From classic to participative change: are we reaching a tipping point?

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Prof. Kotter gave us some hope in the 90s

Harvard Business Review
www.hbrreprints.org

BEST OF HBR

Leaders who successfully
transform businesses do eight
things right (and they do them
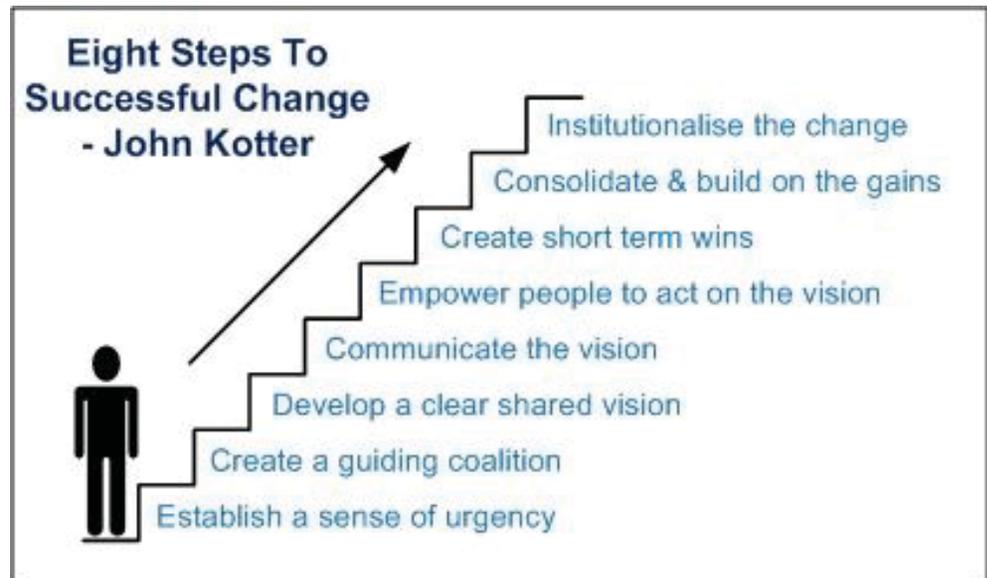in the right order).

Leading Change
Why Transformation Efforts Fail

by John P. Kotter

To give your transformation effort the best chance of succeeding, take the right actions at each step – and avoid common pitfalls

John P. Kotter, 1995

Eight Steps To Successful Change - John Kotter

- Institutionalise the change
- Consolidate & build on the gains
- Create short term wins
- Empower people to act on the vision
- Communicate the vision
- Develop a clear shared vision
- Create a guiding coalition
- Establish a sense of urgency

By 2013 we have realised that we still have a problem

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ARTICLE
CHANGE MANAGEMENT
Change Management
Needs to Change

by Ron Ashkenas

- As a recognized discipline, change management has been in existence for over half a century. Yet despite the huge investment that companies have made in tools, training, and thousands of books (over 83,000 on Amazon), most studies still show a **60-70% failure rate** for organizational change projects — a statistic that has stayed **constant from the 1970's** to the present.

- The content of change management is reasonably correct, but **the managerial capacity to implement it has been woefully underdeveloped.**

- **Kotter's process is necessary, but not sufficient**

Ron Ashkenas, APRIL 16, 2013

Unfortunately we discover that Newton laws apply to animated objects as well, with a complication
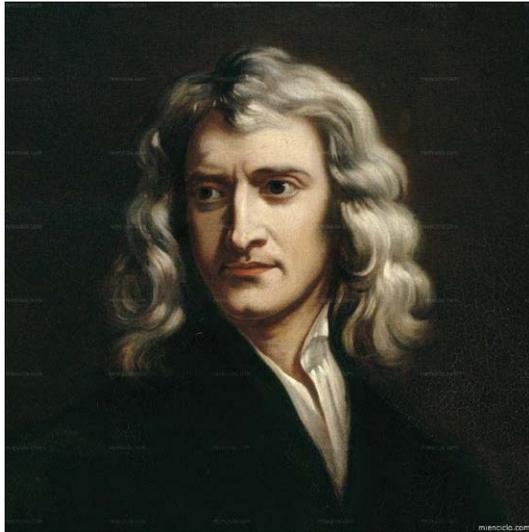
Non-animated objects

- **1st law of motion**: an object either remains at rest or continues to move at a constant velocity, unless acted upon by a force
- **2nd law of motion:** The vector sum of the forces **F** on an object is equal to the mass *m* of that object multiplied by the acceleration **a** of the object: **F** = *m***a**.…
- **3rd law of motion:** When one body exerts a force on a second body, the second body simultaneously exerts a force equal in magnitude and opposite in direction on the first body.

Animated "objects"

- **…** we have different names for it: path dependant, strategic drift …
- **…** we used to call it change management, a mix of command, control and coercion
- **…** we call resistance to change

BUT there is a complication with animated "objects": the can decide to oppose a force exceeding the initial force meant to change their initial status ..

Our "classical" approach assumes we have enough external "force" to overcome resistances

But any wise General, such as Giap would wisely ask some questions
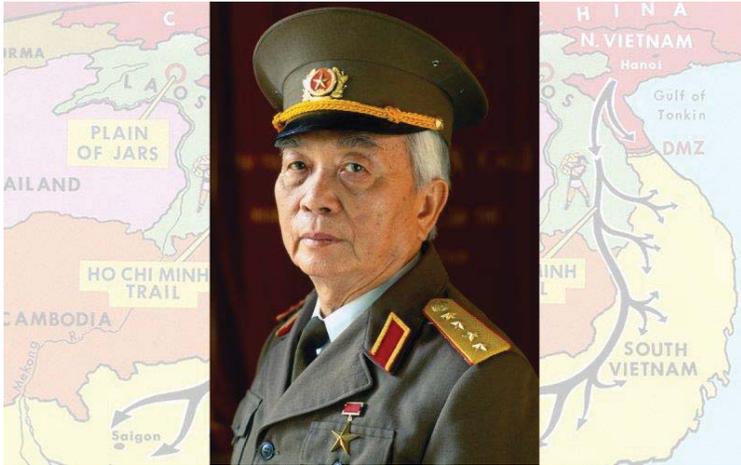
Can we win, if we engage?

Do we have an alternative?

Let's analyse what it means choosing the classical approach

In terms of management role:
- *Command*
- *Control*
- *Coercion of some type*
- *Either soft or hard (carrot or stick)*

In terms of basic assumptions:
- *Employees dislike work*
- *They are lazy*
- *They lack ambition*
- *They dislike responsibility*
- *They are resilient to change*
- *They must be coerced to perform*
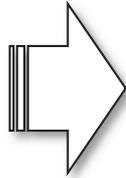
What do I need to succeed?

- *Munitions/budget*
- *Time*
- *Flexibility of constraints*

Can the classical approach be effective today?

Todays' context in developed countries:

- People have most of what they need and it is difficult to motivate them with more (within reasonable budgets)

- Society and legislation make it almost impossible to withdraw acquired "rights"
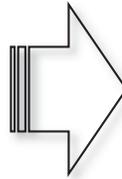
Would you go at war with no weapons?

Over-satisfying lower order needs, it is not an effective motivation lever

Douglas McGregor

Frederick Hertzberg

ABRAHAM MASLOW HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Maslow, A. Motivation and Personality (2nd ed.) Harper & Row, 1970.

Theory Y

Theory X

SELF-ACTUALIZATION
Pursue Inner Talent
Creativity Fulfillment

SELF-ESTEEM
Achievement Mastery
Recognition Respect

BELONGING - LOVE
Friends Family Spouse Lover

SAFETY
Security Stability Freedom from Fear

PHYSIOLOGICAL
Food Water Shelter Warmth
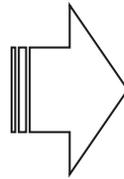
Satisfaction/ Motivation

Neutral

Dis-satisfaction

Recent neuroscience developments open the door to newer assumptions and approaches

Basic assumptions

Employee like work, are creative, ambitious, seek responsibility, can exercise self-control and self-direction
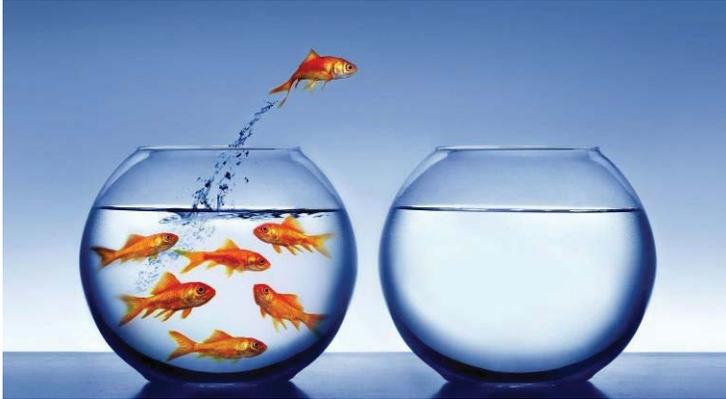
Participative approach

- **_Context_**
- **_Self-management_**
- **_Self-control_**
- **_Mindset_**
- **_Leverage higher order needs_**

Recent academic research offers more and more tools for leading effectively in a participative way

Let's analyse what it means addressing change with the participative approach

The fish bowl metaphor

- **Fishes:** individuals and teams
- **The water:** organizational context and culture
- **The jump:** individual and collective change

How do we go about it

- **Fishes:** support individuals and team at overcoming their immunities to change
- **The water:** become a Deliberately Developmental Organization (DDO), i.e. an organization which can transform itself with limited external "forces"
- **The jump:** prototype Minimum Viable Organizations (MVOS), which can attract people, starting from "early adopters" to reach the tipping point of mass adoption.

Individuals: how can we help them to engage and thrive in the new "water"


Key steps

- **Adaptive Framing:** working the root causes of the obstructive underlying commitments
- **Immunity x Ray**: individual or team process to individualise and overcome competing commitments.

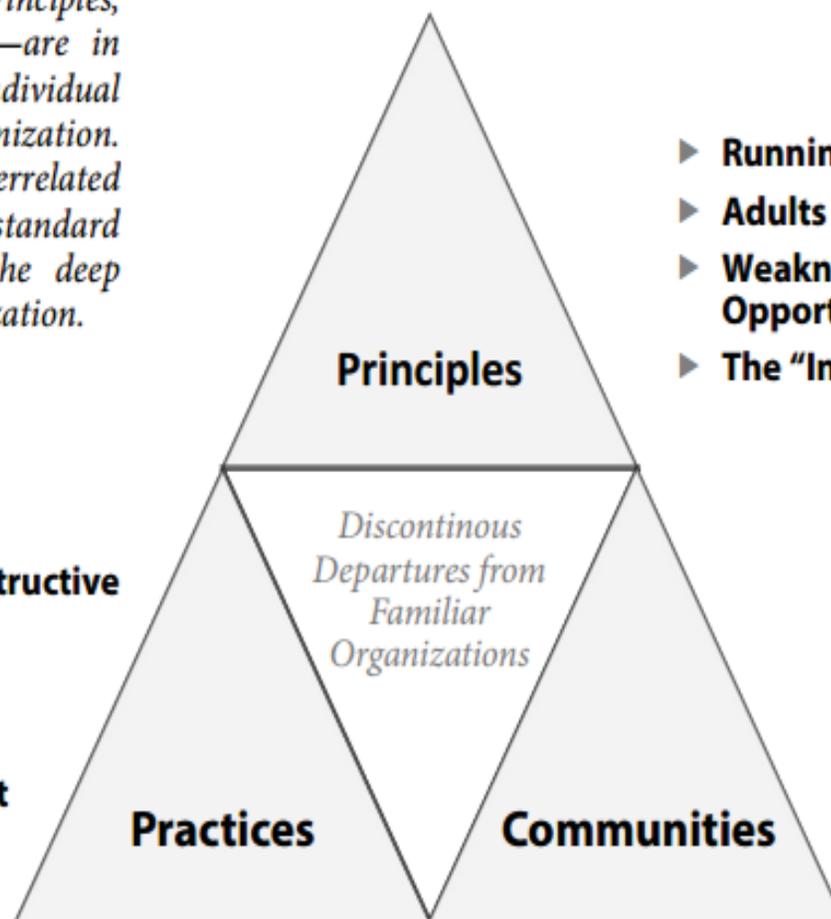| 1 Visible commitment	2 Doing/not doing instead	3 Hidden compet- ing commitments	4 Big assumptions
To be more excited and inspired in my work by connecting more with my own passions, and trusting more my own distinctiveness	I work at things I am not that interested in (because I feel I must). I work in ways that are more routine, more established (because I feel that is what is expected).	To being well regarded by those who evaluate me To not running any reputational, social, economic risks To not looking unsuccessful To not pushing an unknown/unproven trail	I assume my safest route to success is to perform excep- tionally well in ways that are expected and well established. I assume that if I am not highly regarded I will be a failure.
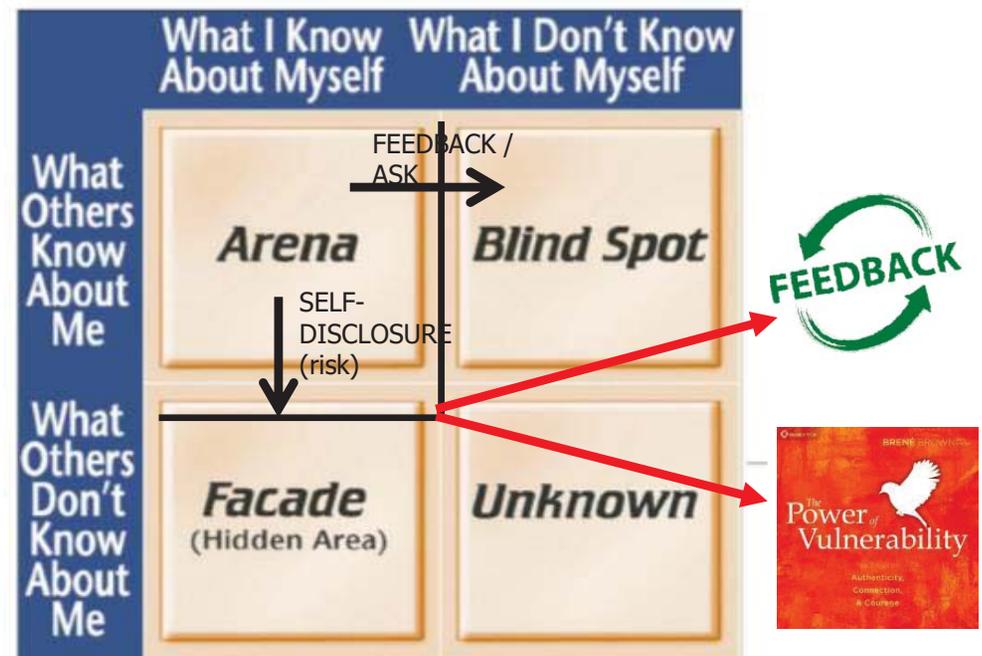
The organizational context: which feature do DDOs have? Why are they developmental?

In a Deliberately Developmental Organization (DDO), the major design features of organizational life—the company's principles, practices, and form of community—are in deep alignment to promote individual development throughout the organization. This alignment is visible in twelve interrelated "discontinuous departures" from standard practices that together make up the deep structure of the developmental organization.

Principles

- ▶ **Running on Principles**
- ▶ **Adults Can Grow**
- ▶ **Weakness Is a Strength; Error Is an Opportunity**
- ▶ **The "Interdependent Bottom-Line"**

Discontinous Departures from Familiar Organizations

Practices

- ▶ **Destabilization Can Be Constructive**
- ▶ **Closing the Gaps**
- ▶ **Timescale for Growth, Not Closure**
- ▶ **"Interior Life" Is Part of What Is Managed**

Communities

- ▶ **Rank Does Not Have Its Usual Privileges**
- ▶ **Everyone is HR**
- ▶ **Everyone Needs a Crew**
- ▶ **Everyone Builds the Culture**

MVOs: how can we actually implement the transformation?
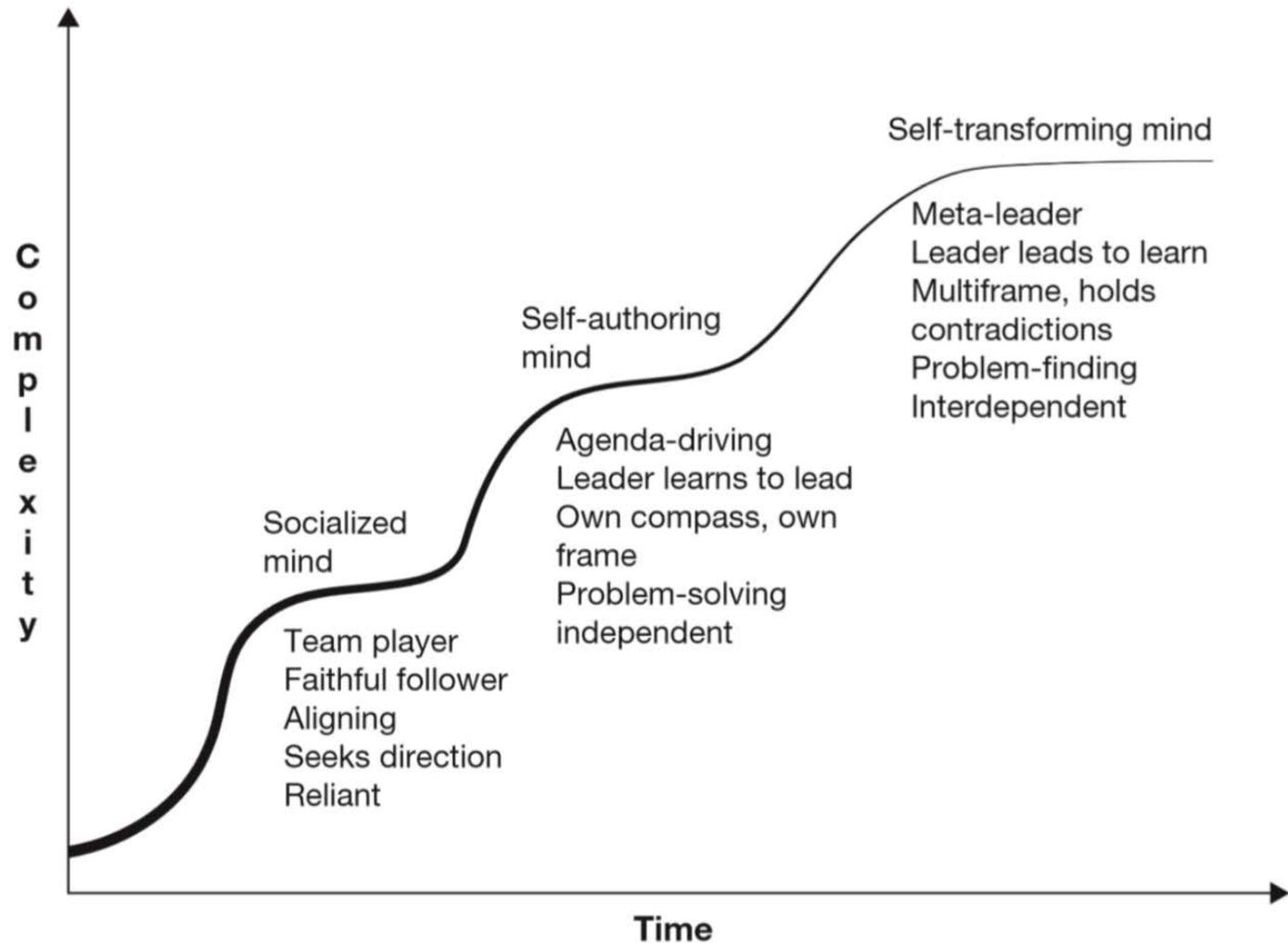
Minimum Viable Organization Process
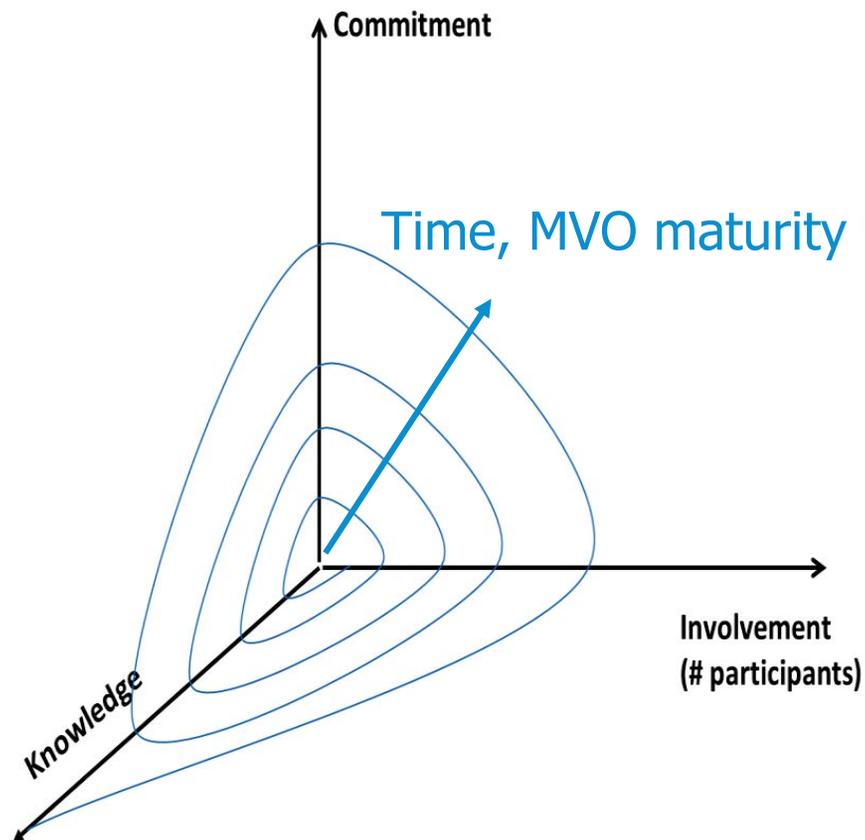
A **Minimum Viable Organization (MVO)** is a reduced, simplified but fully functional version of the future organization.

MVOs are then evolved over time in the core dimensions:

1) **Involvement:** the number of people involved in the MVO

2) **Knowledge:** the cumulated individual and collective new know-how which is gradually built-up though the iterations of the MVO. Knowledge is developed not only through training, but via the iterating performance of the MVO functions

3) **Commitment**: the level of commitment to the new organizational purpose, which goes from simply executing the new tasks assigned, to a deeper commitment to new organizational values which drive self management

The end-game is developing people's mental complexity and therefore drive performance

Three plateaus in adult mental development

Complexity (vertical axis)

Time (horizontal axis)

Socialized mind
Team player
Faithful follower
Aligning
Seeks direction
Reliant

Self-authoring mind
Agenda-driving
Leader learns to lead
Own compass, own frame
Problem-solving independent

Self-transforming mind
Meta-leader
Leader leads to learn
Multiframe, holds contradictions
Problem-finding
Interdependent

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