Leading Change Courageously

8 Leadership Actions That Matter
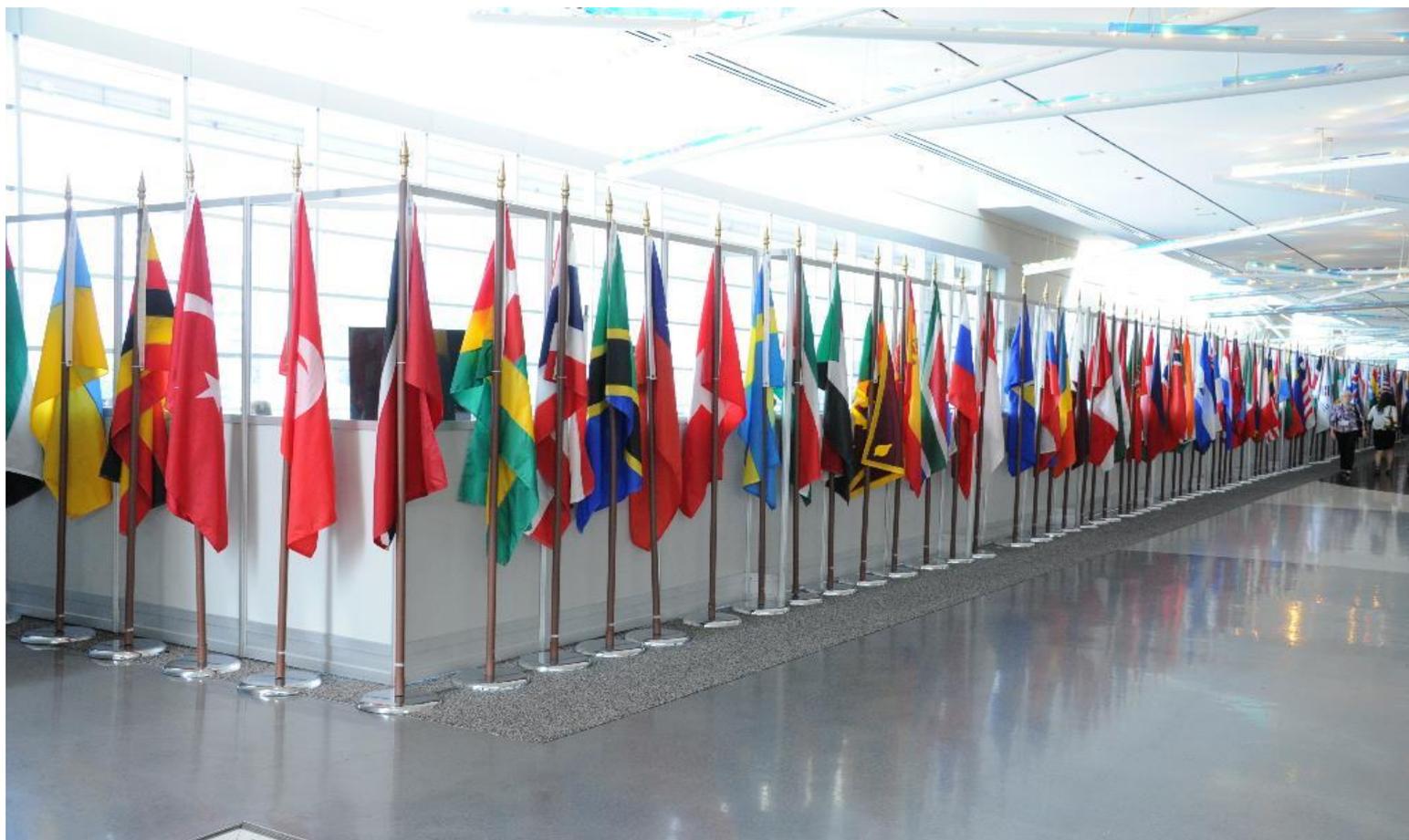
- Gallup's 2013 Global Workforce Study of 142 countries
  - 13% engaged
  - 63% not engaged
  - 24% actively disengaged
- The reason given is a global failure of leadership

Change is Changing

- Change is continuous
- Change is increasingly complex/VUCA
- Great "change leadership" is more important
  - Change leadership = competitive advantage
- Unfortunately, few organizations are investing in change leaders
  - Small surprise the majority of change efforts fail

Who are change leaders?

- For our purposes, change leaders are *internal* organizational leaders engaged in Change:
  - CEO and Senior Executive Team
  - Middle Managers
  - First Line Supervisors
- Change leaders are also specially trained leaders engaged in leading change efforts full-time

Choosing to serve your organization and people…

…even when it means putting yourself at risk

8 Actions that matter

1. Define *means* & *ends*
2. Don't over plan
3. Refuse "false urgency"
4. Do *2* jobs
5. Put yourself "in the middle"
6. Develop people constantly
7. Create change leaders
8. Ensure continuous learning

- A common theme among the 8 actions is the importance of creating a "learning environment" during Change
    - A learning environment calms and engages people
    - A learning environment unites the team
    - A learning environment builds change capacity

Define *means & ends*

- Senior leadership assumes a common understanding of Change
  - In fact, leaders view Change very differently
  - These differences are seldom addressed
- As change efforts unfold, these differences surface and impede the effort
- Senior leadership consensus on the means and ends of change is crucial

Define *means & ends*

- *Ends* define the organization's aspirations for Change—consistent with strategy
  - *Ends* answer the question: What do we aspire to become?
- *Means* define how Change is conducted—consistent with core values
  - *Means* answer the question: What will we do (and never do) to achieve our *ends*
- *Courageous leaders build consensus on means and ends*

Don't over plan

- Conventional wisdom requires a project management plan for Change

- However, managing Change is *different* from other large-scale projects

- The speed and complexity of change demand more flexibility and creativity

Courageous leaders build opportunities for creativity and original thinking into planning

Refuse "false urgency"

- Change can elicit fear
- Fear can foster false need for urgency
  - Fear causes organizations to act without thinking and undermine the change effort
  - Learning and performance opportunities are lost
- *Courageous leaders resist false urgency and set the optimal pace of change*
  - *They ensure no one is left behind*

Do 2 jobs

- Leaders often focus solely on the current change effort
  - No learning from change occurs, no capacity for change is added
- *Courageous leaders do 2 jobs: lead the change effort today and build change capacity for tomorrow*
  - *Building change capacity means investing yourself in talent development*

Keep yourself "in the middle"

- Leaders can be "swept up" in organizational change and become reactive
  - When this happens, the team is left hanging
  - Change becomes "every man for himself"
- *Courageous leaders stay proactive*
  - *They position themselves between the chaos of Change and the welfare of their team*
  - *They use experience and expertise to help team members understand what is happening and why*
  - *They help team members become leaders vice victims*

ASTD

Develop people constantly

- Change offers a profound opportunity for development
  - It provides the "disorienting dilemma"
- People involved in successful change efforts report accelerated personal development—when great leadership is present
- *Courageous leaders use the opportunity of Change to accelerate team development*

Create change leaders

- Our interviewees asserted that great leadership was the most important factor in change
  - Yet almost none had programs to develop change leaders
- *Courageous organizations invest in developing change leaders*
  - *They integrate "change competence" into formal leadership development*

Drive continuous learning

- Many change efforts do not consider learning
  - As a result, no one is developed and the organization doesn't improve at changing
- *Courageous leaders ensure learning occurs at individual, team, and organizational levels*
  - *They create structures for creating, sharing, and remembering knowledge*
  - *They model "learning behaviors" by sharing and using new knowledge*
  - *They build more capacity in for changing*

Change and Learning

8 Actions that matter

1. Define *means* & *ends*

2. Don't over plan

3. Refuse "false urgency"

4. Do 2 jobs

Learning connections

- Set a common direction for Change

- Create plans that foster original thinking

- Don't be led by Change, lead it

- Invest yourself in developing people

8 Actions that matter

5. Put yourself "in the middle"

6. Develop people constantly

7. Create change leaders

8. Ensure continuous learning

Learning connections

- Stand between your team and the chaos of change

- Leveraging the "disorienting dilemma" of Change for accelerated learning

- Create learning-enabled change leaders

- Create structures to create, share, and remember new knowledge

- Why does Change succeed?

Summary

- Great Change is not about a process. It's about the courageous actions of leaders

- Learning leaders understand that the essence of Change is their personal investment in talent development

- Learning leaders use the change environment to accelerate the learning of their teams

- Learning leaders succeed by creating a learning environment during change

Summary

- *Learning does more than make Change better….it makes Change possible*
- *In the end, Change is evidence of learning*

Contact information

Walter McFarland

http://choosingchangebook.com

mcfarland.walter@gmail.com

Twitter: @WaltMcFarland

References

- Collins, J.C. and Porras, T.J. (1995). "Building Your Company's Vision." Harvard Business Review, pp 65-77, 96501

- Cope, M. (2003). The seven C's of consulting. London, Financial Times/Prentice Hall.

- Grint, K. (2008). "Wicked problems and clumsy solutions: the role of leadership." Clinical Leader **I**(II): 11-25

- Heifetz, R., A. Grashow, et al. (2009). "Leadership in a Permanent Crisis." Harvard Business Review **87**(July-August): 62-69.

- Johansen, B. (2009). *Leaders Make the Future: Ten New Leadership Skills for an Uncertain World. San Francisco: Berret-Koehler*

- McFarland, W. and Goldsworthy, S. (2013). *Choosing Change: How Leaders and Organizations Drive Results One Person at a Time.* New York: McGraw Hill