that people do what they get rewarded for doing, and reward systems that focus on risk taking and pay-for-performance are positively related to emotional involvement and commitment to change.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 3 Powerful Engagement Processes

### What Changefirst believes about the delivery of engagement processes

We need a variety of methods to engage people with the ability to draw on different engagement processes at different parts of the change – e.g. rewards can be wasteful if given too early in the change process; learning needs to be offered to people when they are ready to learn and can benefit from the investment.

### What the research says:

The research points to some interesting relationships between the different variables identified as eliciting, sustaining or enhancing people's motivation to act during change.

*Ryan & Deci's Cognitive Evaluation Theory (1985)* propose that rewards, communication and learning help feelings of competence. However, feelings of competence will not enhance people's intrinsic motivation to act unless they are accompanied by a feeling of autonomy which would typically come from involvement or participation. So, people need to feel increased competence and self-determination (increased autonomy) if their intrinsic motivation to act is to be sustained.

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*How to provide middle and front line managers with the skills, tools and motivation to work with their people during the change roll-out*

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 4

## Committed Local Sponsors

### What Changefirst believes about creating committed local sponsors

When it comes to major change, there's something very pivotal about the role of middle and front-line managers – who we call *local sponsors*. Local sponsors can play a powerful role in change execution as they are in a unique place to push the change agenda.

They are often the most trusted by their people and can be used as a sounding board to air concerns - they can also help create a positive climate for change.

### What the research says:

As we mentioned earlier in the paper, the essential nature of change inside organisations looks to be operating at three levels:

- the *individual* level
- the *unit or team* level
- the *organisational* level

And for each level *Vanderheyden & Ven den Broeck (2002 - 2011)* selected a number of valid and measurable variables (called factors), based on a theoretical relationship between that variable and commitment to change. One of the organisational level factors they call procedural justice, which is in effect the extent to which the top management's decision process is judged to be fair during the disruption of change. Trust in top management that stimulates risk taking behaviour at the organisational level, must be complemented with mutual trust and confidence in the subsidiary work units (factors at a unit or team level).

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 4 Committed Local Sponsors

One of the unit or team level factors is labeled *psychological safety*, and defined by Edmondson & Woolley (1999) as “the perception that one’s immediate work environment is safe for interpersonal risk-taking, such that proximal others will not reject or embarrass those who make mistakes or speak up about difficult issues”. The research stressed that, although peers’ attitudes directly affect psychological safety, it is the relationships between subordinates and their immediate supervisors and managers that are crucial. If subordinates believe that managers **cannot** be counted upon to provide help, then employees will find it very difficult to cope with changes productively.

Kotter (1995) also stresses that successful major changes need a powerful guiding coalition. This powerful coalition goes beyond the support of top management - “groups without strong line leadership never achieve the power that is required” (Kotter, 1995). Moreover, “line managers have to translate the general goals of organisational change efforts into specific departmental objectives” (Kanter et al., 1992).

### What Changefirst believes are the 2 crucial components for creating committed local sponsors

The two components of creating committed local sponsors are:

- 1. Local role modelling** – demonstrating the behaviours required for the change on a local level
- 2. Local manager’s support** – creating the conditions for their people to become committed

It seems that in many organisations, these managers have become disempowered and are seen as barriers to change rather than enablers.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 4 Committed Local Sponsors

### What the research says:

Organisational transformation often implies a change in the tasks of line managers, their personal leadership style and their social relations with subordinates. The leadership style of line managers during the change process remains an important element to be monitored during the change process. The active support, the ability to confront the new challenges and the ability to support subordinates adequately are all crucial elements of this line leadership.

Groups without strong line leadership never achieve the power that is required for change to occur (*Kotter, 1995*), and findings from a recent *CIPD research study (2010)* on the barriers and enablers of Sustainable Organisational Performance, looked across six case study organisations to pinpoint what they term *distributed leadership* - as a major enabler to Sustainable Organisational Performance.

The study defines distributed leadership as senior leaders setting a clear strategy, but also empowering and motivating managers to innovate to deliver it. Organisational performance is not attributable to a single leader, or just a senior group, it results from effective leadership at all levels (*Schroder 1989, Young & Dulewicz, 2008*).

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 4 Committed Local Sponsors

Line managers are crucial in times of change because of their closeness to the groups most affected by change. It is this closeness that led *Quy Nguyen Huy* to write in his *September 2001 HBR* article (in praise of middle managers) that “*indeed middle managers may be the corner-office executive’s most effective allies when it’s time to make major change*”. So, the questions that need to be answered to create effective local sponsorship for change are:

1. Have middle managers been engaged in the change before it has been announced to their teams?
2. Have middle managers’ commitment been secured before asking them to cascade the change in their areas?
3. Are there any skills gaps that need to be closed with middle managers before they can effectively help their people adapt to change?

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*How to support  
managers to  
deliver personal  
commitment,  
skill-building and  
behaviour changing  
action plans to  
their people*

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 5

## Strong Personal Connection

### What Changefirst believes about strong personal connection to change

You need to help people to develop a strong connection to change, as that builds personal commitment.

Our data suggests that only 35% of people actually become committed to a single change, but those who said they were committed rated their organisations far higher on helping them to personally connect to the change and adapt to new ways of working. An accurate estimation of the level of commitment of key people is important to successful implementation.

There are three practical (and essential) outcomes of this work:

1. You give people answers to the most basic questions about any change – “*how is this going to affect me, what’s in it for me and what do you want me to do?*”
2. You build higher levels of personal control among people who can anticipate and imagine the future – they feel a personal imperative, they believe that the change solution is achievable and can see personal success in the future.
3. You achieve commitment and behaviour change sooner, by making people feel more informed, valued and involved.

### What the research says:

*Huy (1999)*, hypothesised that emotional involvement reinforces employees’ commitment to organisational change. This idea is also consistent with *Damasio’s (1991)* earlier argument that “*emotion plays a central role in perception, decision to connect to something and ultimate behaviour*”.

*Block’s* book *Flawless Consulting (1981)* is referenced in research in support of this view that “*if no link is seen between, what a person is asked to do and what they actually want to do, the probability of getting their all-out effort is not likely*”. He goes on to say that “*you can order a*



# PCI® Critical Success Factor 5

## Strong Personal Connection

*person to do things and ordinarily they will comply – at least while you are watching, but if you want them to apply themselves then internal commitment is required”.*

Further research from *Vanderheyden & Ven den Broeck* between 2002 and 2011 found that emotional involvement is an important mediating variable between the change process and commitment to change. They studied the perceptions of employees involved in major changes of different organisations, and the results indicated that the organisation’s change history, job satisfaction, participation in the change process, availability of time and emotional involvement are important variables in understanding commitment to change and an individual’s ability to move to action.

**When Changefirst believes the process of creating strong personal connection happens**

Strong personal connection to change happens when the needs of the organisation are translated into something that people can buy into. As a result, people connect emotionally, commit to change sooner and adapt their behaviour more quickly. People typically go through a number of stages (see Table 1) to be committed to a change, that relate to them building Awareness, Acceptance and then Commitment to a new future.

**Table 1:** Stages of commitment

<b>Awareness</b>	Hear > Understand	two-way communication about the change purpose, exploring impacts and requirements with managers
<b>Acceptance</b>	Support > Act	acknowledgement of progress, tailored support and specific involvement opportunities
<b>Commitment</b>	Use > Own	restructuring the environment, follow through with rewards and consequences, learning plans

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 5 Strong Personal Connection

### What the research says:

*Havelock (1973)* identified six phases of individual commitment to change as follows:

- **Awareness** – *“the individual is exposed to the innovation and becomes aware of it. As yet, he has only a passive interest and he does not necessarily seek further information”*
- **Interest** – *“the interest stage is characterised by active information seeking about the innovation ... as he gathers more information and learns more about the innovation, the individual’s first negative or positive attitudes towards it begin to emerge”*
- **Evaluation** – *“in his mind, the individual applies the innovation to his own situation and decides whether or not it is worth the effort to try it out”*
- **Trial** – *“... the individual uses the innovation on a small scale in order to find out how it will actually work in his own situation”*
- **Adoption** – *“... on the basis of... post trial evaluation, the decision is made to adopt (or reject) the innovation”*
- **Integration** – *“even when a favourable decision is made, however, true adoption cannot be considered to have taken place unless use of the innovation becomes routine”*

*Prochaska, Norcross & Diclemente (1998)* in their book *Changing for Good* reference principal theories of psychotherapy as a way to also understand commitment to change and the processes of helping an individual to move to action which is detailed in table 2 on page 48.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 5 Strong Personal Connection

**Table 2:** Principal theories of psychotherapy

THEORY	AUTHOR	PROCESS OF CHANGE	EXPLANATION
<i>Psychoanalytic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freud</li> <li>• Jung</li> </ul>	<i>Consciousness Raising &amp; Emotional Arousal</i>	<p><b>1. Conscious Raising</b> = first announcement and learning more about the nature of the problem</p> <p><b>2. Emotional Arousal</b> = demonstrating the imperative to change by offering a vivid example of the problem at hand</p>
<i>Humanistic/ Existential</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carl Rogers</li> <li>• Rollo May</li> </ul>	<i>Social Liberation &amp; Helping Relationships</i>	<p><b>3. Social Liberation</b> = exploring options and new alternatives for the future</p>
<i>Gestalt/ Experiential</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fritz Perls</li> <li>• Arthur Janov</li> </ul>	<i>Self-Re-evaluation &amp; Emotional Arousal</i>	<p><b>4. Helping Relationships</b> = getting people directly involved in analysis and design</p> <p><b>5. Self-re-evaluation</b> = helping people picture themselves in the future without the problem</p>
<i>Cognitive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albert Ellis</li> <li>• Aaron Beck</li> </ul>	<i>Countering &amp; Self Re-evaluation</i>	<p><b>6. Countering</b> = outline for people how day to day practice would be better, cultural re-alignment – how unhealthy behaviour would be substituted for healthy behaviour</p>
<i>Behavioural</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skinner</li> <li>• Joseph Wolpe</li> </ul>	<i>Environment Control &amp; Reward &amp; Countering</i>	<p><b>7. Environmental Control</b> = restructuring the organisation as soon as possible to support behaviour change</p> <p><b>8. Reward</b> = praise, incentives and payments when change goals are achieved</p>

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 5

## Strong Personal Connection

### What Changefirst believes about moving from connection to commitment

At any point through the commitment journey people can still resist change - they can move up one stage, hit a barrier and begin to lose momentum. The practical use of commitment stages is for change leaders to understand progress and to build the right actions at the right time to keep people moving for early connection towards commitment.

#### What the research says:

*Prochaska & Diclemente (1998)* also go on to conceptualise the stages that “successful changers (not relapsers)” go through as follows:

- pre-contemplation
- contemplation
- preparation
- action
- maintenance
- termination

They then go on to map the processes of change (described in Table 3 on page 50) to each stage. They caution that the journey is not linear, as self-changers have been known to go through the stages some 3 or 4 times before being successful.

They also stress that success is very dependent on “*doing the right things at the right time.*”

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 5

## Strong Personal Connection

**Table 3:** Conceptual stages of change

THEORY	EXPLANATION
<i>PRE-CONTEMPLATION &amp; CONTEMPLATION</i>	<p><b>Conscious Raising</b> = first announcement and learning more about the nature of the problem</p> <p><b>Social Liberation</b> = exploring options and new alternatives for the future</p>
<i>CONTEMPLATION &amp; PREPARATION</i>	<p><b>Emotional Arousal</b> = demonstrating the imperative to change by offering a vivid example of the problem at hand</p> <p><b>Self-re-evaluation</b> = helping people picture themselves in the future without the problem</p>
<i>PREPARATION &amp; ACTION</i>	<p><b>Helping Relationships</b> = getting people directly involved in analysis and design</p>
<i>ACTION &amp; MAINTENANCE</i>	<p><b>Countering</b> = outline for people how day to day practice would be better, cultural re-alignment – how unhealthy behaviour would be substituted for healthy behaviour</p> <p><b>Environmental Control</b> = restructuring the organisation as soon as possible to support behaviour change</p> <p><b>Reward</b> = praise, incentives and payments when change goals are achieved</p>

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*How to enable managers to help people to adapt personally to the change, minimising disruption and maximising performance in a way that ensures the change really sticks*

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 6

## Sustaining Personal Performance

### What Changefirst believes about sustaining personal performance

Commitment relapses are the rule rather than the exception when it comes to change. People have a very strong control orientation and as major change unfolds, and well-established norms and conventions are challenged and altered, people will react by resisting whatever they perceive is happening to them.

### What the research says:

Work from a number of authors (Lawrence, 1954; Maurer, 1996; Strelbel, 1994; Waddell & Sohal, 1998) strongly suggests that the key reasons for the failure of major change can be found in the area of resistance to change.

Ansoff (1990) conceptualised resistance as a “phenomenon that affects the change process, delaying or slowing down its beginning, obstructing or hindering its implementation, and increasing its costs”, and that it is often very difficult to anticipate and quantify in hard terms. Maurer (1996), Rumelt (1995), Zaltman & Duncan (1977) go on to describe resistance “as any conduct that tries to keep the status quo”. That is to say that resistance is equivalent to inertia and the persistence to avoid change.

Some writers and researchers (Beer & Eisenstat, 1996; Goldstein, 1988; Lawrence, 1954; Piderit, 2000; Waddell & Sohal, 1998), have also considered resistance as a valuable source of information and data, which can be used in a very practical way to show change agents what has not been properly done and the specifics of what is required to drive a more successful change process.



# PCI® Critical Success Factor 6

## Sustaining Personal Performance

### What Changefirst believes about managing reactions to change

Resistance is the way people react as they oppose a request to shift from the status quo, and while this persists people's productivity and work quality drops. People tend to display these reactions in stages, such that a forward, backward and "looping" process of management and movement is required to move individuals to action so as to achieve success. These reactions to change are incredibly important in helping change leaders pinpoint how best to help the people affected by change to navigate it.

### What the research says:

A 60 year review (1948 – 2007) of quantitative studies of change recipients' reactions to organisational change makes a strong link between change recipients' reactions to change and the change's potential to succeed. Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis initially considered over 700 articles – whittled down to 79 – and within these, coded hundreds of change variables. In the literature they found that, reactions to change were conceptualised in many different ways. So, to help organise these concepts, they used Piderit's (2000) tripartite definition of resistance to change which includes *affective*, *cognitive* and *behavioural* components. They also felt the need to add *multiple* reactions and *confounded* reactions to the list because the top three reaction categories (shown in Table 4) were not considered to be mutually exclusive.

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 6

## Sustaining Personal Performance

**Table 4:** Definition of resistance to change

<i>Affective Reactions</i>	<i>Cognitive Reactions</i>	<i>Behavioural Reactions</i>
<i>include negative reactions like stress, anxiety and distress as well as positive reactions such as pleasantness, change related satisfaction and affective aspects of change commitment</i>	<i>include sense-making, effectiveness, openness to change and decision satisfaction / challenging</i>	<i>include active involvement as well as withdrawal</i>
<i>Multiple Reactions &amp; Compounded Reactions</i>		

In his book, *What doesn't kill us*, Professor Stephen Joseph references the work of Social Psychologist Prof Ronnie Janoff-Bulman, who describes Western culture as having 3 deep seated beliefs:

- the world is benevolent
- the world is meaningful, controllable, predictable and just
- we have tendency to view ourselves in a positive light

He goes on to suggest that *trauma* (much like change) smashes these deep seated beliefs and the key to dealing successfully with this adversity is to be able to "*revise and re-author our mental frameworks*". Psychologists have found that we are biased to maintaining our own world views – we seek out information that fits these and we try to ignore or distort information that does not fit.

*Joseph (2012)* also talks about people needing to work through trauma in such a way that they resolve tension between pre-existing world view and new trauma related information – even though it can be a painful

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 6 Sustaining Personal Performance

and long journey. He references *Mardi Horowitz's* work on *Phases of adjustment to trauma* – namely Outcry, Numbness and Denial, Intrusive re-experiencing, Working through and Completion.

Models and processes about reaction to change, and specifically their stages/phases, have mostly been derived from the work of Swiss-born psychiatrist *Elisabeth Kübler-Ross*. In her book *On Death and Dying*, the *Kubler-Ross model* describes a model of five discrete stages, and the process by which people deal with grief and tragedy.

Popular research suggests that the people's urge to compress the complexities of life into neat and tidy stages is irresistible. Psychoanalyst *Sigmund Freud* insisted that we moved through five stages of psychosexual development. Developmental psychologist *Erik H. Erikson* countered with eight stages. Harvard University psychologist *Lawrence Kohlberg* postulated that our moral development progresses through six stages. In other words, we need patterns and structures to try to make sense of an often chaotic and unpredictable world.

Stage theories impose order on chaos, offer predictability over uncertainty, and optimism over despair, explained social psychologist *Carol Tavris*, author of *The Mismeasure of Woman (Touchstone, 1993)* and co-author, with *Elliot Aronson*, of *Mistakes Were Made (But Not by Me) (Harcourt, 2007)*. However, there appears to be no evidence, that most people, most of the time, go through most of the stages in this or any other order.

According to *Russell P. Friedman*, executive director of the *Grief Recovery Institute in Sherman Oaks, Calif. (www.grief-recovery.com)*, and co-author, with *John W. James*, of *The Grief Recovery Handbook (HarperCollins, 1998)*, "no study has ever established that stages of grief actually exist, and what are defined as such can't be called stages".

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 6 Sustaining Personal Performance

University of Memphis psychologist *Robert A. Neimeyer* confirms this analysis, concluding in his scholarly book *Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss* (American Psychological Association, 2000) that, “at the most obvious level, scientific studies have failed to support any discernible sequence of emotional phases of adaptation to loss or to identify any clear end point to grieving that would designate a state of ‘recovery”.

*Tavris (1993)* noted that, “in developmental psychology, the notion of predictable life stages is toast. Those stage theories reflected a time when most people marched through life predictably: marrying at an early age; then having children when young; then work, work, work; then maybe a midlife crisis; then retirement; then death. Those theories evaporated with changing social and economic conditions, which blew the predictability of our lives to hell!”

While empirical research around stages, and evidence for their existence, is not strong, there is a strong argument that human beings can relate well to the concept of stages. They help people maintain a sense of control (“impose order on chaos, offer predictability over uncertainty, and optimism over despair”) and there is evidence from other areas of psychology (psychotherapy) that approaches of this kind can help individuals change a negative, self-defeating narrative into a positive one.

In addition, Changefirst have always been clear that the way individuals move through change is not linear and indeed it is possible for stages to be missed completely. Although this is an area which would benefit from more research, our surveys and practice also indicate that individuals in the midst of change need to be able to recognise where they are on the change curve and then to diagnose what would be most helpful to support them at that stage.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 6 Sustaining Personal Performance

### **When Change first believes sustained personal performance happens**

Sustained Personal Performance happens when personal concerns, as well as people's reactions, are being effectively addressed. People might think that change is a good idea, but if they are hitting issues like financial insecurity or worsening work relationships they may decide the cost of the change exceeds the benefits they will gain from it. Key concerns are future security, financial impact, work relationships, levels of responsibility and learning curve.

Research into change at a number of companies\* that have gone through major change, showed that not only is resistance to change inevitable, but the reasons for resistance are varied (i.e. there is never just one reason for resistance).

*\*Spanish researchers conducted a piece of qualitative research into the area of resistance with a population of Spanish companies with more than fifty employees who has undergone a change process recently. According to the database Dun & Bradstreet 2000 (50.000 best Spanish companies) this population consisted of 12,656 organisations. From this population they extracted a random sample of 1.800, to whom their questionnaire was sent, both by electronic and ordinary mail, and obtained 86 valid answers. The questionnaire was designed according to theoretical considerations and it was later tested to check its suitability, first with a group of experts (university staff and several business people) and then with personal interviews to managers in companies of the sample. Out of the 86 respondents 15% were from top management, while the rest were middle managers. Most (70%) had a university degree.*

*As far as the company profile is concerned, almost two thirds of the respondents were from the industrial sector. About half of them have an annual turnover of less than 30 million Euros, and only 20% go over 90 million. One third of the sample has less than 100 employees, the second third has between 100 and 300, and the last third has over 300. Regarding the types of changes that their answers address, 58.8% of the respondents consider the change faced by their institution as evolutionary, while 22.4% state it were more strategic and 18.8% of the companies expresses an intermediate situation. However in this same study there is also some evidence that the more radical and transformational change is, the more powerful resistance to change is.*

# PCI® Critical Success Factor 6

## Sustaining Personal Performance

Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis (2011) were careful in their review to “not confuse reactions with reasons”. The antecedents of reactions are the reasons for resistance and change variables they coded during their review were used to conceptualise a model of 5 categories of change reasons – namely:

- **recipient characteristics** – personality traits, coping styles, needs, demographics, resilience
- **internal context** – supportive environment and trust, management commitment, organisational culture, job characteristics – this factor yields the strongest and most consistent relationship with change reactions
- **change process** – participation, communication, leaders’ change capability, procedural fairness, learning curve
- **perceived benefit/harm** – anticipation of negative or positive outcomes, job insecurity, personal consequences, financial impact
- **change content and the extent of the change**

Not everything we have to do at work (or in educational settings where a lot of this research has been conducted) is intrinsically interesting or enjoyable. Although intrinsic motivators are important there are many things that people do that are not of this nature (i.e. we all have to do things that people and organisations want us to do, even if we don’t want to do them intrinsically). Many major changes are like this – people are asked to do things that they do not want to do.

## PCI® Critical Success Factor 6 Sustaining Personal Performance

*Ryan & Connel (1989)* looked at three sets of external motivators that get people to do things they may not be interested in doing / that are purely externally focused – motivators that are needed to promote engagement, better performance, better learning and higher levels of well-being, and if not in place serve as reasons for resistance.





- **Relatedness** – how the actions people are required to take actually relate to their reality at work (e.g. levels of responsibility) and to the people who work with them (e.g. work relationships)
- **Competence** – understanding the actions people are required to take and feeling they have the relevant skills to succeed at it (e.g. learning curve)
- **Autonomy** – giving people a feeling of self-determination (e.g. future security and financial impact)

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## About Changefirst

- Since 1995, Changefirst have been transferring change management skills, processes and tools inside organisations to help them deliver change successfully. In that time, over 14,000 people have LEARNed our proven People-Centred Implementation (PCI) methodology in more than 45 countries around the world. Around half (over 6,500 people) continue to APPLY PCI via our online application e-change, and more than 330 in-house PCI Master Trainers help to EMBED the capabilities inside their organisation.
- Our clients choose us because: they need to deliver specific changes whilst developing internal change management capabilities; they require a scalable, robust methodology that is easy to access, simple to use, it works, integrates with their project framework and is value for money. Our clients include The Linde Group, Novartis, Initial Rentokil, Virgin Media, HSBC, Network Rail and MSA.
- We have one of the largest global Organisational Change Management research and assessment databases that enables clients to benchmark their change performance against approximately 2,000 entries for our core assessment tools.
- We are regularly invited to share our thought leadership on the international speaker circuit by the likes of ACMP, APMG and PMI.
- We are based in the UK, Australia and Brazil and have a global delivery capability.

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