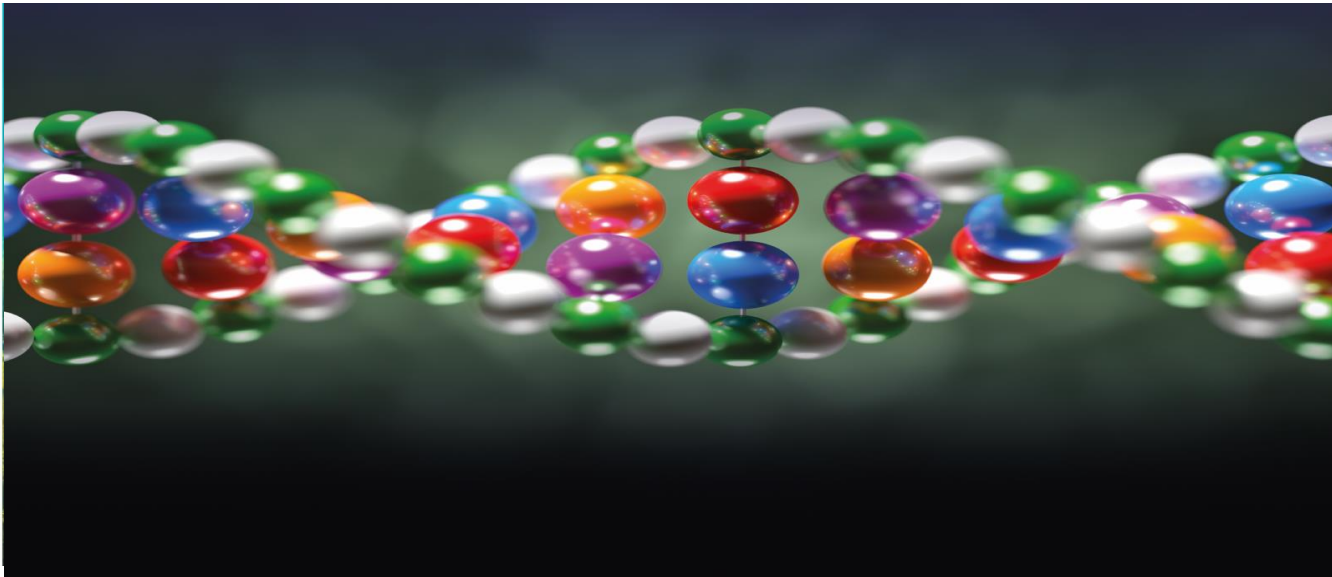


Are you ready for change?

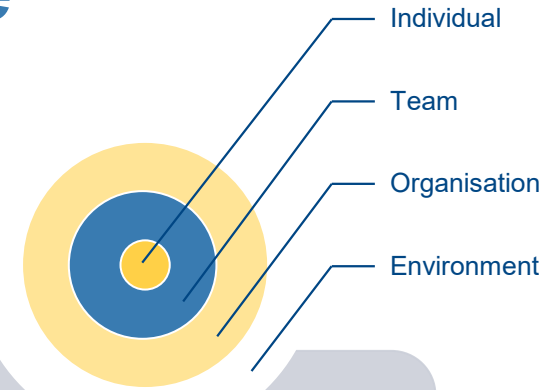


IPA Employee Voice Hub Webinar

Dr Alison Carter

10 June 2025

Examples of known change in work settings



Individual

- New role or responsibility
- New process or performance expectation
- New location or culture

Team

- New team or changing membership of existing team
- New ways of working
- New technologies

Organisation

- New market, product or operating context
- New leader, strategy or direction
- Restructuring
- Merger or acquisition

An organisation is*

*(subject to change)

CHANGE NOUN

An act or process through which something becomes different

Ukraine Energy Cost of living National Insurance
Government Return to the office
policy The labour
Artificial market
Leadership **Intelligence** Ageing workforce
Regulation Redundancy **Restructuring**
Operating environment **Tariffs** Productivity







Henley
Business School
UNIVERSITY OF READING

ies institute for
employment
studies



Henley Forum & IES

Research: Building change-ready change-capable teams

2018 - 2019

11 participating organisations including



Building change-ready teams

IES/Henley joint project

Why is this important? Having change-ready, change-capable teams is at the heart of any organisation's dynamic capability

What's the problem? In practice, we know that change can engender both resistance and overload in the people involved, and that teams often don't feel ready for change

Why bother? Developing a better understanding of the underpinnings of change-ready, change-capable teams stands to benefit both organisations and the people involved

Our research questions

What makes a change-ready, change-capable team?

- Contextual conditions
- Team dynamics
- Personal attributes

How can we evaluate how ready and able teams are?

What tools and processes help?

What is change-readiness?

Individual change readiness

5 beliefs - 'change-ready' employee

- Change is needed
- Proposed change is an appropriate response
- Capability/capacity exists to change in desired way
- There will be support
- They could benefit

Plus must have a generally positive attitude towards the idea of change

Collective change-readiness

Same 5 beliefs as for individuals

Plus work teams must have:

- Psychological safety (interpersonal trust and mutual respect)
- Pro-social behaviour (shared positive emotions and reactions)
- Strong sense of belonging to the team



THE RESEARCH

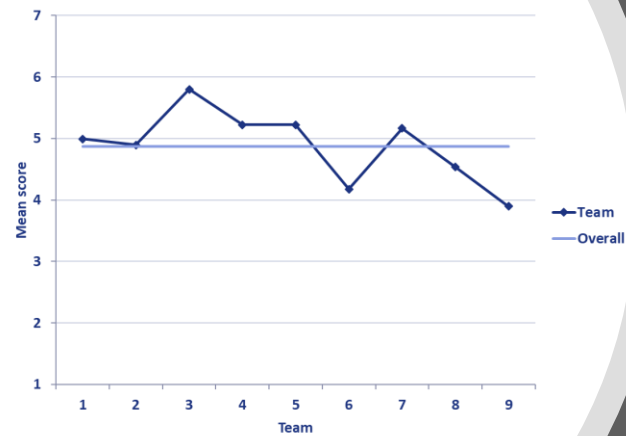
We worked with 13 people from 11 organisations across eight months to scope the research and draw out key findings.



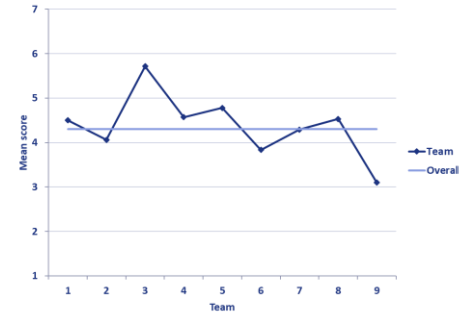
We invited team members to assess their team's readiness and ability for change using an evidence-based survey tool: we received 228 responses from 9 teams across 5 large organisations in 4 countries.

We then interviewed some of these team members to identify what helps or hinders their team being more ready and able for change.

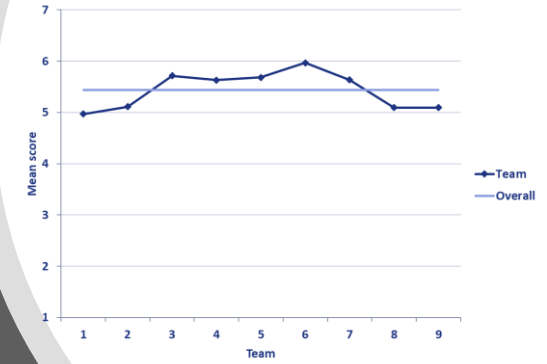
Organisational climate



Previous change



Team climate



Three themes scored high on survey

Findings from interviews

- Being on the receiving end of multiple changes leads people to feel tired, stretched and overwhelmed
 - Yet they reported feeling *more* ready and capable to deal with change than we expected
- Positive team atmosphere helps
 - Several interviewees described a more positive climate for change in their team than in the wider organisation
 - Mutual support to sustain their sense of well-being
- Teams who understanding how change works and have a broad skillset to manage change, feel more able to manage themselves in change

What about the dark side?

- For every strength there may be a dark side...
 - There was a **fear of losing close team relationships** and a sense of community
 - In some mature teams there was a perceived risk of **groupthink**
 - **Change-capable teams** may experience frustration when they feel there are better ways to manage the change process

Hallmarks of Change-capable Team

A clear sense of
communityship in the
team and beyond

Previous experience of
being involved in
change

Self-confident in
managing themselves

Outputs from the research



Since then we have...

- Thoroughly tested the change tools with multiple teams in many more work settings
- Applied the approach to support pilots and introduce a range of change initiatives
 - Wellbeing through job design
 - Inclusive workplace culture

From Change-Vulnerable to **Change-Ready**:

A checklist

- ✓ **Culture** Putting the human aspects of change at the forefront
- ✓ **Leadership** Agile leaders engage stakeholders and contextualise their vision
- ✓ **Teams** Mindful teams embed transformation
- ✓ **Learning** Continuous reflection, considered reaction and improvement
- ✓ **Process** Flexibility in systems and process in an evolving landscape
- ✓ **Skills** Change-smart skills make you ready for any change, as it happens

Ideas to address resistance to change

Expect it

Put the human and emotional aspects of change at the forefront

Overcome inertia and the 'survival of the good enough' mantra

Strengthen change communication and engagement

Embrace the grit in the oyster



Thank you

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