

Preparing for Change:

MEANING

You cannot lead change, or persuade others to choose change, without understanding the competing interests of your team or stakeholders. Let's look at the desire for meaning. Given that most of us will spend roughly a third of our waking hours at work, we want that work to serve a purpose deeper than merely providing a paycheck.

THE APPROACH

Bring your team together and outline a compelling need for change and an equally compelling vision of the future. Do your homework on what the change will be, what it will require, and what the future state will look like. The more detail you can offer, the more readily your team will accept the need for change.

PRO TIPS

While change management will require many conversations over time, it's critical to get your first change announcement right and to focus the message on **meaning**.

1

If change has been prompted by a looming crisis (the business unit might close if performance doesn't improve, or a new technology has disrupted the market), share that information with the team.

2

Paint a picture of how much better life will be after the change has been completed.

3

Reiterate the values and principles by which you will live as change happens (such as transparency, inclusiveness, commitment to principles)

4

Address job security worries up front (see *Preparing for Change: Security*), but keep the focus (for now) on illustrating why change is needed.

REMEMBER!

In order of priority for your team, their needs are: 1) security, 2) relationships, and 3) meaning. Effective change leaders meet these needs in **reverse** order. Unless you start with **meaning**, the need or hope for change, you'll just seem nosy as you ask people over lunch about their worries, their jobs, their inner work lives, and/or their organizational social statuses.



JOHN R. BRANDT