

IEMA

Transforming the world
to sustainability



Sustainability in Practice Guide

Change Management for Sustainable Development

By Penny Walker

Introduction

In writing this book, I want to make it more likely that you will be able to act more effectively to change your organisation (or depending on your sphere of influence, other organisations in your sector or location) so that it contributes to sustainable development.

The practitioner workbook aims to be a model of good practice, working through inspiration and empowerment, giving practical tools and advice, and being like an enthusiastic, approachable supporter. Change is hard. Sometimes our greatest achievements can feel small and slow in the face of the monumental challenges we face as a species. But you are part of a profession and a movement which is doing the right thing. I hope this workbook helps you by offering ideas and approaches you can use now, and by being positive about your ability to use them.

It isn't a comprehensive account of current theories of change. Instead, it draws on the experiences of a lot of people who have been working at the sharp end. I've included the theories and advice that have proven useful in practice.

Neither does it set out to explain sustainable development. There is plenty out there for you to use to broaden and deepen your understanding. Instead, I have tried to bring the skills and insights from the field of organisational change to the task of bringing about sustainable development. I will say that, for me, and in this book, 'sustainable development' is not a vague green or ethical umbrella term, and it's not the same as corporate responsibility or corporate social responsibility – although there are plenty of people doing brilliant work with these words in their job titles. I don't use it to imply that environmental protection and social justice should be traded off against economic development. For me, sustainable development is about meeting people's needs, now and in the future, through getting back within environmental limits. This means significant improvements in environmental and social performance, while staying economically viable.

Things have changed since the first edition, not least the shift to accessing this kind of material online or electronically rather than on paper. Other changes that have influenced this second edition are that, with a heavy heart, it's clear that we are much closer to the edge than we were in 2006. The good news is that we

are also much clearer about the size and shape of the changes we need to make. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals¹ (Global Goals) and the Paris Climate Agreement² give us numbers and deadlines that haven't been present before. Things like science-based targets and zero-net deforestation goals can be tracked with exponentially better data and analytical tools. And organisations are coming together to roll their sleeves up, face complexity and collaborate to create transformational and systemic change.

As our sustainability perspective becomes the new orthodoxy, there is inevitably a backlash from those who think they will lose out as society changes. There will be losers as well as winners, and it is part of our responsibility to consider the needs of the vulnerable and voiceless as we help create the new ways of living within environmental limits.

As you make your way through the book, I hope you will have some 'aha!' moments, where things that didn't quite make sense before suddenly do. There are tools and techniques that you will be able to use straight away. And I hope that you will decide to take specific actions, as a result of what you've read.

Wherever you are in your organisation, you can help it along its journey towards the transformational changes that we need to bring about. Thank you for your contribution to the sustainable future.

Remember: the future has not been written. There is no fate but what we make for ourselves. As we learned from The Terminator.

Good luck – and let me know how it goes.

Penny Walker

1 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

2 <http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

About the author

Penny Walker has been making change for sustainable development since 1989, first with Friends of the Earth and since 1996 as an independent consultant, coach, trainer and facilitator. In her practice, she helps people have better conversations about difficult things: collaboration, finding win-wins, change and personal resilience. Her 'still' conversations for sustainability leaders provide a place for reflection, learning and support with peers.

She has written regularly for 'The Environmentalist' (now 'Transform') about the people and change side of sustainable development. She blogs at www.penny-walker.co.uk/blog. As well as writing two editions of 'Change Management for Sustainable Development', she also wrote 'Working Collaboratively: a Practical Guide to Achieving More' (2013).

She is a Chartered Environmentalist, Certified Professional Facilitator and a qualified coach (AoEC), as well as being a Fellow of IEMA. She is an Associate of the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership and of Forum for the Future.

She has (once) lit a fire from scratch by rubbing two sticks together.

About IEMA

We are the worldwide alliance of environment and sustainability professionals. We believe there's a practical way to a bright future for everyone, and that our profession has a critical role to play.

Ours is an independent network of more than 14,000 people in over 100 countries, working together to make our businesses and organisations future-proof.

Belonging gives us each the knowledge, connections, recognition, support and opportunities we need to lead collective change, with IEMA's global sustainability standards as our benchmark.

By mobilising our expertise, we will continue to challenge norms, influence governments, drive new kinds of enterprise, inspire communities and show how to achieve measurable change on a global scale. This is how we will realise our bold vision: transforming the world to sustainability.

Acknowledgements

I have drawn on experience of working with clients and collaborating with fellow change-makers, including colleagues and participants of programmes run by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership and Forum for the Future, members of GACSO and IEMA, and many others who have shared their ideas and stories over the years.

When I wrote the first edition of this book I was surprised and delighted at how generous people were with their time and knowledge when I asked for help. This time around I've been equally delighted but not surprised: sustainability change-makers want to help each other, because we're all working towards the same vision of a society that lives well on this precious planet.

People attended workshops and round table conversations, filled in surveys and agreed to be interviewed by me. A courageous few waded through drafts to find the places where I needed to be clearer or say something different. Some people who were interviewed chose to remain anonymous: I am particularly grateful to them. It is uncomfortable to talk about difficulties and lack of success, or the internal workings of your organisation, but it is such useful learning for others to hear about. I am pleased that these people trusted me enough to share their experiences. Unless otherwise referenced, quotes come from interviews conducted by the author. Although I have included interviewees' organisations, to help readers understand the context they are speaking from, they all spoke to me in a personal capacity and their views should not be taken as the views of their organisations.

To those who reviewed the manuscript: thank you for your honest and helpful feedback. Many changes were made as a result and I have considered all the advice carefully even where I have ultimately chosen to plough my own furrow. Any mistakes which remain are my own.

A very warm thank you to Adam Woodall, Dr Alan Knight, Amanda Kiely, Amy McKeown, Ann Durrant, Anna-Lisa Mills, Bekir Andrews, Beth Knight, Clare Day, Clare Taylor, Clare Topping, Claudine Blamey, Colin Robertson, David Bent, Deborah Carlin, Dr James Robey, Helen Rosenbaum, Inder Poonaji, Inga Doak, Jane Ashton, Janice Tyler, Jenny Ekelund, Joanne Murphy, John Ross, Jonathan Foot, Jonathan Garrett, Julie Brown, Kirit Patel, Lisa Jones, Lynne Ceeney, Mark Gough, Matthew Robinson, Mike Barry, Mike Lachowicz, Dr Miles Watkins, Neil Earnshaw, Neil Verlander, Rebecca Verlander, Emily Verlander, Paul Pritchard, Phil Cumming, Prof. Martin Bigg, Richard Failey, Solitaire Townsend, Stephanie Draper, Sunny Pawar, Terry Williams, Thomas Lingard, Tom Knowland, Tommy Nederman, Tony Juniper, Tony Rooke, Vicky Murray, Vincent Neate, Whitney Hollis.

And enormous thanks are also due to IEMA for commissioning not one but two editions of this book, and especially Claire Kirk, Jamie Hogue, Katrina Pierce, Martin Baxter, Hannah Lovett, Emma Buyers, Gemma Price and the indefatigable Nick Blyth. Even given all the help I have had, all views expressed remain my own.

Penny Walker

Foreword

Sustainable development is firmly located on the national and global agendas. The adoption in 2015 of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change are just two of the major strategic frameworks now in play, driving the world toward meeting the twin challenges of protecting our common environment while improving and sustaining good conditions for people.

At the same time as governments have made progress, in some cases converting these international agreements into national policies, companies too have been moving to integrate social and environmental goals into their strategies. The words have been increasingly convincing and welcome, painting a picture of a future where we can indeed reach ambitious sustainability goals.

All this is, however, only as good and strong as what can be done at the sharp end – where intention meets reality, in teams, in organizations and in their internal processes and cultures. Anyone who has campaigned for global leadership on sustainability while at the same time trying to run an organization will know which is generally the more challenging!

If we are to make continuing progress, then it will be necessary for sustainability advocates and professionals to achieve change at the micro as well as macro level, and that is what this book is all about – setting out the approaches that can succeed in joining the dots between the very big picture and the day-to-day reality of how things get done.

Part of the challenge comes down not only to how organizations need to increasingly understand their role in shaping a sustainable future, but also how changes that are now underway will in any event affect them, in many cases quite profoundly. A whole new Universe of risk and opportunity is being created and those organizations that can identify the strategies that will achieve positive outcomes for the world while reducing risk and yielding opportunities, are likely to be the ones that succeed. This is the new context and failure to understand it can be costly.

It is not only from the boardroom and the senior team that these new strategies and changes will come, but from right across organizations. Understanding how to achieve and manage change at multiple levels is thus another modern competence that managers and leaders need to master.

Being effective in these tasks of strategic and change management is not easy but it is essential. In going on this journey you could not be in better company than with Penny Walker. I've worked with Penny for many years and know what a talented, thoughtful and committed person she is, working as a campaigner, facilitator and change manager with a range of organizations, in the process building an impressive body of knowledge and experience.

In the pages that follow you will find the practical wisdom needed to bridge the chasm between the global imperatives and the practical realities faced by colleagues. I hope everyone will enjoy using this workbook and find that they are able to meet their aims more effectively and efficiently as a result.

Tony Juniper CBE, environmentalist and writer

Contents

1. How to use this book

- Aims
- The book's structure
- Being an active reader
- Fellow travellers
- Your expectations

2. Understanding where you are now

Introduction

2.1 Know yourself

2.2 Know your organisation

2.3 Know the people

3. How does change happen?

- Different kinds of change
- Principles of change management
- Barriers to change
- What might change?
- Changing people or changing organisations?
- How long will it take?
- The importance of early wins
- How does it happen where you are?
- What kind of change approaches fit your situation?

4. The changes you want to make

- Strategic tools
- Tools for prioritising
- Your change
- How do you want it to be?
- Who has a stake in this change?
- What can you bring to the party?
- How will you know when you've done it?

5. Engaging people

- Visit, listen, involve
- Harnessing people's great ideas
- Equip and empower
- Know them
- Tailor your language and medium
- Show or tell?
- Putting the case
- Begin with enthusiasts and show success
- Solve their problems
- Changing people's behaviour
- Bringing the outside in
- Emotional responses

6. Organisational culture: understanding emergence

- What is emergence, what is culture?
- How does culture emerge?
- What might the new culture look like?

7. Planned change

- Introduction
- Cycle of planned change
- Initial idea and rationale
- Scoping it with a team; refine, improve, test assumptions and evidence
- Exploring options, agreeing the plan; getting sign-off
- Implementation – first phase or piloting; reviewing and refining
- More implementation and embedding; monitoring impacts; communicating success
- Identify the next change

8. What if...?

- You start a new role
- You can start (again) from scratch
- Change starts somewhere else
- You inherit something
- Things don't work out
- There's a merger or acquisition, or your part of the business is sold or outsourced
- You have a champions network or loads of bottom-up ideas and enthusiasm
- You're leading a change team
- You need to collaborate to change the wider system

9. Investing in yourself

- Developing yourself
- Acknowledging your feelings
- Supporting yourself
- Structures for conversations
- Put it in the plan

10. The way forward

Section One

How to use this book

This book will help you to understand how you can be most effective in creating positive change, in the situation you are in right now. It does this through supporting you to:

- understand how change happens in theory, and in your own context;
- think about the different types of things that can change or need to change, and compare them to your own situation;
- understand your starting point, and your organisation's, in relation to change and sustainable development;
- identify your own sources of power, your allies and support structures, and the opportunities which you have for making change;
- see the different roles that people can play in change, and identify your own preferences;
- be clear about your existing skills and the areas that you need to develop, to be more effective;
- consider how you'd tell if change is happening, and the ways you can tell how effective you are being in helping it along; and
- identify your own goals and actions to take.

All in all, it will help you to feel more positive, powerful and resourceful – so you are better equipped to continue your journey from wherever you are now, further along the road to transformational change.

"I learned the hard way the importance of planning and thinking strategically. Don't just unquestioningly follow a pathway, don't just 'do stuff'. Plan your approach." Nick Blyth, IEMA

The book's structure

● You are here...

2. Understanding where you are now

- 2.1 Know yourself
- 2.2 Know your organisation
- 2.3 Know the people

1. How to use this book

- Aims
- The book's structure
- Being an active reader
- Fellow travellers
- Your expectations

3. How does change happen?

- Different kinds of change
- Principles of change management
- Barriers to change
- What might change?
- Changing people or changing organisations?
- How long will it take?
- The importance of early wins
- How does it happen where you are?
- What kind of change approaches fit your situation?

4. The changes you want to make

- Strategic tools
- Tools for prioritising
- Your change
- How do you want it to be?
- Who has a stake in this change?
- What can you bring to the party?
- How will you know when you've done it?

THINKING ABOUT IT



Change management for sustainable development

DOING IT

10. The way forward

9. Your resilience

- Developing yourself
- Acknowledging your feelings
- Supporting yourself
- Structures for conversations
- Put it in the plan

8. What if....?

- You start a new role
- You can start (again) from scratch
- Change starts somewhere else
- You inherit something
- There's a merger or acquisition, sale or outsourcing
- You have a champions network
- You're leading a change team
- You need to collaborate to change the wider system

7. Planned change

- Introduction
- Cycle of planned change
- Initial idea and rationale
- Scoping it with a team, refining, improving, testing assumptions and evidence
- Explore options, agree plan, get permission
- Implementation – first phase or piloting; review, refine
- More implementation and embedding, monitor impacts, communicate success
- Identify the next change

5. Engaging people

- Visit, listen, involve
- Harnessing people's great ideas
- Equip and empower
- Know them
- Tailor your language and medium
- Show or tell?
- Putting the case
- Begin with enthusiasts and show success
- Solve their problems
- Changing people's behaviour
- Bringing the outside in
- Emotional responses

6. Organisational culture: understanding emergence

- What is emergence, what is culture?
- How does culture emerge?
- What will the new culture look like?

Being an active reader

To get the most out of this book, interact with it. There are places where you'll be prompted to make a note of your own insights and how things are in your own context. You can write in the book, or use your favourite notebook or other note-making approach.

No-one will read your notes unless you let them, so you can be honest about your own strengths and weaknesses, and about the situation that you're working in.


If you can't answer all the questions straight away, that's fine. Find out. The conversations you have in finding the answers will be useful in building relationships with colleagues.

Dip in and out. Take your time. Work through it in sections. Come back later. Think about it again. Go back a few sections and change what you first thought. Disagree with yourself. Disagree with me. But above all: reflect on what you're doing, the choices you've made and the impact that's resulted. Learn.

Some of the questions need to be asked and answered in teams, workshops or conversations with colleagues and stakeholders. You can have a best guess at answering them as you read the book, but their real value comes when you find out what other people think, and use the questions and exercises to spark discussion.

How do you plan your own work? Do you have a to do list which you update on a daily basis? Or separate action lists for each project you're working on? Whatever you use effectively at the moment, have access to it while you're reading. Open it now.

If that's not possible, at least get yourself a pencil and paper or open a notes app – and make sure you transfer any action points later.

There are also worksheets and other resources you can download from the IEMA website (www.iema.net), if you'd like to use them for your own analysis and planning, or to share with people that you're working with. These can be downloaded from www.iema.net/cmsd and are marked in the text. 

Terry Williams used the first edition of the book.

"I didn't use all the frameworks in a methodical way, but took the gist of them to understand where I felt the organisation was at, from my perspective. I was brought into my role to make changes and introduce sustainable development principles and toolkits. In hindsight, it might have served me better to understand some of the barriers to change to better influence, rather than try to bring too many wholesale changes at once."

Terry Williams, UK central government

Fellow travellers

The book contains short contributions from interviews about work in progress with people like you who are making change for sustainable development. Some people have chosen to remain anonymous – many organisations are not comfortable admitting to being at a stage of experimentation, steep learning or faltering progress. They all know there is still much to learn and a long way to go before we can say we have reached sustainability. But you can think of them as fellow travellers, sharing stories around the campfire and comparing notes about the journey so far and the way ahead.

"Be brave. Put energy into it. Want it!"

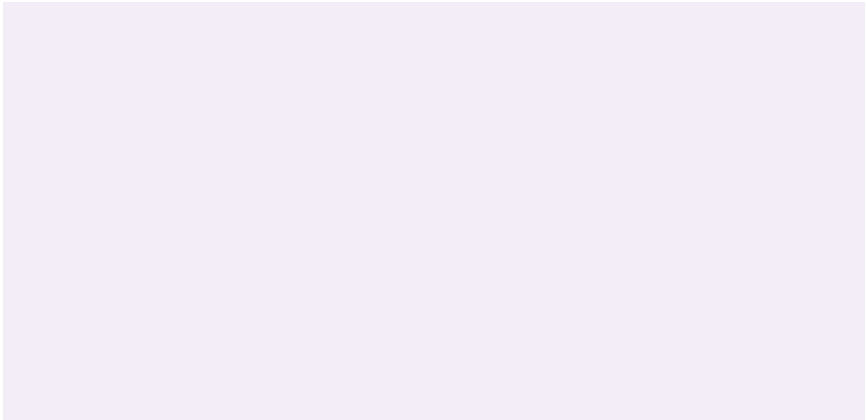
Claudine Blamey, Head of Sustainability, The Crown Estate

Your expectations

This book is a conversation – it needs your input too. I have made some assumptions about what kind of person you are, and what kind of situation you are in. Inevitably, some of those assumptions will turn out to be a little wide of the mark. I hope that most of them will be close enough.

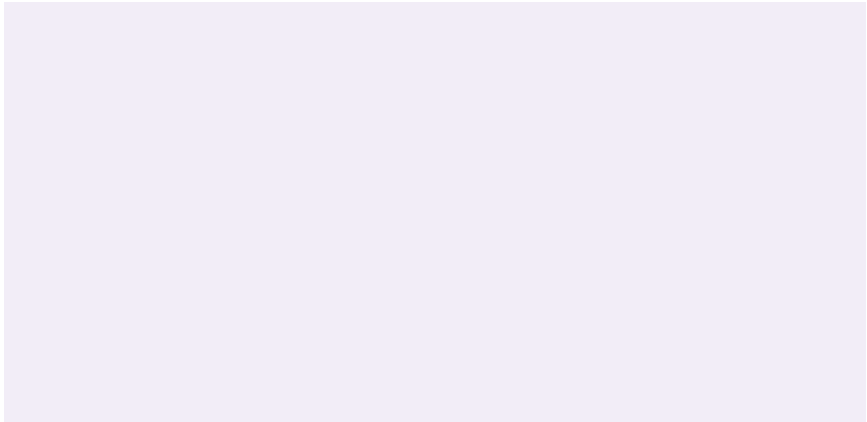
So, there are lots of places where it's handed over to you, to personalise the guidance and make the theory real. This is one of them. Think about your expectations and motivation in using this book.

Why did you open this book?



I have assumed that, in general, readers are sustainability professionals (maybe specialising in a particular aspect like environment, energy or social justice) who want to learn about how to be more effective in changing their organisation or securing organisational change through their work. This book is introducing sustainability specialists to the world of change, rather than vice versa. So, ask yourself:

What do you want to see change – in you or your organisation – as a result of using this book? What would you like to have learned, decided, accomplished or resolved?



Now hold that goal in your mind, as we get into the thick of it.

Section Two

Understanding where you are now

Introduction

One of the important pieces of advice I got, when I talked to people who are out there making things happen, is that you need to really understand the organisation that you are trying to change – its structure and purpose, its people, its culture – and to really understand yourself. In this section, you'll look at your own resources, the state of your organisation and its wider context, internal and external stakeholders and the mandate you have.

You need to know your starting point before you can make a good choice about where would be a reasonable destination to aim for (on this leg of the journey) and how to get there.

By the end of this section, you'll have the answers to a series of questions which will help you understand where you are now – personally, organisationally – and who is alongside you

2.1 Know yourself

We'll start by looking inward, at you.

What are you like? What do you like doing? What are you good at? What do you avoid? When and how do you work best? Understanding yourself better will help you play to your strengths and develop yourself further.

This section looks at skills, sources of power and the personal preferences which influence the kind of change-maker roles that will suit you best. It also asks you to think about where you stand, in relation to your organisation's commitment to sustainability and to reflect on your boundaries. Finally, it covers developing yourself further and finding help to do so.

Skills, strengths, weaknesses, power

As a sustainability change-maker, you need to know about sustainable development and you need to know about change.

This book assumes that you are taking care of your sustainable development knowledge and skills through other means. If you want to check this, look at IEMA's skills maps (www.iema.net/skills-map), in particular the 'core' and 'technical' knowledge areas for both environmental and socio-economic knowledge. See also 'Beyond the Perfect Storm'³, which summarises the strategic sustainability issues that organisations need to understand.

In this book, you can learn more about the change skills you need.

There are a few different ways of thinking about this. Here's one view, from a workshop run with sustainability change practitioners who were asked what skills they had found most useful used when shaping and leading sustainable business practice.

Business skills and Leadership

- Spotting opportunities
- Innovation, creativity and flexibility
- Making a business case
- Planning
- Data management and reporting
- Structures, processes and accountability
- Change

Tailoring messages

- Repackaging
- Understanding culture

Influencing

- Educating
- Challenging
- Persuading
- Understanding culture

Collaboration

- Networking
- Teamwork
- Allies
- Peer group pressure
- Using champions
- Listening
- Taking people with you

Technical knowledge

- Making it real, tailoring, examples

Getting things done

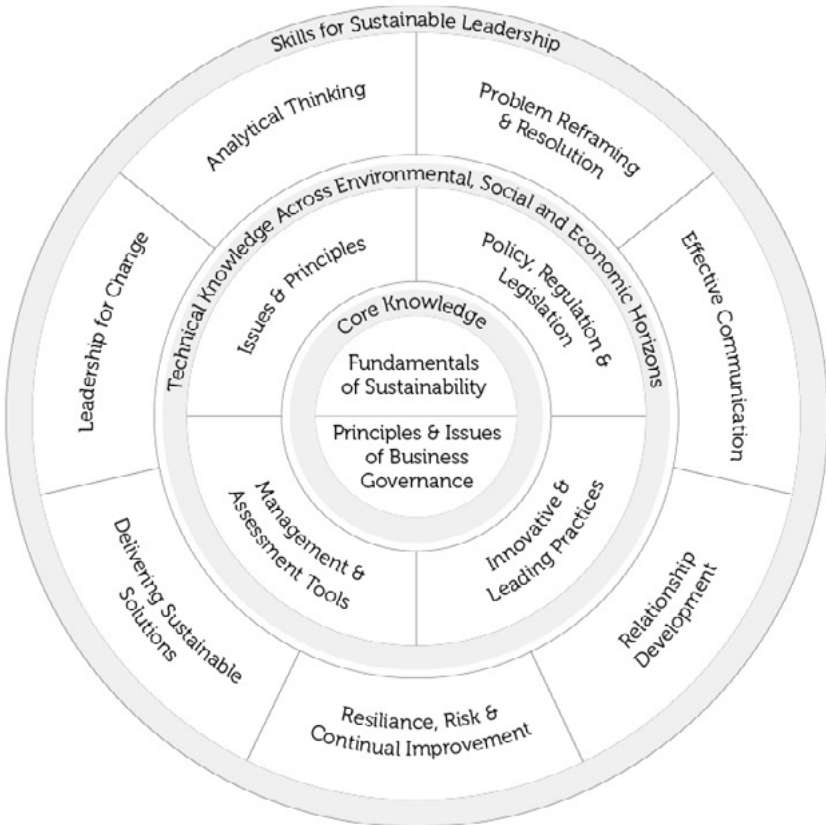
Personal resilience

The most useful skills for shaping sustainable business practice⁴

³ 'Beyond the Perfect Storm: the Corporate Sustainability Challenge', IEMA, 2016.

⁴ IEMA Sustainable Business Practice workshop, 2011

In the 'leadership for change' section, IEMA's skills map emphasises understanding and influencing organisational culture, spotting and challenging barriers to change, helping to transform business models and leading teams who are doing the same. The skills map also addresses knowing the basics of how organisations and businesses function, as an essential understanding for sustainability professionals.



IEMA Sustainability skills map⁵

5 <https://www.iema.net/skills-map>

Some experienced change-makers gave me their perspective on essential skills:

Dr Miles Watkins, Group Business Development Director at BRE Group, and Dr Alan Knight, General Manager, Global Corporate Responsibility and Sustainable Development at ArcelorMittal suggest understanding your strengths and weaknesses, and then playing to your strengths. Miles Watkins says, *"use a tool like StrengthFinder, use 360° feedback or work with a coach."* Alan Knight was on a leadership development course and was invited to list his strengths on one piece of paper and his weaknesses on another. *"Then they told me to throw the weaknesses away. It was all about making the most of my strengths."*

Even though he's been doing it for years, Alan Knight is still practising his communication skills and doesn't leave anything to chance when giving presentations.

"Telling stories well is so important. Telling the story so people want to buy into it. So, make sure there's a story worth telling, your own story with your own pictures and anecdotes. When I'm making a new speech, I deliver it seven times to an empty room."

Diplomacy is important to Vicky Murray, Sustainability Manager at Pukka Herbs, too:

"You must remain approachable. Don't get angry, don't be the 'bin police'. If people don't do what they should, it's because they don't know or understand, not because they are bad people!"

How you are as a person influences the kind of change you can make. Otto Scharma reminds us that 'the success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervenor'. Stephanie Draper, Chief Change Officer at Forum for the Future explains:

"What he means is that the way you are, your internal motivations, will have an impact on what you are able to achieve. I have certainly found it to be true in my work. Coming from a place of passion and integrity drives commitment and results. At the same time, it is important to recognise your strengths as a change-maker and act accordingly – building a team around you that complements your skills."

Putting all of that together, here is my suggested set of skills and abilities, which a great sustainability change-maker will have.

Skills and abilities of a great sustainability change-maker

Seeing things differently

- Understanding sustainable development, both the big picture and what it means for your organisation (key issues, short-term and long-term benefits). Seeing the distinction between transformational change for sustainable development, and 'greening the status quo'.
- Seeing existing things in a new way, reframing them.
- Being comfortable with complexity and systems thinking. Resisting the temptation to dismiss things that don't fit the current pattern, or to force them into it. Keeping an open mind.
- Being able to understand the perspectives and needs of different stakeholders, while still holding on to your own.

Adding value to your organisation

- Finding win-wins and maximising the business case for sustainable development. Seeing the opportunities for new products, services, ways of engaging customers or users. Understanding dependencies, risks and opportunities through a sustainability lens.
- Understanding your organisation's business model, priorities and challenges and helping people to solve their problems.
- Understanding your organisation's structures, processes and culture so that your change-making goes with the grain where possible, and alters the underlying context if necessary.
- Delivering projects and initiatives that succeed and add value.
- Helping your organisation redefine the value it adds to society, and what it sees as valuable.
- Helping your organisation to see how their competitors, markets and wider society are changing, in ways that may disrupt the status quo.

Helping others to rise to the challenge

- Helping them to learn the skills and develop the understanding they'll need, to be part of the change and work well once it is underway.
- Understanding the things that might get in the way of them changing, and helping them to change anyway.
- Acting as a coach or facilitator, enabling others – alone and in teams – to find the confidence and courage to run with new ideas and new ways of doing things, and to find their own great response to the sustainable development challenge.
- Building and leading a change team – helping the team to recognise itself as such, to gel, to perform well. Inspiring them and giving them direction.

Communicating well

- Listening to and understanding others' needs, concerns and contributions. Testing your understanding in case you've missed something.
- Building good working relationships and getting the most from informal communication networks, to find out what's really happening and what people really think, and to harness others' ideas.
- Understanding the options open to you when communicating with others, wherever they are inside the organisation or outside it, so you can choose an approach they are likely to be receptive to.
- Being able to tell a compelling story with a clear vision of the now and the future.

Using tools and approaches to monitor, analyse, understand and communicate

- Understanding where the business is now, and providing a means to measure or explain the starting position.
- Assessing the need for change, identifying priorities, gathering evidence and finding the business case.
- Understanding a range of tools and models to use when analysing and communicating the need for change and the desired future.
- Being able to switch between a wide-angle view and minute details.
- Monitoring and evaluating change as it progresses, reviewing plans as a result.

Collaborating

- Creatively and open-mindedly identifying potential collaborators (internal and external).
- Finding shared outcomes and win-wins with them.
- Understanding the typical pitfalls of collaboration and working with collaborators to overcome them.
- Sharing credit and learning with collaborators.

Flexibility and opportunism

- Being able to hold several strands of work at once, and keep them all progressing.
- Connecting ideas, putting insights and suggestions from different areas together, to come up with new ones.
- Harnessing conflict by moving towards barriers and objections, rather than away from them.
- Spotting and seizing opportunities to work with others to further your agenda alongside theirs.

Being self-aware and resilient

- Be strong and determined in the face of trials and tests, accept there will be bad days.
- Understanding your own rhythms and motivations, when and how you work most effectively, and how to look after yourself.
- Understand your strengths, weaknesses and preferences. Encourage and be open to feedback about the impact you are having. Being able to learn from your own and others' experience (good and bad), being alert to pitfalls and opportunities without being afraid to fail.
- Taking the time to invest in and support yourself. Use your professional and social networks for support, reinvigoration and ideas. (See [Section Nine – Investing in yourself: supporting yourself](#) for examples of networks and how to find out about IEMA events.) You are not the only one tackling this!

Worksheet One

Skills and abilities of a great sustainability change-maker self-assessment

Which of these come easily to you now, and which do you need to work on?

Seeing things differently

I do these aspects easily and well

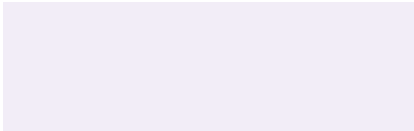


I need to work on these aspects

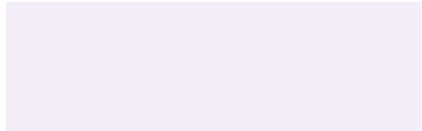


Adding value to your organisation

I do these aspects easily and well

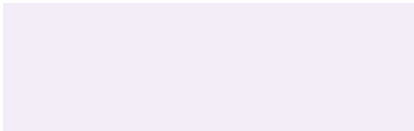


I need to work on these aspects

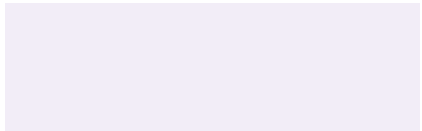


Helping others rise to the challenge

I do these aspects easily and well

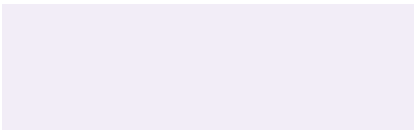


I need to work on these aspects

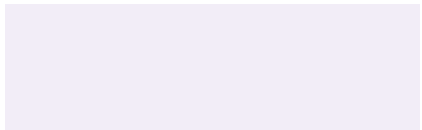


Communicating well

I do these aspects easily and well



I need to work on these aspects



Section Two

Using tools and approaches to monitor, analyse, understand and communicate

I do these aspects easily and well

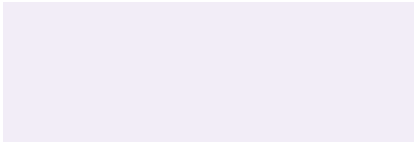


I need to work on these aspects

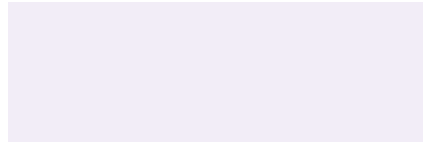


Collaborating

I do these aspects easily and well

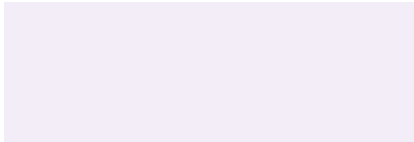


I need to work on these aspects

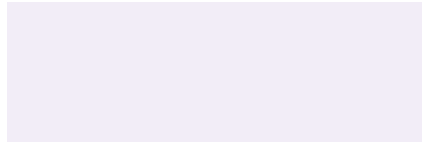


Flexibility and opportunism

I do these aspects easily and well

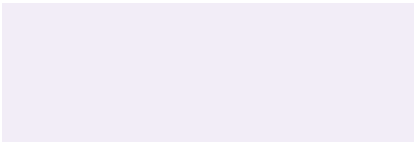


I need to work on these aspects

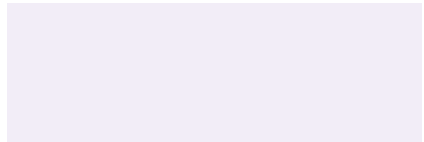


Being self-aware and resilient

I do these aspects easily and well



I need to work on these aspects



There are also well-known self-assessment tools which aim to help you become more aware, so you can understand yourself – and others – better. Among the most widely used are the Belbin⁶ team roles and the Meyers Briggs Type Instrument (MBTI)⁷. Your organisation may favour others.

Sources of power

This sub-section is about your personal power and resources. If you are trying to create change, it's useful to think about your sources of power⁸, so that you can play to your strengths and find others who can fill any gaps.

"To be more effective, know where power is brokered in your organisation, and who influences those people. Build a network by finding and establishing a set of like-minded people who can, and will, support you. Understand their goals and how yours align with theirs," advises Tony Rooke, currently Director of Technical Reporting at CDP

⁶ <http://www.belbin.com/>

⁷ <http://www.myersbriggs.org/>

⁸ Adapted from 'Notes for Change Agents to Sustainability' Professor Charles Ainger, Cambridge University Department of Engineering School of Sustainable Development, 2002. Professor Ainger draws on the work of Ian Palmer and Cynthia Hardy, particularly 'Thinking About Management: Implications of Organisation for Practice', 2000.

Worksheet Two

Sources of power – self-assessment

Here are some 'sources of power' that you might have. Make a note of how much, or little, you have of each.

SOURCE OF POWER	WHAT POWER DO YOU HAVE?
<p>1. Resources e.g. power over budgets, equipment, staff resources, information. Do you have a formal right to control others? Can you influence the rewards and sanctions that other people get?</p>	
<p>2. Processes e.g. power to put things on the agenda, control decision-making processes, change criteria, decide who gets involved.</p>	
<p>3. Meaning e.g. power to put things into internal and external communications channels (like a website, social media, newsletter or training programme), ability to 'speak the same language' as the people you want to influence, good persuasion and communication skills.</p>	

SOURCE OF POWER	WHAT POWER DO YOU HAVE?
<p>4. System e.g. being in tune with the established system, values, structures and so on. Do you have access to the powerful decision-makers or politically powerful in your organisation?</p>	
<p>5. Confidence e.g. being confident that others will not stereotype or ignore you – because of your age, gender, ethnic origin, professional background, tendency to wear sandals.</p>	
<p>6. Freedom e.g. your freedom to walk away if you don't get what you want, or it all goes horribly wrong.</p>	

SOURCE OF POWER	WHAT POWER DO YOU HAVE?
<p>7. Scarcity e.g. what your organisation values you for, which is in short supply. This might be your skills, knowledge, abilities, or it might be that you are a valuable 'token', embodying something that the organisation says it values.</p>	
<p>8. Time and enthusiasm e.g. your willingness to put extra time and effort into creating change and making it succeed.</p>	
<p>9. Charisma e.g. how easy you find it to get people to listen to you, to trust you and to follow you.</p>	

SOURCE OF POWER	WHAT POWER DO YOU HAVE?
<p>10. Credibility and track record e.g. the level of respect you get from people, for your formal qualifications and your other achievements.</p>	
<p>11. Expertise e.g. your specialisms, and what level of expertise you have in a technical area, a profession or in interpersonal skills.</p>	
<p>12. Group support e.g. the group of people who support you and your ideas, its size and influence.</p>	

SOURCE OF POWER	WHAT POWER DO YOU HAVE?
<p>13. Control over information e.g. useful information which can be either generated within the organisation, or which you are able to bring in from outside.</p>	
<p>14. Political access e.g. your connections to the movers and shakers inside and outside your organisation, the important people whose help you can call on.</p>	

What role(s) are you playing, in creating change?

"Understand your broad role in the organisation, not just what's on your business card." Miles Watkins, BRE Group

"The role of skilled environment and sustainability professionals [is] in helping organisations to adapt." 'Beyond the Perfect Storm', IEMA⁹

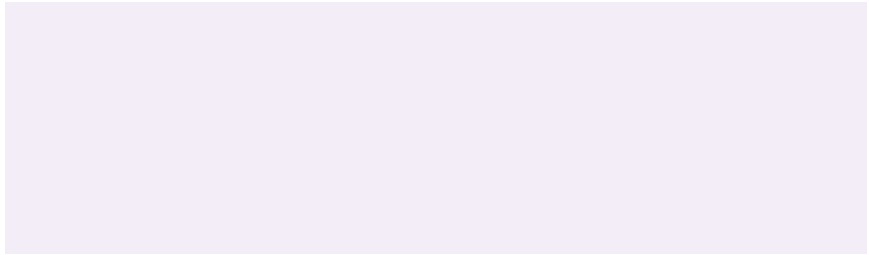
Perhaps your role is already recognised as being, at least in part, about creating change in an organisation. If change isn't part of your current role, perhaps you're reading this book because you'd like to make more change but are not sure how, or you're curious about whether this kind of work is for you. Whatever your current role, take a few moments to think about all the different people who spark, drive and implement change.

There are lots of words used for people who change things. Here are some that I've compiled:

/ Activist / Agent / Alchemist / Architect / Artist / Catalyst / Champion / Chef /
/ Composer / Conductor / Designer / Dictator / Diplomat / Doctor / Dreamer /
/ Engineer / Expert / Facilitator / Follower / Gardener / Jester / Leader /
/ Learner / Magician / Manager / Mechanic / Midwife / Miracle-worker /
/ Nurturer / Observer / Parent / Personal trainer / Provocateur / Radical /
/ Revolutionary / Saint Story-teller / Supporter / Teacher / Tempered radical /
/ Truth-teller / Visionary / Witch / Wizard /

9 'Beyond the Perfect Storm: The Corporate Sustainability Challenge.' IEMA, 2016.

Which of these rings true for you? What other words might you use?



Change-makers I spoke to reflected on the different roles that they need to play and which they have got the most traction from.

Vicky Murray is Sustainability Manager at Pukka Herbs, which has had a sustainability ethos from the day it was set up in 2001. Vicky Murray says it's hard to find time for longer-term work when there are so many day-to-day demands on their time, but that it is essential to do so. *"I have spotted some new areas of future supply chain risk that the previous strategy didn't include and I'm helping shine a light so that as a company we are addressing them."*

Tom Knowland, Head of Sustainable Energy and Climate Change at Leeds City Council, recognises this tension too, as he *"balances project delivery and strategy"*.

Jane Ashton is Director of Sustainability at TUI Group. *"Sustainability people can keep up to date with external sustainability trends and macro issues, and provide that overview back to the rest of the organisation who may be so busy in their discrete departments that they aren't able to look out for these things."*

Alan Knight talks about the critical importance of being commercial, but not *"pretending to be the buyer or the logistics manager. It's my job to be the internal champion of sustainability or 'greenie', thus being one to interpret the stakeholders and the science in the context of us, the business and product range."* Alan Knight also sees his unique contribution as being able to take a broader and longer view and wrestle with complexity whilst ensuring the technicalities are being managed by technical experts in the right functions. *"I have a colleague whose role is lead on LCA. She works in R&D, whilst our carbon strategy is driven by Technical. My role is more broad advice, concepts, coordination."*

Mike Barry, Director Plan A at Marks and Spencer, agrees. *"I'm the conscience of the business, pushing it to be better."* His role is also *"to help people raise their heads from the day-to-day and see the long-term trends."*

Stephanie Draper of Forum for the Future talks about the importance of *"experimenting – lighting many fires and working to get those fires to add up to something bigger. It's a strategic influencing role, not so much a technical role."*

People may move between the different kinds of change-maker roles, as the circumstances change or as they learn more about themselves or expand their skills.

Lynne Ceeney, Technical Director at BSRIA, says that lots of different roles are necessary, at different times in the change process, and different people may be better suited to one or another. *"Some people like to set things up, and then move on. You need to know whether you are an activist and a disrupter, creating the conditions for change, or a negotiator and diplomat, ready to bridge the old to the new and curious about how things can be different and working at relevance and strategy, or an implementer and embedder."*

In her career, Beth Knight, who is Strategy and Operations Leader at EY's Beacon Institute, has been both an implementer and an advisor. She prefers implementing. *"You need to find what gives you energy and maintain your resilience when managing change. To be an effective and credible advisor, you need to have experienced implementation yourself."*

In Futerra's four element model of change (see [Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: what is its sustainability journey?](#) below), skilful and effective people are needed in all four quadrants: visionaries, storytellers, technical designers and brand experts.

Futerra's co-founder Solitaire Townsend says, *"If you're a 'map' person – an expert on technical issues, processes and measurement – you can't be expected to be a 'symbols' or 'stories' person. Sometimes people have too much expectation put on them. So, if your expertise is in that one quadrant, you need to reach out to the brand, communications and strategy people."*

Nick Blyth, IEMA Policy Lead, has spoken to many sustainability practitioners – GACSO and IEMA members – about how they create change, along with having his own experience to draw upon. He has this to say, about the multiple pathways that we might use to change our organisations:

"It is always about evaluating barriers and drivers, and finding a way through. There are multiple pathways that can lead to change. You may first need to prove yourself by making sure you have credibility and are seen as adding value. Perhaps you solve a compliance issue or help win new work, save costs, or improve reputation. You build momentum, consult and engage to strengthen evidence and build support. Bring in a big name to enthuse your team or board. Trials, pilots or small-scale initiatives might come from focusing on one part of the organisation: for example, with marketing to test or pilot services and products with sustainability innovations, or with finance and others to evolve annual reporting into sustainability reporting. You might sell your change to a colleague who is leading other changes. External pressures and stakeholder noise could provide the challenge to catalyse action. At some point there may be a 'big bang', where a top-down commitment from the CEO forces a response from the rest of the organisation. Maybe the best change comes from a blend of all of these so there is never a single driver. There may be right and wrong turns at stages. The point is that you have to find your own pathway."

Another way of being a change-maker is to be a 'tempered radical' – an organisational insider who wants to make some change – without rocking the boat. The term was coined by Debra Meyerson, Consulting Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Stanford University Graduate School of Education (GSE). This quote is taken from an interview she gave to Douglas Newcomb in 2001¹⁰.

"Tempered radicals are organizational insiders. They have regular jobs in an organization and they want to contribute and succeed in their jobs, but at the same time they are treated as outsiders because they represent ideals or agendas or values or even identities that are somehow at odds with dominant culture. So they are both organizational insiders, but they feel like and are often treated like organizational outsiders. They are people who want to succeed. They want to fit in, they want to get ahead, they want to contribute to the organization, and

¹⁰ Meyerson, D. 2001. "Tempered Radicals: How People Use Difference to Inspire Change at Work." An interview in which she discusses the role can be found here: <https://law-journals-books.vlex.com/vid/conversation-with-debra-meyerson-52942101>

they want to also act on what makes them different from the majority in the organization. They are constantly straddling the tension between fitting into the status quo and shaking it up a little bit by being different."

Debra Meyerson, Stanford University

Change-makers for sustainable development find themselves in different roles in different organisations. Here are just four examples:

Dr Alan Knight – degree in geology, PhD on the impact of the china clay industry on the coast of Cornwall; sustainability roles in B&Q; SAB Miller and currently General Manager, Global Corporate Responsibility and Sustainable Development, ArcelorMittal.

Jonathan Garrett – degree in Environmental Sciences, first job was as an asbestos analyst for a small health and safety consultancy, later environmental manager and then Director of Environment, Health and Safety at Smiths Group. Via RHM, Balfour Beatty and Jaguar Land Rover to current role as Head of Environment, Health and Safety in Corporate Property in Prudential.

Lynne Ceeney – LA21 Officer for City of York Council, via Technical Director of Sustainability at BRE and UK Director and Global Head of Sustainability at Parsons Brinckerhoff, currently Technical Director at BSRIA.

Vicky Murray – degree in Business Administration with French, volunteered at a conservation charity, intern and then researcher at AccountAbility, then worked at Forum for the Future as a sustainability advisor, via Neal's Yard Remedies (Head of Sustainability) to current role as Sustainability Manager at Pukka Herbs.

What is a change-maker changing?

So, you've spent a bit of time thinking about the different kinds of roles a change-maker might have, depending on their own preferences and the circumstances they are in. Now go back to the list of words for change-makers. Think about the different pictures they conjure up.

Which ones imagine the 'thing' being changed as an object, acted on by the person doing the changing? And which imagine that autonomous thinking human beings are choosing to do something differently, albeit influenced or helped by the change-maker?

The reason why, up to now, I have been using the term 'change-maker' is that there are different roles which people involved in change might have – which depend partly on individual preferences, and partly on the model of change which is being used (consciously or unconsciously) to inform their work. Some imply a top-down, mechanistic model where it is possible to carefully plan a change programme, implement it, and get the change you want. Others imply an organic model, where the system which is changing is the product of many small decisions and actions – like an ecosystem. They pretty much all imply that the change-maker is somehow separate from the system, and can either 'do' change to it (by fixing it or catalysing it), or observe the change from a distance whilst not really being affected by it. In reality, the change-maker is an intimate part of the system. After all, change for sustainable development is about changing society and changing the impact we have on the planet. And we are very much part of those systems. So, it's also important to consider the changes within ourselves (that make us more or less wise, and more or less effective), and the changes which we can spot and respond to, as well as the changes we try to make 'out there'.

The definition I use is left slightly open, so that you can fill it with your own assumptions about what it means to be a person wanting to make change.

Yourself as a change-maker

How much influence do you believe one person can have? Which strategies do you believe are most effective? And how do those beliefs affect your view of yourself as a change-maker? How resilient are you and able to deal with knock-backs when you are trying to drive change?

"If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in bed with a mosquito." Attributed to Betty Reese

"How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."

Choose a word, or combination of words, that sound like the kind of change-maker you'd like to be. Think about how you will stretch and develop yourself to be that person as you work through this book, and try things out. What kind of change-maker are you going to learn to be?

What are your boundaries?

You may have been brought in to do one thing, but circumstances change or you can see that prioritising something else would be a better strategy. Perhaps you would like the organisation to be more ambitious. How far are you prepared to work beyond your formal mandate? If you are planning to go beyond your mandate, can you build effective alliances with those people who have a wider mandate?

You may find yourself in an uncomfortable position: being asked to do things that feel beyond your competence, or beneath it; being asked to support action or policies that you do not believe in, or are against company policy, involve being less than truthful or are plain illegal.

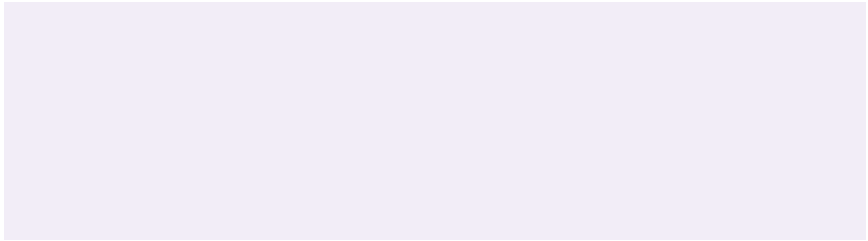
Some professionals are pledging to fly less, even if their careers suffer as a result. Some men are taking a stand against all-male panels, by refusing to take part in conferences where there are only male speakers.

You may find it helpful to remind yourself of IEMA's Code of Practice: <https://www.iema.net/home/code-of-practice>. The code of practice sets out the professional behaviours and conduct expected of IEMA's members. It is an important document for capturing what it means to be an IEMA member and a sustainability professional.

Sunny Pawar, who has worked in a number of companies and industries, says it comes down to your appetite for risk. *"Know your own risk appetite. Take the power yourself. Know your own sense of what role you want, and your capabilities. Are you able to or prepared to walk?"*

Beth Knight found herself faced with a difficult situation in a new job. *"On the face of things, I had a text-book sustainability role, but it became clear that there was a mismatch of expectations about what I would actually be working on. I had a challenging conversation with the Managing Partner which allowed me to re-focus the role on sustainable development, but I knew I was prepared to leave if it didn't work out."*

What do you think about your own boundaries and how firmly you can defend them?



Developing and learning

As you reflect on yourself, you will have spotted gaps and weaknesses, as well as strengths. We all have them! And we can all do something about them.

You will super-charge your change-making if you analyse the successes and failures that you have: learning from them, and changing your approach if you need to.

You may already know that there are some areas that you need to develop. We will turn now to looking at how you might go about doing so.

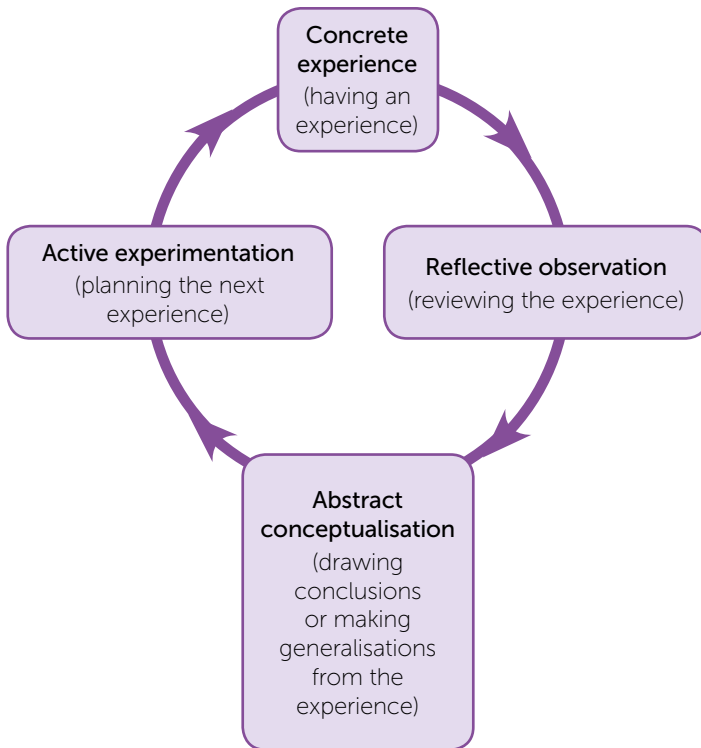
Here are a couple of models of how people learn.

	UNCONSCIOUS	CONSCIOUS
INCOMPETENCE	You don't know that you don't know	You know that you don't know
COMPETENCE	You can do it without thinking about it	You can do it if you think about it

Conscious competence learning model

Awareness that you need to learn something is an early step in this model. Concentrating and practising are part of conscious competence. With enough practice, you get to unconscious competence. And then you realise that there's something else you don't know... ¹¹

Another well-known model is Kolb's learning cycle¹², which shows how he thinks people learn: having concrete experiences, observing and reflecting on them, building (or hearing about) concepts and theories which explain these experiences, and experimenting with new ways of doing things. You can begin anywhere in the cycle, although some theorists think that people have a marked preference for one of the four learning styles.



Kolb's learning cycle

¹¹ No-one seems to know where this model originated. If you're interested in origins, see this discussion: <http://www.businessballs.com/consciouscompetencelearningmodel.htm>.

¹² Kolb, D. 1984, 'Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development', Prentice Hall.

What both these models point to is the importance of moving continuously between theory and practice – for example, you can read about how to use positive, forward-looking language when talking about sustainability issues and be given evidence about how it has worked for others. You may need to force yourself to do it the first few times (which is where live practice at a training course is so helpful). As you get better at doing it, and see the results, you won't need to make such an effort to do it that way in the future, and it will start to feel 'natural'.

Although it's great that you are using this book to learn, you won't be able to learn everything you need from reading alone. In particular, you can't learn all you'll need to know about change for sustainable development from a book, because it's very much a work in progress – so most of the answers don't exist yet. You need to try things out, reflect on what you've done and the impact it has had, and decide what to do next time. This reflection can be done alone, with a friend or colleague, with a coach or mentor, or with a group of peers. And as you learn about what works, tell others about it. There is more on this kind of structured learning from experience in [Section Nine – Investing in yourself: structures for conversations](#).

Mike Barry has been able to go on mainstream leadership development courses and to work with a coach, through programmes offered by Marks and Spencer. He is a strong advocate of the usefulness of peer learning and the kind of benchmarking you get through networking. He also recommends mentoring others:

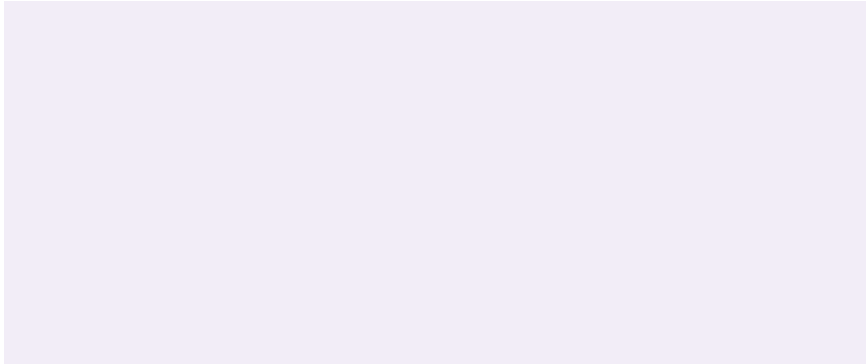
"You see their abilities and challenges, and it makes you reflect on your own stuff at the same time."

So, looking back at your skills gaps, think about some of the opportunities you already have for taking yourself further along the learning cycle for any of them

Think about things like:

- written resources, videos or podcasts
- live or online training courses and webinars
- coaching
- opportunities to try things out and get feedback
- learning groups or networks you can be part of – especially with regular structured reflection on your work and discussion with others about theirs
- meeting your CPD obligations for your profession(s)
- professional development plans or equivalent in your organisation.

What are your opportunities to learn?



Check out the IEMA website, benefits map and newsletters for training events, policy and networking opportunities – <https://www.iema.net> And remember to keep a record of your CPD. IEMA provides tools to help you plan your professional development and track and evaluate your progress <https://www.iema.net/myiema/cpd>.

Your support structures

We all need to recharge our batteries or have a good rant from time to time. We need people who believe in us and support us. We need to do things which take us out of ourselves. These support structures are essential.

Change-makers I interviewed told me about the things that they do, to keep themselves effective on the journey of change.

"I know what makes me happy and excited. I like to be connected to the bigger picture, and feel I'm contributing. I like to keep moving forward. I still do some drawing and creative things. Cycling, visiting nature reserves, having experiences and exploring, reconnecting with what makes me happy."

Sunny Pawar, Green Collar

"There have been times when I've been demotivated and have needed to step back. But I've found my tribe! The CISL [University of Cambridge Institute of Sustainability Leadership] Master's programme helped me to find a group of kindred spirits which has grown over time. It's also given me a safe space outside of work to explore what it means to be an effective sustainability leader."

Beth Knight, EY

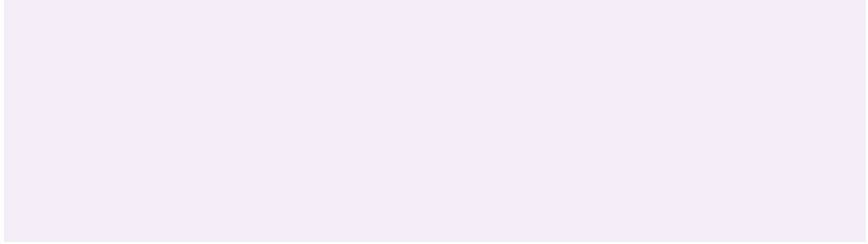
"You need a support network. I've found that through IEMA and people in organisations I've worked for. I went on my first ever protest march in 2017, and ended up walking with someone who was the head of risk at a bank. We walked and talked, and had a lot in common. We've continued to meet up."

Tony Rooke

"I can't stress enough how important it is to find what gives your life balance and recharges your batteries. I wish someone had sat me down and told me this earlier in my career. When you are 'saving the world' it can be so easy to become all-consumed in your work. But you will be much more effective, in the long run, if you care deeply about your own health and happiness first. I find walking in nature essential to keeping me happy – which then positively affects everyone in my orbit, as well as my ability to think clearly and make change happen!"

Vicky Murray, Pukka Herbs

Who already gives you support? Who do you provide support to?
What recharges your batteries and makes you feel unstoppable?



2.2 Know your organisation

"All organisations are different. No organisation is a classic."

Dr Miles Watkins, BRE Group

Having looked in some detail at your own strengths and the areas where you are less strong, we now turn to understanding the organisation that you are thinking about changing. Even if you think you know an organisation, it's useful to take a step back and challenge your assumptions. And if you joined it recently, or have only been exposed to a small corner of it, this reflection is especially useful.

These are the questions to ask yourself when you join a new organisation, or if you're still trying to figure out the organisation you're in! They are:

- What is the external context, the system?
- What are the priorities, business model and strategy?
- What are the processes for deciding things?
- What is the culture?
- How does the organisation change and what is its capacity for change?
- How does it fit into its sector and context?

- How might paying attention to sustainability improve the organisation?
- What are its sustainability aspects – dependencies, risks and opportunities?
- What is its sustainability ambition?
- What is its sustainability journey?
- How do you and your role fit in?

We will look at each question in a bit more detail, and by the end of this section you will be an expert on your organisation!

What is the external context, the system?

Time to turn to a very commonly used management tool – the PESTLE analysis¹³.

This is a checklist for making sure that an organisation has identified all the significant things in its external context, that might affect its effectiveness and success. It can be done by a single person, an internal team, or a group which also includes consultants or stakeholders.

Use this tool to pick up things that are going on in your context and will make a difference to your organisation's ability to move onto a sustainable development path.

¹³ This is sometimes seen as the PEST, or PESTO analysis (with the O standing for 'other'), variants include STEEP or even STEEPLE. In traditional management books, you will see the 'environmental' element given a definition which means something like 'anything in the wider context that isn't covered by what we've already come up with'. In this context, I think it's appropriate to bring it back to an environmentalist's view, and to use it to pick up on the significant environmental aspects and impacts of the organisation. These will show up in other categories too – like the 'legal' one.

Worksheet Three

PESTLE analysis

<p>P - Political</p> <p>What's on the political agenda? What are politicians trying to do?</p>	
<p>E - Economic</p> <p>What's the local, national and global economy doing?</p>	
<p>S - Sociological</p> <p>What are the trends in society? What are the significant social aspects and impacts?</p>	
<p>T - Technological</p> <p>What's being used? What's on the way out? What's emerging?</p>	
<p>L - Legal</p> <p>What laws are relevant to the organisation? What's on the way in or out?</p>	
<p>E - Environmental</p> <p>What are the significant environmental aspects and impacts? What environmental limits will become an issue soon? And in the longer term?</p>	

For some organisations – particularly those in highly regulated sectors, or charitable or public service organisations where simple profit and loss is just one measure of success among many, and where there may be multiple lines of accountability to significant stakeholders – then this contextual analysis may be complex. Take time to understand the wider system, the formal rules the organisation needs to follow and the people it needs to keep satisfied.

What are the priorities, business model and strategy?

Understanding what your organisation does, and why, is critical.

A good place to start are the things it says about itself in public: annual reports, website, values, vision and strategy. Maybe it has a risk register that you can look at. Although these things are not infallible – some organisations pay much more attention to them, in others they are paper exercises – they are something tangible you can read and spot the gaps and opportunities.

“Companies over a certain size have to publish risks and describe their business model in their annual review. If yours does, read it.”

Thomas Lingard, Global Director, Climate & Environment, Unilever.

“When you understand the business model, you can start mapping the dependencies. What environmental services or social structures does your business depend on? What trends are a threat or an opportunity?”

Mark Gough, Executive Director, Natural Capital Coalition.

Another way of understanding the business model is to ask yourself:

- Who is paying us, to do what?
- Why are they paying us, instead of someone else?
- Who are we paying, to do what?
- Why are we paying them, instead of someone else?



Understanding your organisation's priorities, and how these change, can be very useful.

"When my company's strategy switched from mergers and acquisitions to divestment, the sustainability opportunities changed too: from preventing bad or unsustainable decisions to understanding future liabilities."

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous, talking about their time at a major energy company

"Know what's important in your business. In this company, it's customers. So, including a sustainability question in the customer feedback questionnaire means we now capture data about our sustainability performance from a source that everyone listens to."

Bekir Andrews, HSES Group Head of Environment & Sustainability, Balfour Beatty

Understanding the organisation and its challenges helps you to identify the business case for sustainable development more precisely.

"Food in hotels is one of the biggest environmental impacts once customers get to destinations. The trend towards a flexitarian diet will be important for the business and I can see us building a business case around this."

Jane Ashton, TUI Group

"When cities run short of water – as happened in Sao Paolo – and your products such as shampoo require water to be used – reality hits home. That's a real business problem to solve."

Thomas Lingard, Unilever

"A recent recruit wanted to work with us because we're a B-Corp. One set of people who do read sustainability reports are candidates. When you're competing for staff, this makes a difference."

Vicky Murray, Pukka Herbs

David Bent, former Director of Sustainable Business at Forum for the Future, draws attention to what he calls dependencies and hygiene (what could floor the organisation overnight, for example losing its supply of raw materials) and *"what your company thinks its success is rooted in. Is it the brand? Or its engineering skills? Its innovation pipeline? Its sector will have a success area which people differentiate around. You need to match your sustainability work to that: how can you be a vital part of its success?"*

What are the priorities in your organisation?

Other great questions include:

- Who does your organisation compare itself to?
- What are its big strengths?
- What is its ethos?
- Where and how did it grow, succeed or change in the past?

Lynne Ceeney says *"The key is understanding the organisation you're working with, and its real purpose. Its overt purpose and the tacit understanding of what management really want to achieve. Middle managers and senior managers often have different views of what this is. Be aware of the cognitive dissonance that exists in many organisations – stated aims and objectives are communicated widely by senior managers, but internal incentives and the requirements of key leaders which are laid on middle managers are for something completely different."*

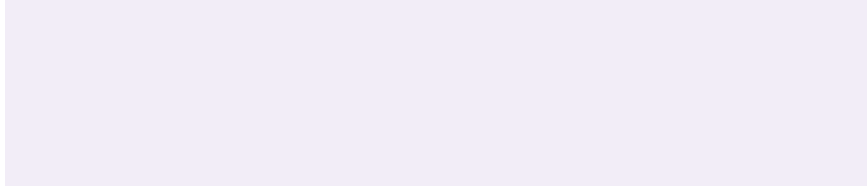
Talk to people at all levels and in different parts of the organisation, to get a rounded picture of what they think the organisation really values. Notice how wide a range of answers you get.

What are the organisation's particular skills and role? Profound change can involve reframing what an organisation is and what it is for – seeing it through a different lens.

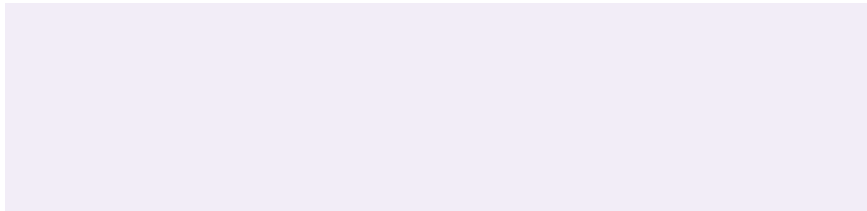
There are two lines of enquiry here. What is your organisation good at, and what is it for?

Tom Knowland explains how understanding his organisation's strengths and characteristics shaped his work. *"Leeds City Council has two big strengths: it has a brand and reputation that is really trusted locally. And we have a huge scale of assets like our social housing. These two things have influenced our fuel poverty and carbon reduction work. We were able to procure very cost-effective and systematic retrofitting of energy efficiency and renewables, and give our tenants access to low-cost domestic energy contracts because of the scale of our operations."*

What is your organisation good at? What are its technical specialisms and areas of expert knowledge? What is organised really well? What can it do standing on its head? Who does it have really good relationships with? What messages does it get across easily and accurately?



What is your organisation for? If that's a hard question to answer, ask yourself what people would miss, if it ceased to exist tomorrow. For each distinct answer, ask yourself what that is for.



Reinvented business models

Asking 'what is our organisation for' can lead to some innovative alternatives to existing business models. Some of the most interesting shifts move a business from 'product to service', and here's a bit more on that.

Not all business models are based on the linear take-make-waste approach, or on selling 'stuff'. Some operate in sectors where the usual approach is to sell objects or resources, but they choose to sell services rather than 'stuff'. There are some examples below – some are still small or in their early days, others are well established. There are lots more examples on the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's website <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/ce100> Perhaps they provide some pointers to the ways that business models will be reinvented.

Rolls-Royce describes its TotalCare approach as a circular business model, where the company 'retains product stewardship'. Customers who opt for this pay per flying hour, and Rolls-Royce provides a maintenance and repair service that maximises engine performance.

Phillips and Turntoo collaborated to pioneer the idea of customers buying light as a service, rather than lighting as a product.

Rype Office's remanufactured office furniture refurbishes existing furniture as well as suppling upmarket second-hand.

River Simple hydrogen fuel cell cars – the price includes fuel, and the business describes itself as having a 'circular service-based ownership model'.

Other terms to look for, when seeking inspiration about reinvented business models, are circular economy, blue economy, sharing economy, cradle-to-cradle, net positive, natural capitalism, the fourth Industrial Revolution, regenerative design and biomimicry, and paying for ecosystem services.

The pace of change and the rise of disruptive innovators into established markets has been the big business story of the last decade. It's interesting to look at what they have kept, what they have added and what they have thrown out, from the traditional players' business models. Is Airbnb in the hotel or home rental market, or is it a marketing platform?

What are the processes for deciding things?

Another set of characteristics which tell you a lot about an organisation, and you need to understand, are the ways it decides things and the things it chooses to pay attention to when making decisions.

Find out how your organisation already analyses its markets, competitors, customers and context. Understand how it makes decisions and the criteria or rationale it typically relies on.

In some organisations, the formal processes are very important.

“Professional services has a high staff turnover, so it doesn’t make sense to invest too much of our time winning over individuals. We need to embed sustainability within our company’s operating model and process improvements have stood the test of time irrespective of management changes.” Beth Knight, EY

When you put together an argument for a new way of doing things or for a new project, how important will a formal business case be in your organisation?

“We look for a good return on investment, with a two to three-year payback, but the company is also looking at comparative ROI so we need to know how our proposition compares to other business cases.” Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

For Tom Knowland, the situation is a little different. *“It depends whether the proposal is for something on our own estate, or as part of our city-wide collaboration to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions. Smaller projects on our own estate need a more-detailed business case, we need rigour and an audit trail to justify investment. With the collaboration, the business case was broader and more strategic.”* Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

Is all this talk of business cases and formal procedures a bit baffling, in your context?

“Some organisations have standard operating procedures and some don’t. If your organisation doesn’t have clear processes like strategy development and setting goals, then find its rhythm and people instead.” Miles Watkins

How are decisions made, and what criteria or rationale influence decisions, where you are?



What is the culture?

Having looked at the formal processes (or lack of them), this next section touches on organisational culture. As Miles Watkins says, *“It’s possible to go against the tide, but there are easier ways and harnessing its power is better.”*

There are different ways of spotting and understanding organisational culture, and you can look at this in more detail in [Section Six – Organisational culture: understanding emergence](#).

This is a light touch, intuitive first go at thinking about your organisation’s culture. You can often spot it by comparing one organisation to another, especially when you have recently joined a new organisation. Look for the things that make the organisation what it is, that aren’t in the policies or structures.

Jonathan Garrett, who is Head of Environment, Health and Safety in Corporate Property in Prudential moved from an engineering and manufacturing company to one in financial services.

“At Jaguar Land Rover, you could trace your own objectives all the way through to company strategy. The strategy was clearly meaningful. In that sense, the organisation ran like a carefully engineered machine. Now, at Prudential, it’s more ambiguous, although it’s meaningful once you put it together. It’s more of a federal organisation, top-down approaches are resisted, you need to engage, use persuasion and build relationships to be successful.”

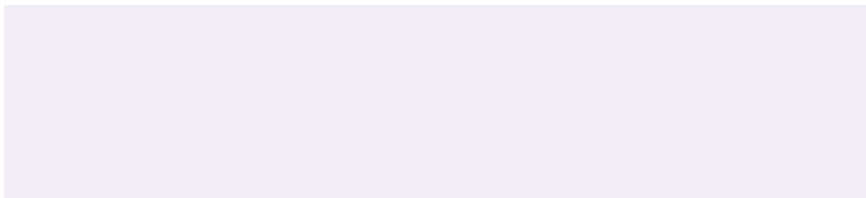
Sunny Pawar came face to face with very different organisational cultures following a merger. *"One company was more agile and because it ran facilities for all sorts of clients and was privately owned, it was good at tailoring things so there was just enough standardisation while still being flexible. The other company was publicly listed, much more used to a top-down approach, with low flexibility and once the system was decided you stuck with it. I think there was a clash of viewpoints about competency, with highly educated theorists not thinking that highly experienced practitioners had much to offer. Whereas the first company tested things and was more experimental and innovative."*

Understanding what an organisation values is useful. You need to have a good feel for how to win credibility and what kind of challenge is acceptable. Even where there are superficial similarities, organisations can be very different.

Colin Robertson, Group Energy and Environment Manager at Betty's and Taylor's, has worked for two family-owned companies. *"At N G Bailey, organisational hierarchies are well established. I was given good advice by people who wanted me to succeed. They said, 'this is how things work here, go with the grain and you will be more effective'. When I moved to Betty's and Taylor's, which was also owned by a family, I found the approach more collaborative. People work in teams and you need to spend time talking and getting buy-in. You can't go a senior person and get things overruled."*

Vicky Murray says, *"It's also worth observing sub-cultures within your organisation. At Pukka, our finance team love a competition and rising to a challenge. Whereas our marketing team prefer being given a creative brief and time to respond imaginatively. Knowing this helps identify the right approach to working with a team or across teams."*

What do you already know about your organisation's culture?



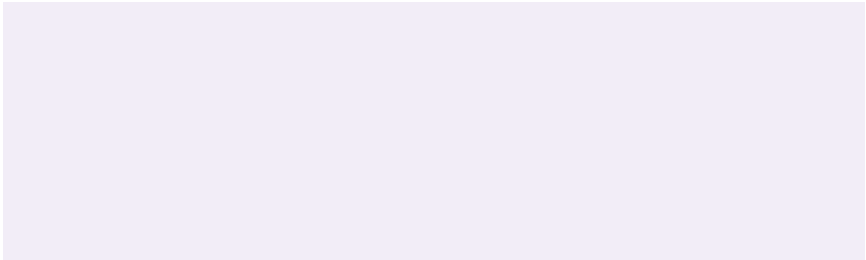
How does the organisation change and what is its capacity for change?

"Identify what already makes change in your organisation."

Solitaire Townsend, Co-Founder, Futerra

Some organisations are nimble, flexible, relish a challenge and are really up for change. The slightest whiff of adventure and they are grabbing their rucksacks and heading for the hills. Others are cautious, like to know what's happening so they can plan carefully for it, value what they have already done and put energy into defending it. They take care to cancel the milk and book the dog into kennels. You have to work harder to convince them of the value of changing, and even harder to make it happen – but once you do, you can be pretty sure it will.

If your organisation was a person going on a journey, what would it be like?



So, you've got a picture in your mind about what your organisation is like, and its approach to change. This will have come from your intuition – you may not even know why you have built this particular view.

Time to think about the evidence. We'll look at an example of a change that happened, and do a bit of analysis on that change.

Think about the recent history of your organisation – up to, say, five years ago.

What has changed? (Not necessarily related to sustainable development, it could be any kind of change – like a change in job titles, a new member of staff, a move to a different site, the introduction of a new way of doing things, or a change in overall atmosphere.)

Which of these changes are significant? Either they:

- took a lot of doing, or
- are now so ingrained that people can hardly remember what life was like before them, or
- they have had a major impact on what the organisation does, how it does it, and how it is seen by people.

Choose one significant change to analyse.

Significant change:

Thinking about that change, tell yourself the story of that change.

- What were things like before the change?
- How did the change happen? Was it planned, or did it happen as a reflex response to something, or did it somehow just emerge?
- What were the drivers of the change (the things that made it happen)?
- What were the things that happened which made change easier, deeper, faster or more effective?
- What were the things that happened which made change harder, shallower, slower or less effective?
- What made people realise that the change was here to stay?
- What are the opportunities around now, to copy this successful change or improve on it?

Now let's turn to changes that are happening now, or likely to happen in the near future. Again, you don't need to think only about changes related to sustainable development – any kind of change will be instructive.

What changes are underway or on the horizon?

- What's driving those changes? Which of these drivers are coming from inside the organisation, and which from outside it?
- How are people reacting? Are different groups of people reacting in different ways?
- What are the opportunities to use these changes to move the organisation towards sustainable development?



Let's look now at some other questions which provides insights into how an organisation changes.

People sometimes say, *"It is better to apologise afterwards than to wait for permission."* Consider in what circumstances people with this approach are valued in your organisation, or punished.

It's also helpful to think about how people know that 'they really mean it' when a new initiative is introduced. Mike Barry says that everyone knows that what matters in Marks and Spencer is customers, and communicating with them is a big deal. This shows up in how people can tell whether the company really means something.

"You know that when we tell customers about it, we're really committed to it."
Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

In your organisation, how do people know whether something is just an initiative that they can wait to fade away, and what tells them that the company 'really means it'?

And now, combine your gut instinct about the organisation, with the evidence that you've come up with in thinking about these questions:

- How does change happen in your organisation?
- What are the ways in which it is good at change?
- What are the ways in which it is not good at change?



How does it fit into its sector or context?

Ann Durrant has worked with many organisations as a sustainability consultant. *"You can't just look at an organisation's impact. You need to look at its capacity for change. For some organisations, it's not in their gift. It's in their client's gift."*

Your organisation may be a company operating in a sector – supplying business services, retailing groceries, matching customers to suppliers or manufacturing machine tools – or it may be part of the public sector – running or commissioning services, regulating others or developing policy. Maybe it's a charity or NGO, lobbying for change or looking after people or things that need help. Maybe it's something else entirely.

Perhaps the context you identify most strongly with is geographical – as an advisor with a particular location to cover, or working with organisations and people in a place.

Whatever sector or context makes sense for you to think about, think about it now.

There are two things to get a good picture of. How does change happen in your sector or context? And, how powerful is your organisation, relative to this sector or context?

How does change happen in your sector or context?

Thinking about change in the recent past, or changes that are just around the corner, ask yourself similar questions to those about your own organisation.

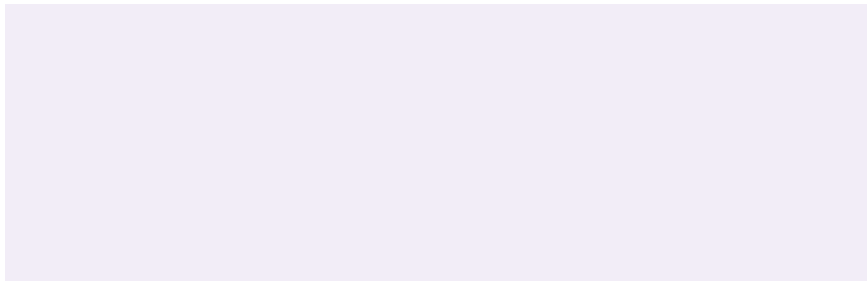
- What has driven change or is driving change here?
- How have different people in this sector or context reacted to those drivers?
- Who responds by rising to challenges and seizing opportunities? Who responds by defending the status quo?
- What are the examples of significant change? Thinking about how they came about, what insights do you have about how change happens in your sector or context?



How powerful is your organisation, relative to its sector and context?

You'd be surprised at how powerless really powerful people sometimes claim to be! The government won't act because they are less powerful than voters. Individuals won't act because they are waiting to be told that they must. Retailers won't act because they are less powerful than shoppers. Suppliers won't act in case customers don't like it. Managers won't act because they fear the board and the shareholders We all feel powerless sometimes. And there's always someone who thinks that 'we' are the powerful one. What would it be like if we dared to use a fraction of the power that other people think we have?

Picture your organisation and the context and sector it is part of. Think about the other players – competitors, collaborators, peers, customers and clients, funders, suppliers, regulators and so on. Which have the most power? Which have the least? Who drives change and who constrains it? Who is blown about in the wind? Who might gain, if your organisation changes, and how much influence do they have? Who might lose out, and how much influence do they have? Where does your organisation sit?



Collaboration, especially coordinated action, is a way of mitigating risk, increasing power and building trust so that people who try something new don't lose out. It's also unlikely that your organisation will have all of the skills and knowledge to make the changes required in an ever-increasingly complex and interconnected world. You will need to seek partnerships both internally and with external organisations. Transformational change will require system-level change. There is more on collaboration in [Section Eight – What if... you need to collaborate to change the wider system?](#)

How might paying attention to sustainability improve the organisation?

The earlier part of Section 2.2 looked at aspects of your organisation which would be interesting to look at even if the change you want to bring about is nothing to do with sustainability. Now we will look at it from a sustainability perspective.

Every organisation's business case for sustainable development will be different. But there are some useful ways of thinking about what the advantages may be, of seeing things through a sustainability lens.

Here are just two of the numerous attempts to frame a generic sustainable development business case¹⁴.

¹⁴ Also recommended by a reader: 'The Sustainable MBA: A Business Guide to Sustainability', Weybrecht. Useful for understanding how to frame sustainability in the context of business. IEMA has published guidance on 'Climate Change Adaptation: Building the Business Case' <https://transform.iema.net/article/building-climate-resilience>

The business benefits of sustainable development, Porritt, 2006¹⁵

- Eco-efficiency
 - 1 Reduced costs
 - 2 Costs avoided (Design for Environment, Eco-innovation)
 - 3 Optimal investment strategies

- Quality management
 - 4 Better risk management
 - 5 Greater responsiveness in volatile markets
 - 6 Staff motivation/commitment
 - 7 Enhanced intellectual capital

- Licence to operate
 - 8 Reduced costs of compliance/planning permits/licenses
 - 9 Enhanced reputation with all key stakeholders
 - 10 Influence with regulator

- Market advantage
 - 11 Stronger brands
 - 12 Customer preference/loyalty
 - 13 Lower costs of capital
 - 14 New products/processes/services
 - 15 Attracting the right talent

- Sustainable profits
 - 16 New business/increased market share
 - 17 Enhanced shareholder value

¹⁵ Porritt, 2006. 'The World in Context: Beyond the Business Case for Sustainable Development.' Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.



Opportunities pyramid, Kane, 2010.¹⁶

Kane sees compliance as an underpinning foundation. When this is in place, the organisation can get the direct economic benefits in the second layer. Building on that come, what Kane calls, 'internal but intangible' people-related opportunities, and then the branding benefits. Being ahead of the game in new markets is the ultimate prize.

As you looked at these approaches, what jumps out at you as being especially relevant to your organisation?

¹⁶ Kane, 2010. The Opportunities Pyramid, Terra Infirma. <http://www.terrainfirma.co.uk/blog/2010/02/opportunities-pyramid.html>

What are its sustainability aspects – dependencies, risks and opportunities?

Now let's look at its sustainability performance.

Time for a quick reminder of how IEMA describes sustainability, and how organisations fit in:

The 1987 report from the World Commission on Environment and Development, 'Our Common Future' (also known as the 'Brundtland Report'), defined sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. As a challenge for organisations and environment and sustainability professionals, its implications are far-reaching. They include:

- the rights and responsibilities of current and future generations
- environmental limits in meeting current and future needs
- social value and social protection floor
- the resilience of society and the economy
- human values, ethics and quality of life
- dependencies and mega trends
- the need for new economic and business models.

The priority for businesses and governments is to resolve rather than to balance or trade off this challenge. Population growth, development pressures and business-as-usual are driving us towards, and in some cases past, the planet's environmental limits. Social boundaries are under greater pressure as populations grow and critical impacts continue to be 'traded off' between the environment, social conditions and the economy. IEMA's ambition is to innovate, collaborate and resolve our future development – to transform to sustainability.¹⁷

¹⁷ 'Beyond the Perfect Storm: the Corporate Sustainability Challenge', 2016.

Sustainable business is, as Sunny Pawar says,
"not about how you spend your money, it's about how you make your money."

Jonathan Garrett uses the image of a ruler,
"Your direct impact is probably just the first centimetre. It's your indirect impacts, in the next 29 centimetres across the value chain, that's really material and worth going for from a sustainability perspective."

Ann Durrant says,
"We talk about the footprint versus the handprint – the footprint is the impact the organisation has by default, as a consequence of operating; the handprint is the impact it chooses to have in addition to doing business (e.g. charitable giving). We're interested in the footprint."

It is helpful to think about the ways that your organisation can make a difference to sustainability issues.

Some organisations have a big direct sustainability impact, like a power company generating electricity by burning fossil fuels or a big employer paying a living wage. For other organisations, the chain of influence is more dilute, like a local authority deciding how much priority to give to cycling in its transport plan or a publisher not reinforcing gender stereotypes in their children's books.

Where are your organisation's biggest opportunities to make a difference? Are they through its own direct impacts? Through the products it makes and the services it supplies? Through the influence it has on others (staff, suppliers, customers, service-users, clients, students, members, residents...)? Do you have access to some of the really significant change points, like the design of products and services, or changes to legislation?

If you want to do a more rigorous analysis of your sustainability impacts and opportunities, people I spoke to recommended a range of frameworks and tools. There is a little more detail on these in [Section Four – The changes you want to make: strategic tools](#):

- understanding your contribution to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and other globally-recognised goals, through using science-based targets
- exploring the implications of future megatrends with different teams and senior leadership¹⁸
- B-Corp's B-Impact Assessment.
- Future Fit Benchmarking
- for organisations which love official standards, BSI has a number of standards and guidance documents. There is a navigator here to help you find your way around them <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/Sustainability-Standards-Navigator>
- analyse your contribution to (or undermining of) the UN's Sustainable Development Goals/Global Goals http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/brochure/SDGs_Booklet_Web_En.pdf

There are some useful signs to look for, in different parts of the organisational system:

Vision, long-term goals, purpose or mission, statement of values, brand or image

- If your organisation has any of these, is sustainable development integrated into them? The term sustainable development may not necessarily be used – it may talk about getting back within environmental limits, or meeting today's needs without compromising the future.

Products and services

- Are any of the products or services inherently incompatible with sustainability?
- Does the organisation provide alternatives to more damaging ways of meeting people's needs?
- Are products and services designed and delivered with the best environmental and social impact?

¹⁸ For example, see 'Future Megatrends: How to Identify and Integrate These into Your Environmental Systems', IEMA and WSP, 2017. <https://www.iema.net/policy/environmental-management/environmental-megatrends-2017.pdf>

Objectives and targets

- Do the objectives or targets of the organisation include any which are designed to help the organisation reach sustainability (being back within environmental limits, meeting everyone's needs)? How do they relate to the scale of the challenge?
- If they are not about long-term sustainability, are there at least some which are about environmental and social impact?
- Are there any which contradict sustainability?

Monitoring, measuring, assessing and rewarding performance

- How does the organisation monitor, measure and assess its performance, in terms of sustainable development? Would it know if it was moving further towards or further away from sustainability?
- Are the ways that it monitors its social and environmental performance integrated with the ways it monitors its financial performance and how far it meets its core purpose (e.g. standards of health care if it is a health body, standards of education if it is an educational institution)?
- Are staff recognised and rewarded for better performance on sustainable development, as well as for better performance in other areas? Are the systems integrated?

Skills, competencies, professional development

- Are the skills and knowledge needed for sustainable development integrated into the organisation's approach to staff learning and development?
- If they are not integrated, are they at least available to staff?

Worksheet Four

How well integrated is sustainable development in your organisation?

	IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN HERE FORMALLY? WHERE?	IS IT INTEGRATED AND LIVED, OR IS IT JUST 'ON PAPER'? WHERE IS IT MOST 'LIVED' AND WHERE IS IT MERE LIP-SERVICE?	IS IT LIVED WITHOUT BEING 'ON PAPER'? WHERE DOES THIS HAPPEN MOST? WHY ISN'T IT FORMALISED?
Vision, long-term goals, purpose or mission, statement of values, brand or image			
Products and services			
Objectives and targets			
Monitoring, measuring, assessing and rewarding performance			
Skills, competencies, professional development			

Environmental limits and society's priorities will set the context for your organisation's success or failure. The sustainability change-makers I spoke to had this experience to share, about understanding the relationship between the bigger picture, and their organisation's strategic priorities:

"Know your impacts and what the biggest contributors are to those impacts. For our city-wide climate change collaboration, an early step was to find out who the largest carbon emitters in the city are, so we can use the 80/20 principle to focus our work." Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council.

"When I first started in my new role, I looked at the mega trends, the world in 2050 and the big picture, and also did a review of the sector: what were other businesses paying attention to and benchmarking where we were in relation to them." Jonathan Garrett, Prudential

"You need to pay attention to materiality. Is this worth me troubling the organisation with? Is it so disconnected to what we do, that there isn't any point?"
Lynne Ceeney

Sustainability can have an important impact on your reputation with suppliers, regulators, customers and potential new recruits:

"Our biggest direct impacts are from energy and travel. We run between 30 and 40 data centres, which use very significant amounts of electricity. I'm proud of the innovation work we did at the Merlin data centre in Swindon. It's one of the most sustainable on the planet. We used low-impact construction techniques to minimise the embedded carbon and it's extremely energy efficient, reducing operational carbon – both these factors are important to our clients. We also harnessed our people's natural competitive spirit when designing Merlin, it became a competition to make the data centre as sustainable as possible."
Dr James Robey, Global Head of Corporate Sustainability, Capgemini

"We run an extensive customer research programme and it's clear that customer attitudes are shifting: what they value and are aware of. The figures are increasing year on year." Jane Ashton, TUI Group

We are in the middle of a technological and communications revolution, with exponentially more powerful ways of collecting and analysing vastly more data than ever before, and machinery that can automate and mechanise tasks from agriculture to zinc-plating. AI, drones, automation, robots, digital alternatives, data mining – with the potential to transform economies, sectors, organisations and everyday life.

Dr James Robey of Capgemini, says sustainability change agents can help their organisations by seeing both the upsides and downsides clearly. *"New technologies can be a real enabler of more sustainable ways of doing things, but they can also be significant accelerators of unsustainable business models. For example, automation and mechanisation have enabled the creation of machines the size of houses that enhance our ability to extract natural resources but with the danger of increased pollution. The digital revolution is another example, it won't be the panacea, and careful consideration of planetary limits will be critical. Technology and data relies on electricity in surprising quantities – some estimates suggest 11% of all UK electricity is used in running the internet today, and it is rising quickly as we take for granted the ability to stream films to our smartphones in HD while commuting. Innovators are needed to look at how we can do more with much lower-powered processors."*

Tony Rooke agrees that sustainability expertise can help sharpen the focus on risks and opportunities in this fast-moving area. Technological, social and environmental mega trends will change society and he thinks it is crucial to how businesses sell their services. *"Mining Big Data can be invaluable. But there's a human flipside to this. As people realise how critical their personal information is, they may want paying for their data. Also, the rise of AI may automate many systemic and process-oriented tasks, potentially making careers redundant; so how do people make a living? CTOs need to be aware of these questions and organisations need to consider them in their planning."*

Recent leaps in the availability and ability to analyse data has really helped some organisations.

"The route to targeting clearly is having access to good-quality data. Spend time with the data, go through it line by line, look at what it's telling you. Automation makes it possible to collect and analyse so much more data so much faster. I work with our data architect and analysts to capture, automate and analyse our performance. This allows me to demonstrate the impact of our work, especially in financial terms" Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

"Because of the kinds of organisations based in our city, there is a real community of 'geeks'. We have opened up our data as part of Data Mill North, so people can do deep dives and design things to help. Big data is a great resource for understanding and prioritising, and for engaging people."

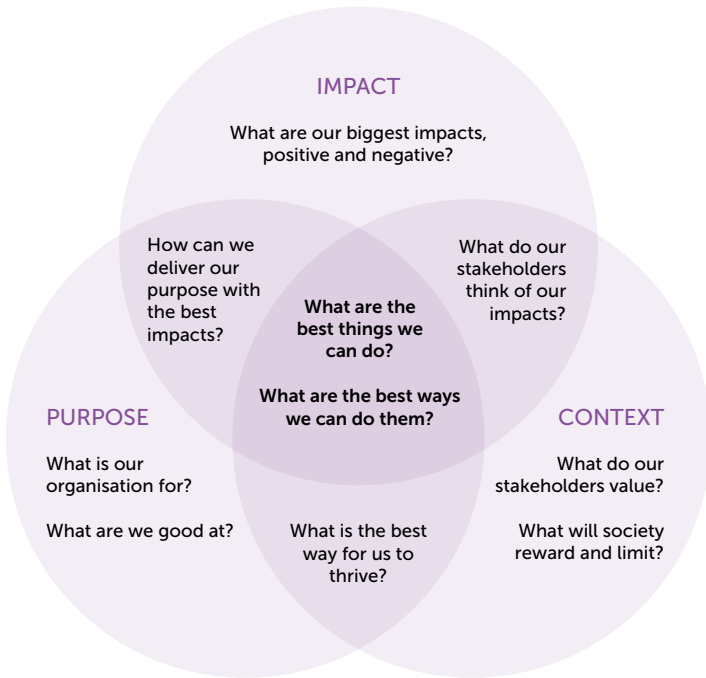
Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

Tom Knowland's experience is an interesting change story too. *"Local authorities and other public bodies publish data to reduce FoI obligations and the cost associated with them. Opening up our data gives people a chance to play with it, make apps and games and so on. A key driver was digital health care, to reduce costs of health and social care by giving people direct access to services and helping to target resources more effectively by sharing information. That strong motivation changed our whole organisation's understanding of and openness to sharing data. There are big synergies between 'smart cities' and sustainable cities. In a sustainable city, you'd run everything like waste, energy, transport and water optimised at a whole-city level. We'll be able to see synergies, correlations and achievements. We published all the energy data, and people found ways to benchmark things like primary school energy use. Someone created an app to tell you when to put your different bins out. There's a product for building managers to show predicted versus actual energy use, so they can spot problems. As a result of seeing all this potential, we now include data in contracts for things like energy. We own the data. So, sustainability officers are reinventing themselves as data geeks."*

"We get monthly data from our retail premises – we have about 700 shops – so we can do benchmarking, and find the problems and strong performers. It's done by remote software. It was driven originally by our obligation to report on carbon emissions, but we realised that this was really useful information that we could use." Jane Ashton, TUI Group

And it's not just about measuring improvements from your starting point. Things like science-based targets or absolute targets like zero-net deforestation in supply chains can address what Dr James Robey calls *"the risk that all of our small targets will not add up to enough."*

To sum up this sub-section, when you ask what sustainability means for your organisation, you are effectively asking: "What's the best thing we can do?" and "What's the best way we can do it?" (see figure below).



What does sustainability mean for an organisation?¹⁹

¹⁹ An earlier version of this diagram was first published in 'Sustainability: the Big Question', Walker, P., The Environmentalist, February 2011.

These questions get to the heart of the organisation's purpose and activities, daring us to reinvent them for the world of tomorrow, where the purpose responds perfectly to the context and is delivered with the best possible impacts.

What is its sustainability ambition?

One of the most important questions for a sustainable development change-maker to ask themselves is, "Has my organisation agreed that it wants to become truly sustainable, in the long term?" Its commitment may be worded rigorously or poetically.

Unilever	Our vision is to grow our business, while decoupling our environmental footprint from our growth and increasing our positive social impact.
M&S	Plan A is our way to help build a sustainable future by being a business that enables our customers to have a positive impact on wellbeing, communities and the planet through all that we do.
IKEA	To create a better everyday life for the many people.
Pukka Herbs	Through the incredible power of plants we will inspire you to lead a more conscious life. We strive every day to help create a pukka planet benefiting people, plants and planet.
Triodos Bank	Triodos Bank is a global pioneer in sustainable banking, using the power of finance to support projects that benefit people and the planet.

Not all organisations want to be leaders. Some want to be, as one interviewee put it, 'Champions' League'.

But some can be persuaded!

Claudine Blamey is Head of Sustainability at The Crown Estate. Talking about her time at a previous employer, she says:

"When I joined Slough Estates Group (now SEGRO), not only was it the first corporate responsibility role in that organisation, it was the first in the sector in the UK. I knew we'd be setting the benchmark for everyone else. I convinced the development team to have an aspirational target. I showed them that our occupiers, who were used to really high standards in the US, will want them for their UK premises too. It took me a good few months of evidence gathering and talking to people individually, but by the time I took it to the board everyone had already agreed." Claudine Blamey

And some will surprise you.

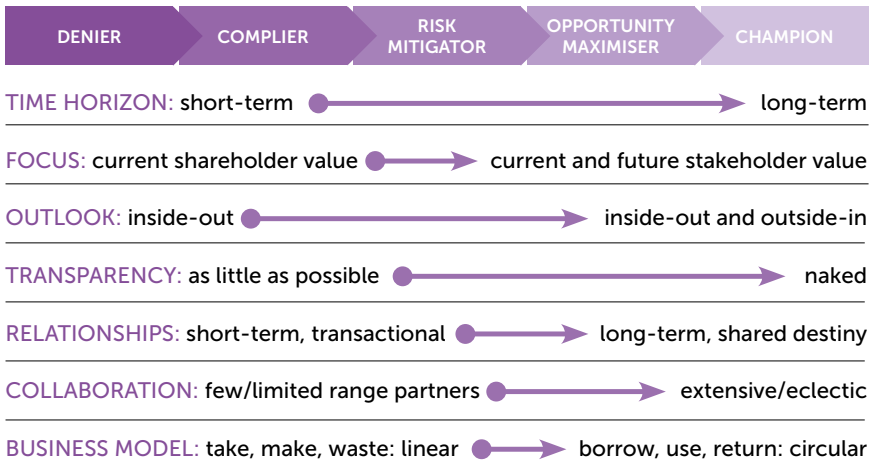
"We were changing incentives and policies to reduce carbon emissions at Parsons Brinckerhoff. We were promoting teleconferences, there was training in place, new incentives and a tweaked policy. There were two departments which were particularly keen and they were far more rigorous with their policies and set much higher targets than I would have done. The power was with them as Directors, and they chose to be much more ambitious." Lynne Ceeney

What is its sustainability journey?

Distinct from its actual impacts – but hopefully related to them – are the commitments your organisation has made about sustainable development.

Has your organisation got a commitment to sustainable development? How well is it doing, in moving towards sustainability? How would you know?

You can choose a model or spectrum from the many out there. This one makes sense to me.



Evolution of stages of maturity²⁰

A spectrum like this can be used to get a sense of where an organisation – or different parts of an organisation – are, in relation to sustainability on several dimensions. Typically, does it think short term or long term? Does it keep information closely guarded, or share it transparently? How experienced is it at collaborating? There is a detailed description of this spectrum in the paper referenced below.

²⁰ Reproduced from Ainsbury, R. and Grayson, D., 2014. 'Business Critical: Understanding a Company's, Current and Desired Stages of Corporate Responsibility Maturity', Cranfield University. The whole paper is well worth a read. <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/dynamic-content/media/Doughty/SOMAT%201505%202014%20final.pdf>

Another way of understanding where it might be on its sustainability journey is Futerra's four element theory of change.

All four elements need to be in place, although organisations often begin in one place and work their way round the others iteratively. All 'right' and no 'left' is greenwash. All 'left' and no 'right' will not come alive. All strategic and no tactics will not be achieved. All tactics and no strategy can go swiftly in the wrong direction.



Four element theory of change, Futerra²¹

Futerra's Solitaire Townsend says, *"When we look at what's blocking change, it's often not the lack of a business case, technical solutions or alignment with the core business. It's often the people side of things: the status of sustainability, the way it challenges and excites people, the dreams. Is it keeping the board awake at night? You need the left brain elements and the right brain elements."*

²¹ <http://www.wearefuterra.com/offer/>

Where is your organisation now? Where was it a few years ago? Where does it want to be?

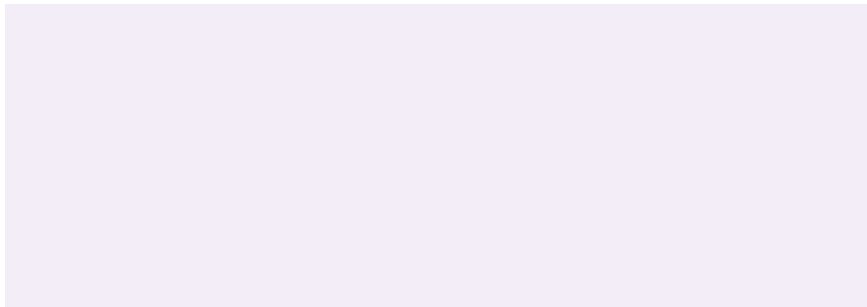


Solitaire Townsend's experience is that, in practice, organisations often work on the tactical areas before the visionary ones, building credibility and getting their house in order, finding the quick wins. That way, the vision can be recognised as achievable and as building on what's gone before, while it sets priorities for bigger efforts.

The business case for greater sustainability action (see [Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: how might paying attention to sustainability improve the organisation?](#)) is different for every organisation, but it's likely to include:

- cost savings
- reducing supply chain risk
- attracting and retaining great employees – sustainability, purpose and values are especially relevant to millennials
- attracting and retaining clients or customers
- meeting current and future regulatory obligations.

What has driven your organisation's activity on sustainability, so far?



How do you and your role fit in?


Earlier (Section 2.1 – Know yourself: yourself as a change-maker) you thought about the kind of change-maker you would like to be. You might want to refer back to whatever notes you made about that as you think about how that compares to what your organisation wants from you.

When you think about how you work for sustainable development in your organisation, where are you in this spectrum²²?

**Activist/campaigner
for sustainable
development**

**Passionate change
agent for sustainable
development**

**'Volunteered' change
agent for sustainable
development**




And where is your organisation in this spectrum?

**Leading its sector
in sustainable
development**

**Average for the sector,
better than compliant
with regulations**

**Laggard in the sector,
maybe not complying
with regulations**



A mismatch between your aspirations and your organisation's can lead to tensions, which you will need to face up to and either resolve or manage to live with.

- The activist is likely to feel out of step in most organisations, even those leading their sectors.
- The passionate change agent may find themselves asking whether they can live with the gap between where they are and where their organisation is, whilst still being true to themselves. If they are in an organisation which is not a sector leader, the passionate change agent may find that the tension they are trying to bridge is very large.
- If they have been volunteered for the role, the change agent's tension may be about trying to bring about changes which they're not comfortable with.

²² The spectrums are taken from: Ainger and Howard, Cambridge Programme for Industry and Cambridge University Engineering Department Centre for Sustainable Development, May 2003, presentation for the Sustainability Learning Networks Programme (now the Post-Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Business, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership).

Looking at these two spectrums, ask yourself: where is your organisation, and where are you?



Some change-makers prefer not to be too out of step – to be a ‘tempered radical’. Others, like Alan Knight, relish the challenge of being a provocateur:

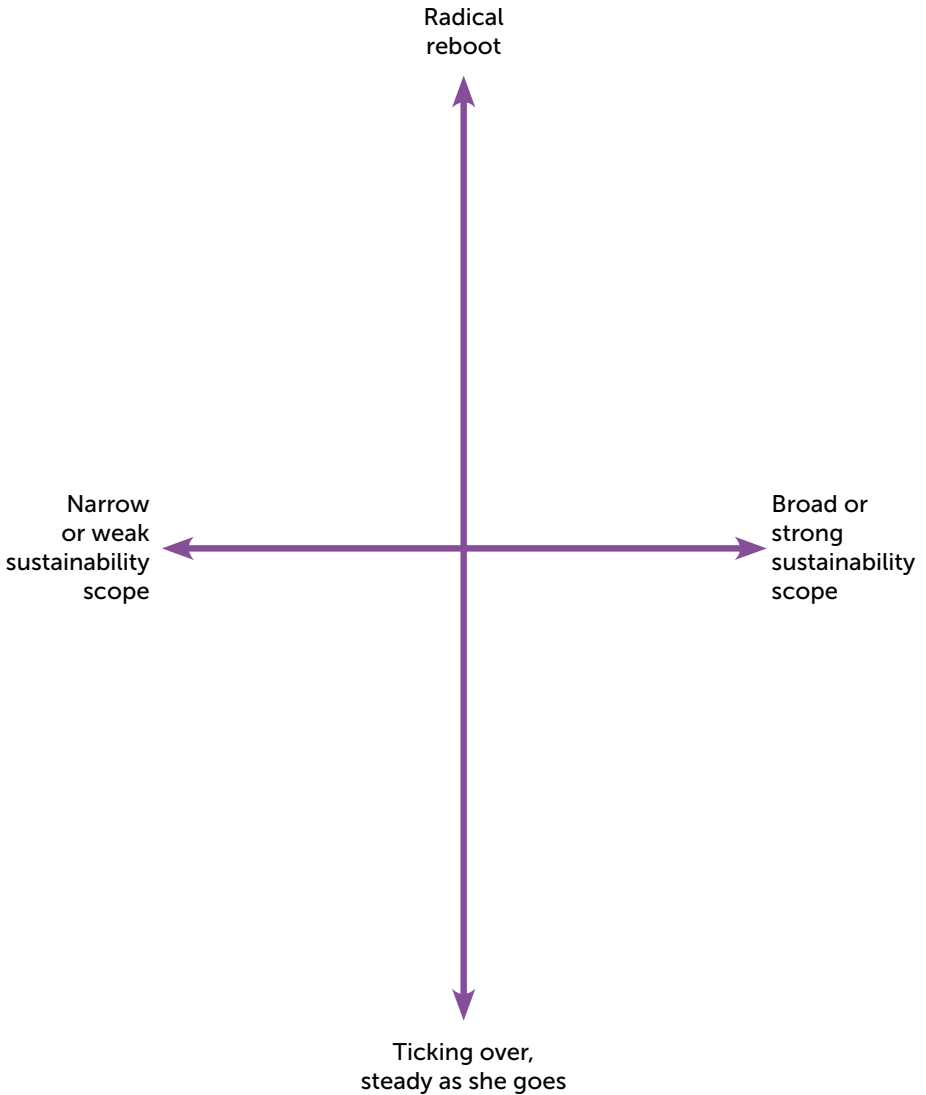
“I am drawn to the organisations with the biggest problems to solve, where my willingness to be constructive but thought provoking, even provocative, can make the most difference.” Alan Knight

You may have a preference for the kind of change-maker you want to be. And you may appreciate the kind of change-maker your organisation needs right now, to provoke, design, engage or implement.

But what you think it needs may not be what it wants. So, consider: what does your organisation want from you?

Worksheet Five

Your mandate: what does your organisation want from you?



Consider also your team's mandate, and how it relates to other people or teams who share the organisation's sustainability responsibilities.

You can choose to creatively stretch your mandate, as a result of spotting risks and opportunities that your organisation hasn't. The stakes will be higher: you could improve or diminish your reputation with the organisation, with work which is beyond your mandate. So, consider the pros and cons.

There is more detail below ([Section Five – Engaging people](#)) on persuading others – and therefore getting a more ambitious mandate. Beware:

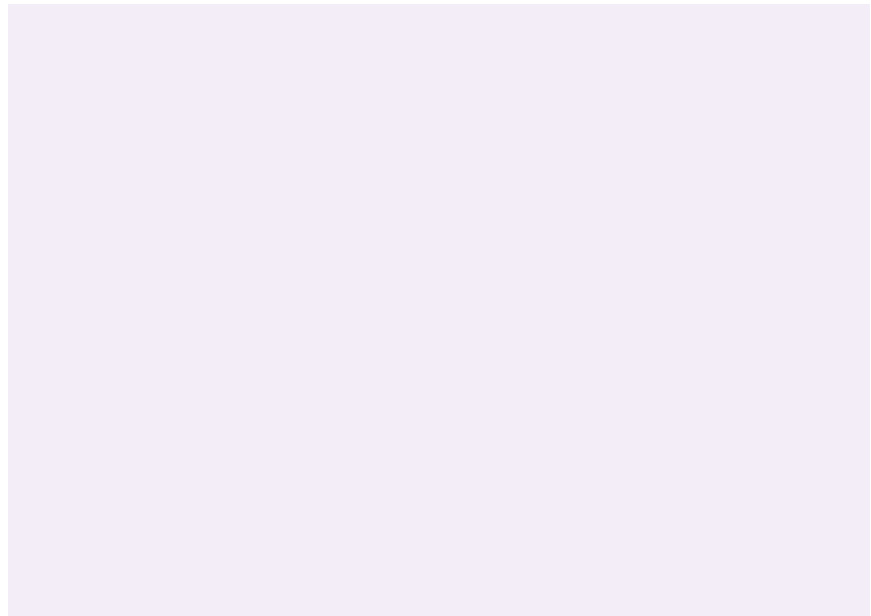
- of 'crying wolf' – your credibility could come into question
- of the Emperor's new clothes and greenwash – the organisation rushing headlong into trumpeting its wonderful achievements, which turn out to have little substance
- of the insincere mandate – all too easily given in the field of sustainable development. The senior management team who sign up to the 'motherhood and apple pie' aspects of sustainable development, without an intention of doing anything other than the easiest of quick wins, and get cold feet as soon as you talk about investing for the long term, or questioning the organisation's direction or ways of working
- of the speed at which people and post-holders can change – don't put all your eggs in one basket, as if your key champion at board level leaves, their successor may want to show how different they are, by ditching existing initiatives and approaches.

The positive flip side of these dangers is that a mandate may suddenly appear when you least expect it, due to:

- changes in the context – if a new law comes in, if a tax or price rise shifts the finances, if the media suddenly get interested in your sector
- closet ‘tree huggers’ and ‘do gooders’ come out – they could be anywhere – in human resources, finance, facilities management. A promotion or reorganisation may give them a chance to flex their muscles in line with their passions.

What do you make of the interplay between these three pulls on you:

- the role you’d like to play
- what you think the organisation needs now and
- what it’s actually asking you to do?



“It’s like a rock and a piece of string. If you pull too hard and the rock is stuck, you’ll just end up breaking the string. You have to judge the pace, the ambition, so you don’t lose touch with the people and organisation you’re trying to shift.”

Lynne Ceeney

2.3 Know the people

"It's not about the job description. It's about their character and your connection. It's about human connections." Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

You've looked at yourself, and the wider organisational system. Let's now look at the other people who you need to understand, to be an effective change agent.

Find out who the key people are

"You need to know your stakeholders, and understand them. What makes them tick. What kind of business case will appeal to them. Their organisational drivers and their personal drivers are both critical." Dr James Robey, Capgemini

Stakeholders are the people who have a stake: either that they can influence whether things happen or not, or they will be impacted on by what you do. (For some people, it's both.)

Find out who the key players are, internally and externally: the senior executives, the people in finance, strategy, marketing, communications, HR, innovation, learning and development as well as in the mainstream product or service parts of the organisation. Who are the sustainability allies and heroes? Who are the influencers? Who are the biggest or most valuable customers and clients, the regulators, the suppliers?

The change-makers I interviewed stressed that building relationships with key stakeholders, understanding their perspective and working with them was an essential fundamental for success.

When Jonathan Garrett moved into his new role, he got an organisational chart and identified the most influential stakeholders. He is gradually visiting them all, finding out what their broad sustainability understanding and attitude is. He showed me what he calls his stakeholder heat map.

"It's a work in progress. I hope to meet the influencers, gathering intelligence, soaking up insights like a sponge."

Bekir Andrews also has a systematic approach.

"I use an internal stakeholder map, for each issue. Even if they don't seem relevant to sustainability, I contact them on a regular basis, and if I see someone in the lift or in the kitchen, I ask them how things are going and always have something to say about our sustainability work. If you don't engage with people regularly, you fall back into the noise."

Don't avoid the blockers and antagonists. They can become your greatest allies. Nick Blyth recalls his time at a public sector organisation:

"Some department representatives were initially hard to work with. There were two who disrupted and dominated a particular meeting. I invested time with them individually and we found some mutual interests. In time, at least one became an advocate and both engaged. They got a higher profile and I was able to help them solve some problems and improve outputs."

Knowing who the really influential people are can make for much more efficient communications by cascading information. Tony Rooke says:

"You can't train everyone, you wouldn't want to and it would be too expensive. So, if you can find the key influencers – the experienced, respected staff, the people who are trusted because they deliver, the ones who the bosses ask for advice, it'll be different in every organisation – and convince them, that's a much better way." Tony Rooke, CDP

When thinking about stakeholders, remember also those people who need to 'own' certain things – like the training programme, or the way IT is used, or talking to investors. Who needs to get the credit or be consulted? Don't tread on their toes without meaning to – you want to make change, not enemies.

You should also consider how influential the stakeholders will be: who must you actively collaborate with from an early stage? Who do you need to excite and get interested? And consider how much the change will impact on them: whose concerns must be taken into account?

Section Two

Their ability to influence the change	High	Ask them about their concerns and needs, and use these to understand the problem and to design the solutions. Excite them about the possibilities.	Engage them in framing the problem and scoping the solutions. Collaborate with them.
	Low	Let them know what's happening.	Ask them about their concerns and needs, and use these understand the problem and to design the solutions. Pay particular attention to ensuring they aren't steamrolled.
Stakeholder mapping	Low		High
	Likelihood of the change having an impact on them		

Stakeholder mapping: impact/influence matrix²³

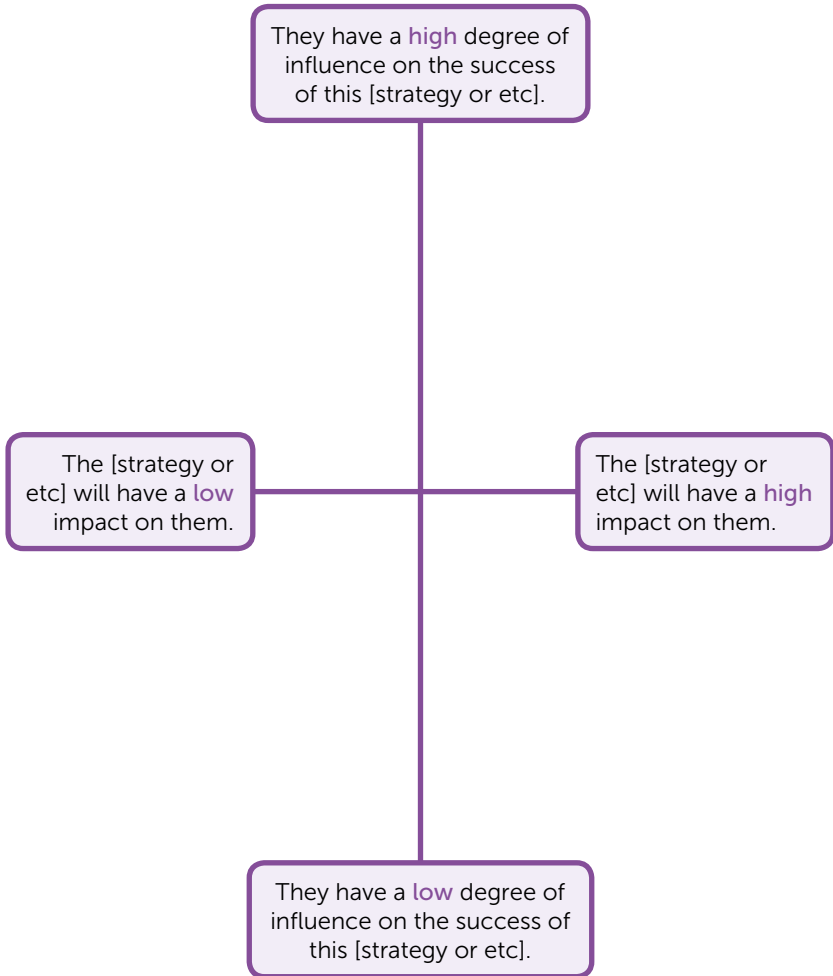
²³ This matrix must have originated somewhere, but is now in such widespread use that I cannot find its origin. I first learnt about it from the Environmental Resolve project of The Environment Council

Worksheet Six

Stakeholder mapping

Step 1: Identify all the stakeholders – people and organisations.

Step 2: Map them on this matrix, according to their degree of influence and the degree of impact on them.



There are some other tools for understanding stakeholders – particularly if you think you already know what their attitude may be towards sustainability change – in Section Four – The changes you want to make: who has a stake in this change?

Are there some stakeholders who are particularly significant, for successful change? This is the experience of some of your fellow change-makers:

“Our experience is that different layers are all necessary. The board sees the need for change, makes space, provides focus and visions. Operational internal people are needed to activate the work and spot the blockages. Sustainability experts need to work with professionals, the copywriters, the storytellers. Technical people need to recognise the necessity and validity of these other professions.”
Solitaire Townsend, Futerra

Tom Knowland’s key relationship at the moment is with procurement and project management, because his organisation is focusing on new ways to cut fuel poverty, reduce carbon and promote energy efficiency. *“We sit together now. They like this work – it’s edgy, it’s innovative and interesting and fits with the organisational culture. It’s more interesting than most of the work they do. If we come up against an obstacle, they can always find a way to work around it.”*
Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

If your organisation produces an annual report or an integrated report, Alan Knight suggests getting close to that person and Mark Gough goes further *“write it as a team. Use this as an opportunity to have a conversation about what’s important and what’s going on.”* The same goes for the people involved with business planning.

Other places to look include those teams whose role includes innovation: they may sit in marketing, R&D, new product development, digital or customer insight.

Chief Executives and senior leaders

Undeniably influential for good or ill are Chief Executives and other very senior leaders.

“Our new CEO didn’t want sustainability to be separate. She wanted it to be fully integrated into all decisions, processes and targets. Every development we do has sustainability principles with minimum standards and aspirational targets.”

Claudine Blamey, The Crown Estate

But beware of the pitfalls of having very strong support from the CEO.

“When I was brought in, the CEO didn’t know what good looked like, he knew he wanted us to improve. When you have strong support from your CEO it’s easy to put other people’s backs up. I was very new and really lacked self-awareness, with my direct line to the MD. It makes me cringe a bit now to think of it. So, respect the hierarchy, don’t ride roughshod over people. It’s not right and it diminishes trust.” Miles Watkins, speaking of his time at Aggregate Industries

“We could have imposed even more changes with the strong CEO and political mandate, but we couldn’t embed or sustain such change without sufficient stakeholder awareness and support.” Nick Blyth, recalling when he worked for a local authority

And don’t take their support for granted. Help them to help you.

“Plan A has lived through three CEOs, and each new one wants to emphasise different things: partnership and system-level change, or customer relevance. You need to remember that being a CEO is hard. You have a few minutes with them so be very precise with the value proposition you’re putting forward, reassure them it’s being safely managed and be clear where they can add value. You can go to the CEO and ask for help, but very rarely.”

Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

So, what are the ways that change-makers have won over their bosses?

A round table of GACSO and IEMA members compiled this list of the things that will really get the board's attention:

- **Security of supply** – including climate impacts, disruption and social unrest.
- **Characteristics of supply** – including sustainable sourcing, carbon, waste, chemicals, ethical issues.
- **Assets** – new-build specifications and their relationship to safety, sustainability and resilience.
- **Market share or differentiation** – e.g. developing a net positive business.
- **Adding value or winning new business** – through, for example, meeting client needs on sustainability.
- **Innovation** – e.g. circular economy and business transformation (new models).
- **Share price impacts** – investor requirements and concerns.
- **Public reporting** – for example CDP and integrated reporting.
- **Corporate reputation** – with investors (e.g. leading edge) and communities of interest such as staff and customers (e.g. blacklisting, false marketing claims, etc).
- **Finances** – costs, ROI, OPEX, value engineering – understanding the cost of energy and commodities.
- **Bonuses for directors** – performance-related pay on sustainability outcomes.
- **Labour** – skills and competencies (including into the supply chain and subcontractors) – employability, youth.
- **Diversity** – e.g. attracting and retaining talent (and diversity reporting).
- Changes to the policy landscape that affect the business (national and global).

Jonathan Garrett used a presentation and workshop developed with Business in the Community to open up a conversation with the board.

"We went into Jaguar Land Rover with the Big Boardroom Agenda, from Business in the Community. There are five provocative questions which boards need to ask themselves, about megatrends, their unique contribution, the legacy they want to leave, the balance between short-term and long-term thinking, and what they are asking of their customers. It really got them thinking about our core competencies and the scale of the innovation challenge ahead." Jonathan Garrett, talking about his time at Jaguar Land Rover

Others have helped leaders learn by helping them when they are fronting sustainability to external audiences.

"Working with leaders on their speaking engagements can itself be an effective change strategy. By working with them on drafts of a speech, you create the opportunity for them to interrogate the facts in private. When you're going to make a speech on an issue, you have to understand it inside out. So, it can be the first time they have looked at the issues quite so closely. In doing so, they understand the underlying issues much better and then will drive action as a result." Interviewee who wanted to remain anonymous

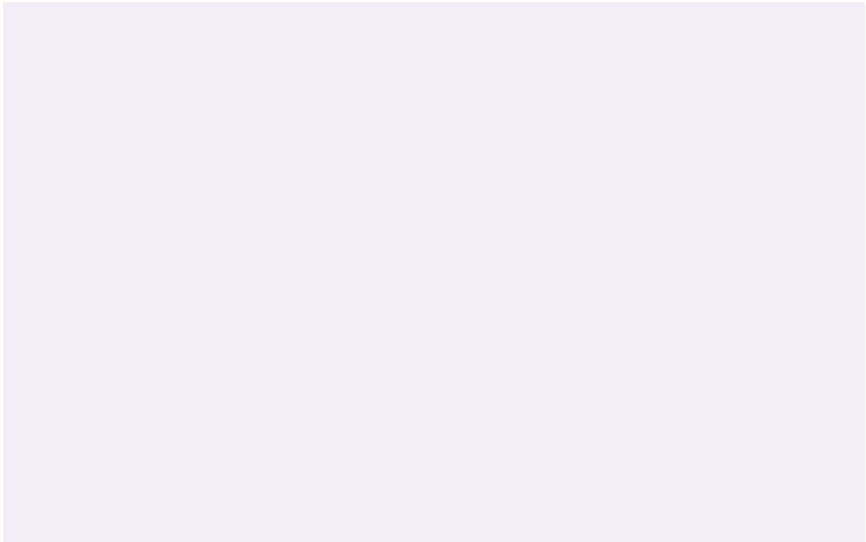
For Claudine Blamey, at a previous organisation, a different approach was needed.

"There was a board member at SEGRO who didn't get it, just didn't see the point, and saw it all as added cost. There was a formal dinner at an event, and I made sure to sit them next to someone senior from another organisation, who was primed to argue and persuade. It worked!"

Matthew Robinson is Sustainability Engagement Head at HSBC, and leads HSBC's Sustainability Leadership Programme. His whole role and direction of travel turned on the success of exposing one senior leader to an out-of-office experiential learning programme.

"The programme was originally designed for more junior staff – a two-week-long citizen science volunteering programme run with Earthwatch. The one senior leader in question had an 'aha' moment, when he heard from an environmental scientist about the impact human beings were having on the planet, and subsequently how many planet's worth of resources he was 'actually' consuming... and not in a positive way! The realisation soon became obvious on two levels for this leader. One, with a young family, was he leaving a lasting legacy; and secondly, what if other leaders like himself were to see this reality and also therefore the benefits of a programme like this?" There is more about this story in Section Six – Organisational culture: understanding emergence.

To what extent do your senior leaders 'get it'? What might help?



Section Three

How does change happen?

CHANGE

The transition from a current state to a future state.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The practice of applying a structured approach to transition an organisation from a current state to a future state to achieve expected benefits.

Association of Change Management Professionals²⁴

Not all change is managed. Some change happens in other ways. And not all change takes place at the level of organisations. Change can happen in individuals, systems and so on. The focus of this book is organisations, and your ability to catalyse, influence, shape and manage change.

It's useful to think a bit about some different kinds of change.

Different kinds of change

Change may be smooth or disruptive, incremental or transformative²⁵. It may come about through planning or it may emerge.

Disruptive change is dramatic. Like a volcano or a forest fire, it alters things rapidly and dramatically. It is likely that there will be destructive downsides for incumbents or people who benefit from the status quo. It may bring environmental and social improvements, but it may not. It isn't always sustained: when the fire abates or the eruption ends, there may be a new 'normal' or the old may reassert itself.

²⁴ From the 'Standard for Change Management', Association of Change Management Professionals, 2014.

²⁵ The most confusing term, in my experience, is 'step change'. Does this mean 'many small steps' (i.e. incremental)? Or does it mean 'one giant leap' (i.e. disruptive or transformational)? People seem to use it to mean both, or either, which is not helpful!

Transformational change is so fundamental that it's sometimes hard to see the relationship between the new state and the old – like a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, or a light spongy cake made from eggs, flour and sugar. The UNDP says: 'To qualify as transformational, the change must have contributed to significant, sustainable and sustained change for the better.'²⁶

Incremental change is like the multi-faceted growth and evolution of the new ecosystem which arises following a cataclysmic event, or the gradual alterations to a person's face as they grow and age. Given long enough, incremental changes can add up to very big changes, especially if a tipping point is reached.

Planned change is ordered and orderly, predicted and predictable, like the establishment of a plantation, or its felling. Someone 'does it'.

Emergent change just happens – sometimes predictably (like the cycle of the seasons), sometimes as a surprise (when an acidity threshold is reached in a lake).

Change can also be freely chosen, or can happen as a response to something else, or can be imposed on one set of people by another.

FREELY CHOSEN	Driving more slowly in a residential area, or to appreciate a great view.
RESPONSE	Driving more slowly when a sign flashes your current speed at you, or because you know it is fuel efficient and will save you money.
IMPOSED	Speed limiters on coaches, speed bumps, speed limits.

²⁶ 'Supporting Transformational Change', UNDP, 2011.

Although the focus of this book is organisational change, transformational change cannot happen in one organisation in isolation – the systems of which it is a part will need to change too.

There are distinctions, and there overlaps between these different kinds of change too.

Think about some changes that seem significant to you, in the field of sustainable development. They may be changes or trends which take us closer to sustainability, or further away. Are they/were they more planned or more emergent? Disruptive, incremental or transformational? Chosen, imposed or responded to?

On our journey towards sustainability, there will be lots of change. Think about what a sustainable society would need to be like (back within environmental limits, with people's needs being met). When we get to sustainability, will the changes have been disruptive, transformational or incremental? Planned or emergent? Chosen, responded to or imposed?

Principles of change management

Thinking now particularly about organisational change, it's useful to have some theoretical framing.

Organisational change management theory divides broadly into those theories which see organisations as machines and those which see them as conversations.

Machines have component parts which move in predictable ways – pull a lever or turn a cog and you'll get a particular result. Adjust the lever, remove the cog, link up different parts and you'll get a different – but predictable – outcome.

Conversations are much less controllable. They take place between people who may at different times be more or less rational, more or less open, more or less intuitive, interested, cynical, inspired.... Conversations have unwritten rules – but not everyone thinks the rules are the same, and we can break the rules very easily.

If you think an organisation is like a machine, then your approach to changing it will be very different to the one you'd use if you think an organisation is like a conversation. The critical differences are to do with:

- the extent that you prioritise engaging people – influencing what they talk about and listening to what they are saying or
- whether you emphasise a detailed analysis of the systems, processes and structures and come up with a solution which is then implemented by experts.

Is one view right and the other wrong? Ultimately, they are both metaphors that help you to see a recognisable pattern in what may be a chaotic reality. The important thing is to be aware that theories are maps rather than territory. Notice when your theoretical framework is helping you to be effective and when it is getting in the way. If you're stuck and can't see the way forward, try on different assumptions or use different metaphors to get new insights.

When looking at system change, the machine metaphor is less helpful, especially as it implies a top-down 'command and control' approach to intervening. Systems, with their complex interactions and lack of a single controlling centre, don't work that way.

Another difference between competing theories of change management is how confident and certain they expect the change manager to be, about what needs to change. In top-down, hierarchical organisations – or in truly urgent situations – the expectation is that the plan won't be challenged and won't need to be challenged. On the other hand, in situations where the right answer can't easily be discerned, where agility is called for, and where a command-and-control approach won't work, then more engagement and experimentation are needed. In this kind of situation, you begin the change process before you know the destination or the plan.

There are some useful general models of planned change to help you think about the systemic nature of organisational change, and to help you plan your approach. The models can also help you understand where you are and what you may have missed, if things stall. This book includes brief summaries of:

- Booz and Co's Ten Guiding Principles of Change Management
- Kotter's Eight Steps to Accelerate Change
- Dunphy, Griffiths and Benn's Transformational Path

Check out the references for fuller explanations.

Ten guiding principles of change management²⁷

1. Address the human side of change systematically
2. Change starts at the top and begins on day one
3. Real change happens at the bottom
4. Confront reality, demonstrate faith and craft a vision
5. Create ownership, not just buy-in

6. Practice targeted over-communication
7. Explicitly address culture and attack the cultural centre
8. Assess the cultural landscape early
9. Prepare for the unexpected
10. Speak to the individual as well as to the institution

These guiding principles support each other, and you apply them all at once, rather than seeing them as steps. They can usefully be referred to alongside other models.

Eight steps to accelerate change²⁸

1. Create a sense of urgency
2. Build a guiding coalition
3. Form a strategic vision and initiatives
4. Enlist a volunteer army
5. Enable action by removing barriers
6. Generate short-term wins
7. Sustain acceleration
8. Institute change

Kotter's Eight Steps model is widely known. It has been criticised for being too top-down, and it has evolved over time to emphasise engagement and experimentation more, but it still begins with a visionary 'stake in the ground' or 'burning platform'. I think you may need to do quite a lot of preliminary work before you can get to that point, and this is reflected in my cycle of planned change (see below), which is more iterative and open.

²⁷ Van Lee, R., Jones, J., Hyde, P., Neilson, G., Tipping, A., Aguirre, D., Schirra, W., Krings, J. and Staub, C., 2004. 'Ten Guiding Principles of Change Management.' Booz Allen Hamilton.

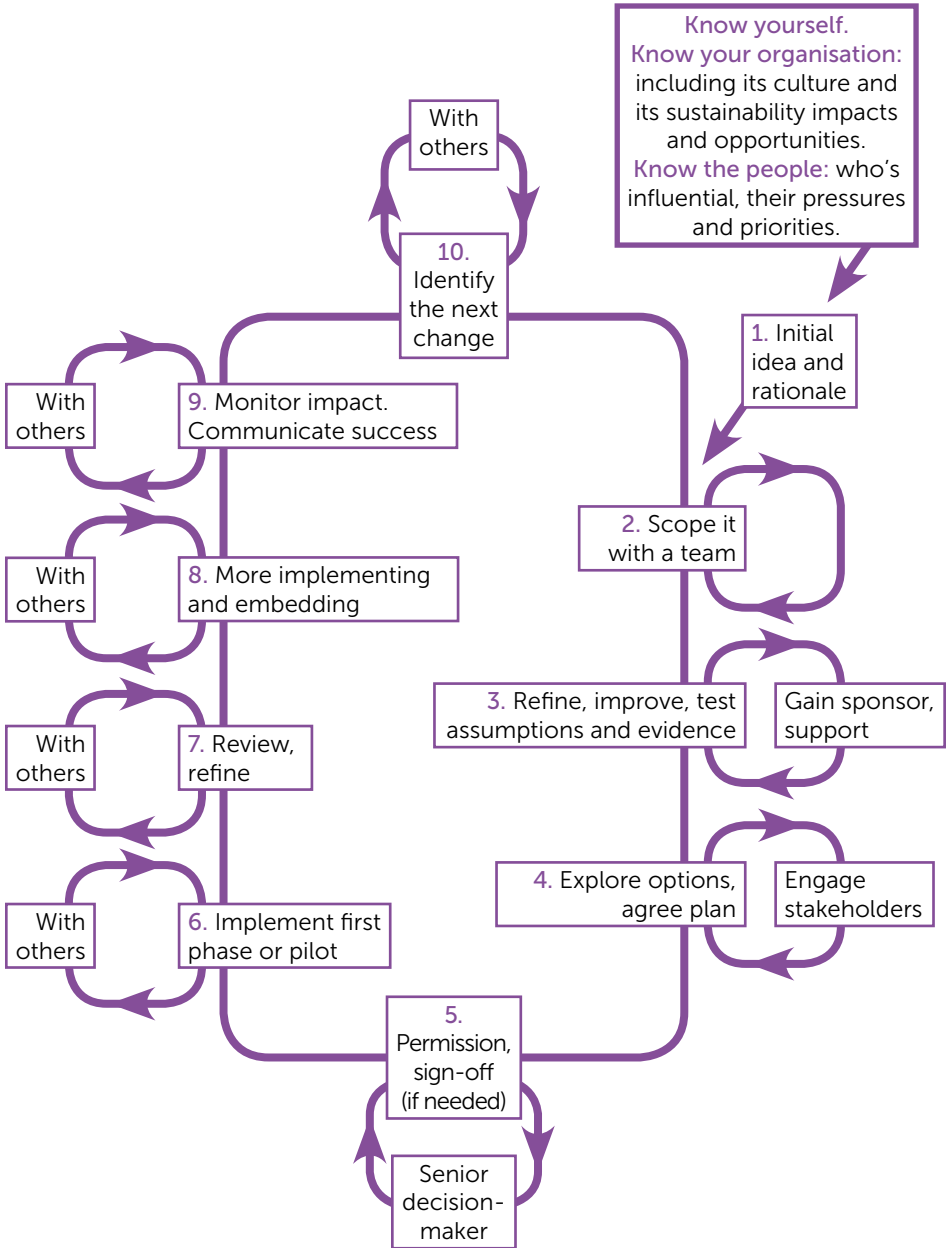
²⁸ <https://www.kotterinternational.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/> '8 Steps to Accelerate Change'.

Transformational path²⁹

- Step 1: Know where you are now
- Step 2: Develop the vision – the dream organisation
- Step 3: Identify the gap
- Step 4: Assess the readiness for change
- Step 5: Set the scene for action
- Step 6: Secure basic compliance first
- Step 7: Move beyond compliance
- Step 8: Establish the performance criteria for ‘compliance plus’
- Step 9: Launch and manage the transformational change
- Step 10: Maintain the rage

Like this book, Dunphy and his colleagues put a lot of emphasis on understanding the starting point and the ground work. They give less guidance about how to actually do Step 9.

²⁹ Dunphy, D., Griffiths, A., and Benn, S. 2003. 'Organisational Change for Corporate Sustainability'. Routledge.



Cycle of planned change (Walker, 2017)

Other models that some change-makers I interviewed found useful are:

- **Lewin's Unfreeze > Change > Refreeze.**
- **Deming's Plan > Do > Check > Act.**

And for readers who like a thorough, generic standards approach, there is the 'Standard for Change Management' developed by the Association of Change Management Professionals³⁰. This assumes that someone else had already successfully created a vision for the destination, and the change manager's role is to help get the organisation there.

As Phil Cumming from Marks & Spencer says, first and foremost change management is about people, so focus on those aspects which are required to "implement and sustain" the planned change, such as influencing individual behaviour and organisational culture, introducing new ways of working and capturing lessons learned for future change programmes. Within this context, models can be simplified into four stages³¹:

1. **Determining the need for change**
2. **Preparing and planning for change**
3. **Implementing the change**
4. **Sustaining the change.**

And please remember this about plans and planning:

"Plans are worthless, but planning is everything." General, later President, Eisenhower ³²

"You need a level of pragmatism. Plans change, goals move, people move. Some things take more time than expected, some things get shut down. At the macro level I had a plan, a strategy, a road map. At the micro level, there was lots of change!" Beth Knight, EY

³⁰ www.acmpglobal.org/page/the_standard

³¹ Cumming, P. 2016. IEMA Approved MSc Sustainable Business Practice Module Lecture Notes 9 'Change Management for Sustainable Business.' Birkbeck, University of London. See also BSI (2017) BS 8001: 2017 Framework for implementing the principles of the circular economy in organizations - Guide

³² Eisenhower, Remarks at the National Defense Executive Reserve Conference, 1957. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=10951>

As we've seen, change can be emergent too. The gradual, unplanned shift of knowledge or values in the people who make up an organisation can create a groundswell of interest and activity. Shifts in customer demands can mean the balance of products and services changes. A series of shocks in the supply chain make some things unavailable. The organisation and its people respond to external change. The hundreds of conversations that people have with each other every day co-create the emergent reality (more in [Section Six: Organisational culture: understanding emergence](#)).

Barriers to change

It's also helpful to think about what stops change from happening. When IEMA and GACSO members were surveyed in 2015, the main barriers to sustainability in their organisations were identified as:

- business culture
- lack of management support
- lack of clear strategic or operational alignment
- financial
- resistance to change.³³

Barriers to change can be individual, or collective – at the level of an organisation or of society. They can be objective (e.g. about money, technology, geology) or subjective (e.g. to do with attitudes, assumptions, beliefs).

³³ 'Beyond the Perfect Storm: The Corporate Sustainability Challenge', IEMA, 2016.

Time for another two-by-two matrix. The illustrations in this diagram are about climate change, but other sustainability issues are subject to the same barriers.

	SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE
INDIVIDUAL	<p>1. Individual subjective</p> <p>Personal values, world view, assumptions etc.</p> <p>“Climate change is such a huge issue that there is nothing I can do.”</p>	<p>2. Individual objective</p> <p>The limits of one’s role or authority, skills, resources, knowledge etc.</p> <p>“I do not have the money to replace my boiler.”</p>
COLLECTIVE	<p>3. Collective subjective</p> <p>Group culture, shared mindsets, shared norms, predominant fashion or beliefs.</p> <p>“We can’t make money enough on eco homes.”</p>	<p>4. Collective objective</p> <p>Political, economic, social, technological, legal, environmental.³⁴</p> <p>“Building regulations aren’t strong enough.”</p>

Barriers to change

This way of looking at the barriers to change was developed by David Ballard, drawing on the work of Ken Wilber³⁵. Ballard argues that it is rarely an objective lack of a robust financial case or the availability of technology which stops change, at least in the field that he has studied in depth, which is that of climate change mitigation and adaptation. In Ballard’s experience, it is the subjective factors – both individual and collective – which form the more intractable barriers.

³⁴ Recognise the PESTLE here, from Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: what is the external context, the system?

³⁵ Ballard, D., March 2006. ‘Changing the climate for effective action: some key themes from the ESPACE / Hampshire CC behaviour change and champions reports.’ Wilber, K. 2000. ‘Integral Psychology.’ Shambhala.

Worksheet Seven

Barriers to change

Which barriers to change lie in the four quadrants of the matrix?

1. INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTIVE	2. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVE
3. COLLECTIVE SUBJECTIVE	4. COLLECTIVE OBJECTIVE

Source: Ballard, D.

What might change?

"Keep your options open. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari call this 'rhizome theory'.³⁶ Rhizomes grow in all directions. Keep as many paths open as possible. If one gets blocked, you have others." Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

It's useful to think very widely about the kinds of things that might change – or need to change – to get us on track for sustainable development. Imagine a group of people in a room, brainstorming onto sticky notes, in answer to this question:

When our organisation is sustainable, what will have changed?

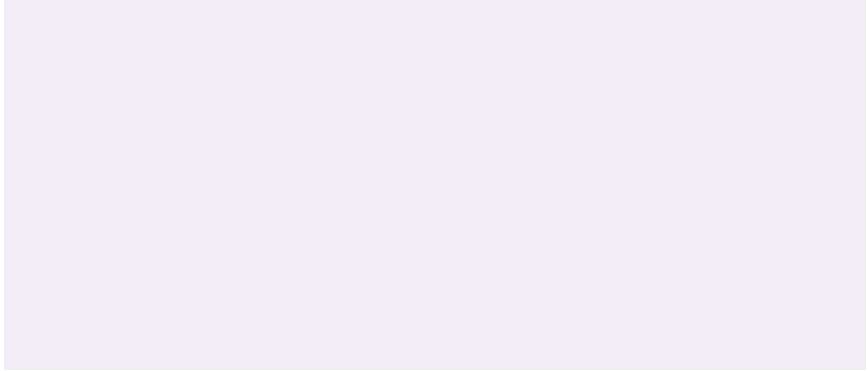
³⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, 1988. 'A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.'

Section Three

They write furiously, coming up with all sorts of ideas. When the stickies are all stuck up and have been loosely grouped, the answers look at bit like this.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS	WHAT OUR ORGANISATION IS LIKE	THE PEOPLE, THE OTHER PLAYERS	THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT, THE SYSTEM
<p>How we make things.</p> <p>How we use raw materials and energy.</p> <p>What we make and how.</p> <p>What we sell, how it's designed, how it's used.</p> <p>The services we provide.</p> <p>The buildings we occupy.</p> <p>The way we communicate with each other.</p> <p>The way we use energy day-to-day.</p> <p>What we do with our waste.</p> <p>The waste we produce.</p> <p>The way we use water.</p> <p>The way we keep ourselves at the right temperature.</p>	<p>Job descriptions.</p> <p>Organisational structure.</p> <p>What we get asked to do by the organisation.</p> <p>Our rewards and incentives.</p> <p>Our organisational vision, mission, values.</p> <p>Budgets and resources for new ways of doing things.</p> <p>The things we measure and value, the way we assess our success.</p> <p>The skills the organisation looks for, and we get trained in.</p> <p>The things we say to each other – policies, procedures, everyday conversations, e-communications.</p> <p>The things we say in policy debates – lobbying, press releases, input to sector policy statements, stances we take.</p>	<p>Suppliers.</p> <p>Customers.</p> <p>Clients.</p> <p>Regulators.</p> <p>Users.</p> <p>Competitors.</p> <p>Our whole sector.</p> <p>How our stakeholders see us, how they interact with us.</p> <p>How we get to work.</p> <p>The hours we work.</p> <p>The length of time we might expect to be in a job.</p> <p>The skills we need to do our jobs.</p> <p>Our beliefs and attitudes about how to use materials and energy.</p> <p>Hearts and minds</p> <p>How we really put policies and procedures into practice.</p>	<p>The market we operate in.</p> <p>The cost of raw materials.</p> <p>Energy costs.</p> <p>Laws on products.</p> <p>Laws on manufacturing.</p> <p>Laws on product responsibility.</p> <p>Taxes on products.</p> <p>Taxes on energy.</p> <p>Taxes on waste.</p> <p>How we work with others in the system to make new things possible.</p> <p>Collaborative initiatives.</p> <p>Sector-wide targets or standards.</p>

Thinking about your own organisation and context, ask yourself what else might change, that isn't already mentioned in these stickies? Do these other things fit easily in with the grouping of ideas already there? Or do they sit together in a new cluster?



IEMA's and GACSO's work with corporate sustainability leaders identified six principles of sustainability in corporate practice:³⁷

- accountability
- ethical behaviour
- inclusivity
- integrity
- stewardship and
- transparency.

Perhaps change in your organisation will involve principles like these being incorporated into its explicitly stated ('espoused'³⁸) values?

³⁷ See 'Defining Corporate Sustainability: A GACSO & IEMA White Paper'. This White Paper also references principles included in ISO 26000:2010 Guidance on social responsibility and BS 8900-1:2013 Managing sustainable development of organizations.

³⁸ From Edgar Schein's model of culture. See 'Section Three: How does change happen? Changing people or changing organisations?'.

Getting onto a sustainable development path doesn't just involve your own organisation. And your opportunities for making change are not confined to that organisation. No organisation is an island – even the best in the world cannot be absolutely sustainable, unless the system of which it is a part is too. The external context and the system constrain what you are able to do, having an impact on financial viability, availability of technology, availability of environmental resources and services, legal implications and what society finds acceptable and eccentric. The external context, the people and organisations which yours relate to, also empower you. They provide opportunities for alliances or partnerships, third-party praise or aggravation, markets and legal obligations. There is more on collaborative system change in [Section Eight – What if...you need to collaborate to change the wider system?](#)

Sustainability change-makers share some of the ways that their organisations have changed internally, manifested in programmes, structures and processes:

"It can be as simple as adjusting the form, or reviewing a process. As a result of the challenge made by myself and my team, sustainability is now formally considered in our technical requirements and design reviews," says Lisa Jones, Senior Technical Assurance Engineer (Environment), Horizon Nuclear Power.

"You can be really influential through changes to internal business processes. Not necessarily the ones you can see, but the hidden, more mundane things like terms and conditions, travel allowances, office moves, procurement. These shift the DNA of the organisation. There's a skill in finding these opportunities." Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

"There are full-time sustainability people in every key area of the business, and a board level sustainability sponsor for each part of the business." Jane Ashton, TUI Group.

Change also happens in the conversations people have, formally and informally:

“There’s a Plan A agenda item for 30 minutes every two months at our Operations Committee, which is chaired by the CEO. It looks at systemic issues, and decisions are minuted. Our culture is such that if the business says it is going to do something, it will, so this is a great fit with that.” Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer.

“Leadership is so important. You need champions who believe in it, who set an example. Who talk sustainability even when you’re not there.” Jane Ashton, TUI Group

The impacts of what begins as a small initiative can be far-reaching:

“Having done a lot of work on our own footprint globally, the company is now looking to commercialise sustainability through supporting our customers’ transition to a lower carbon economy. Governance and resources are being built around this agenda through the mobilisation of a global sustainable financing unit, which reports to a senior management committee called the Climate Business Council, which ultimately has ties to the bank’s Group Management Board.”

Matthew Robinson says HSBC is now taking what it has learned over the last 10 years in terms of reducing its own environmental footprint, and transferring this knowledge to its customers through the bank’s global network, balance sheet and subject matter expertise.

Transformational change will only come about when systems like supply chains and sectors are also part of it.

There are some exciting system-wide coalitions, which have only come about because two or three organisations were prepared to take a leap of faith, in order to achieve outcomes which could only be achieved through collaboration and work on system change. The Sustainable Apparel Coalition – initiated by Walmart and Patagonia, soon joined by Nike – is one.³⁹

³⁹ <http://apparelcoalition.org/behind-the-scenes-at-the-sustainable-apparel-coalition/>

Changing people or changing organisations?

Look again at the examples of 'what might change'. Some of them are about objective, physical things or behaviour that can be directly observed. Some are about rules and organisation. Some are about beliefs and values.

Edgar Schein is a respected organisational theorist. His well-known management model⁴⁰ of the things that might change talks about three 'levels of organisational culture':

- Artefacts – physical objects and observable behaviour that demonstrate important things about the organisation – logos, annual reports, advertisements, how the reception area is arranged and decorated, whether people use the recycling bins or not.
- 'Espoused' values – these are 'consciously held views about truth and reality', which explain and justify the organisation's purpose and actions. They may be written in mission statements, and they may be vague. Beliefs, manifested as things like policies and talked-about norms ('We don't do that round here') also fit here.
- Basic underlying assumptions – the deep-rooted assumptions people make about the organisation's purpose, how it relates to the outside world. These are often so 'taken for granted' that they are not examined or explored.

There is more on this model in [Section Six - Organisational culture, understanding emergence: what is emergence, what is culture?](#)

So, if you want to really change things, it's not enough to just go for the superficial, easy-to-observe 'artefacts', like putting more energy- and resource-efficient appliances on the approved procurement list. You need to find a way to make sure that the purchasing itself gets changed – through changed behaviour and changed values or assumptions.

⁴⁰ Schein, Edgar., 1992. 'Organizational Culture and Leadership.'

Different commentators have different views on how you can bring about lasting, deep-rooted change that 'sticks'. All agree that somehow people's beliefs and attitudes need to change. And all agree that people's behaviour needs to change. But they disagree about the order in which this might happen. Does awareness and a changed attitude need to come before action? This is the assumption in the ADKAR⁴¹ model of changing people's behaviour. Or can taking action lead to a change in attitude and awareness? There is evidence that, for example, fitting micro-generation (like solar panels) to people's homes 'passively' (the residents didn't choose to have it done, it was done by their social landlord) leads to the occupiers learning a lot about energy issues and taking more 'green' action than people from similar backgrounds who don't have solar panels. The visible technology, coupled with a good explanation of how and why it works, stimulates their curiosity and gives them a strong sense of being able to do something effective, in turn leading to a desire to seek out and learn more about the issues, thus raising awareness.⁴²

Alan Knight argues that relying on changes to processes and policies is not enough, given the world we find ourselves in. *"Twenty years ago, we were responsible for a set of issues. Now it's utter complexity and interrelated systems."*

Mike Barry of Marks and Spencer agrees: *"As the world gets faster and instant communication is the norm, people can't come back and check all the details with the sustainability specialists. Think about a store manager faced with a customer question or a buyer discovering a difficult situation in a supply chain. Their judgement and values will become increasingly important."*

For all these reasons, people as well as organisational 'artefacts' like structures, policies and forms need to change. Not everyone will.

⁴¹ <https://www.prosci.com/adkar/adkar-model> Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement.

⁴² Hub Research Consultants for the Sustainable Consumption Round Table 'Seeing the Light: the Impact of Micro-generation on the Way we Use Energy' 2005.

"It's really hard work. Many people are averse to change. So open up communications, get people excited, hear people's worries and objections, respond. And accept not everyone will come along. Some people will be lost. Be comfortable with that. Stick with the change."

Claudine Blamey, The Crown Estate

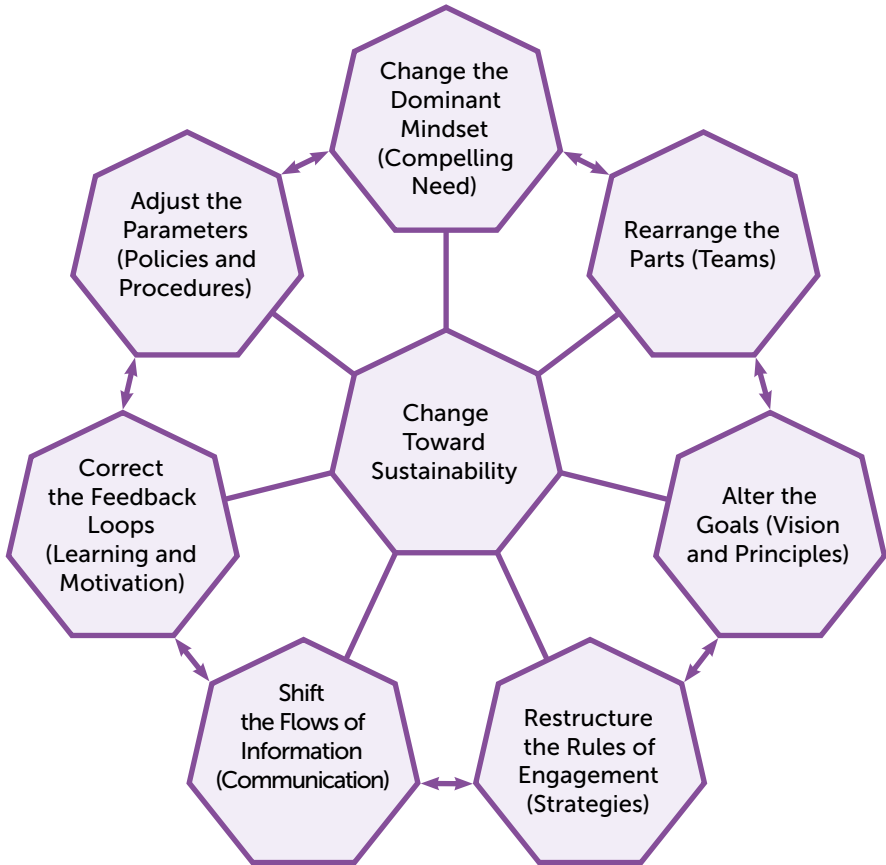
Some people are hard resisters and you may need to navigate carefully to avoid these individuals having a chilling effect on the process and disrupting the consensus for change. Ways of tackling those who are digging in their heels include:

- listening closely to their concerns and identifying exactly what it is that they object to, so that you can either modify the approach to avoid that concern, or show that the concern is unjustified;
- pointing out any advantages to the individual from the change process, where these exist, and working with them to maximise these where possible;
- using champions and peers to persuade or contain the dissenting voice;
- explaining clearly the implications for both the individual and the organisation if they continue to block change;
- accepting that the individual resister may need to find another role, either within the organisation or outside it.⁴³

If the change you are working on involves a bigger system than your own organisation, then the fundamental thing to remember is that no-one is the boss, and everything will be a negotiation. See [Section Eight – What if...you need to collaborate to change the wider system?](#) The outcome will depend on lots of people's choices, and cannot be planned for in the same way as a project that is taking place within a single organisation.

Bob Doppelt offers this checklist of seven 'interventions' which 'interact to form a continuous reinforcing process' of change towards organisational sustainability.

⁴³ Thanks to Mike Lachowicz for input on this section.



Wheel of change toward sustainability⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Doppelt, B., 2003. 'Overcoming the Seven Sustainability Blunders', http://nbis.org/nbisresources/sustainability_frameworks/systems_doppelt_overcoming_sustainability_blunders.pdf

How long will it take?

Longer than you think!

"When I changed roles from being an external advisor to an internal change agent, the biggest thing I learned was how wrong my expectations about speed were."

Vicky Murray, Pukka Herbs

"You have to give it two or three years: time to get to know the organisation, to find allies." Alan Knight, ArcelorMittal

Mike Barry has a clear idea about the phases that Marks and Spencer's change will go through. *"We are on a five-stage journey. First, reduction: less waste and energy. Second, business integration, so new stores or sites have sustainability built in. Third, engaging customers and colleagues so they understand why we do what we do on sustainability. That's where we are now. Fourth, innovate new business models. Fifth, building coalitions for a truly sustainable society. We know we can't do that alone."*

There's a tension to manage here, because, as Dr James Robey says:

"The massive challenges of sustainability are five-year problems not 15–20-year problems as many still conceive them. People haven't got their heads round how severe, and urgent, the problems are." Dr James Robey, Capgemini

Be ready when they do!

The importance of early wins

Getting some tangible success under your belt early on is critical for your credibility and for winning allies. It doesn't have to be a huge change. Look for areas where you can help the organisation cut costs, solve a regulatory problem, build a better relationship with stakeholders or solve a supply chain issue.

Early wins help others have confidence in you, and build your self-confidence.

"There are some quick wins that you can get under your belt. Putting out a sustainability report. Doing or reviewing a materiality matrix. Taking action on employee feedback. Reaching out to client or customer advocates."

Beth Knight, EY

"Choose wisely early on, start small, especially if you are in a risk-averse organisation. Get the leadership on board: the CEO or ExCo. Unless you bring them with you, it won't happen. Once you have a proven record of creating positive business change, then you can branch out."

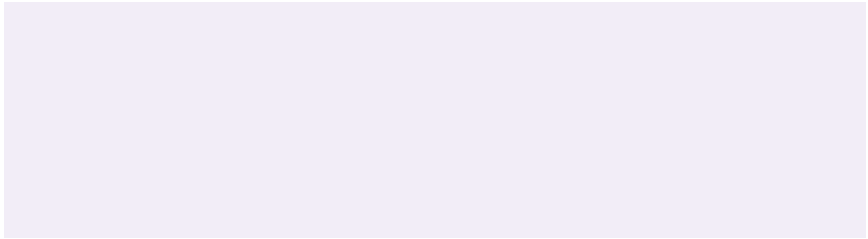
Claudine Blamey, The Crown Estate

How does it happen where you are?

Go back to Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: how does the organisation change and what is its capacity for change?, and re-read the notes you made about changes that have actually happened in your own organisation, sector or context. In particular, look at the questions around how change happens in your situation.

Pick an example of a change that happened, and a change which someone tried to bring about but didn't succeed at. These don't have to be related to sustainability. Reflect on what happened. If you can, talk to some other people who also had experience of the change and the attempted change, and get their perspectives. Look at why one succeeded and the other failed, and identify the key traits.

Having read about some models of change and change-making, and spoken to some other eye-witnesses, ask yourself again: how does change happen where you are?



What kind of change approaches fit your situation?

"If you rely on one strategy, you'll never get any change." Tony Rooke, CDP

Any model of change that you use can and should be adapted to fit your situation. Some organisations are just more organic and less organised than these models assume.

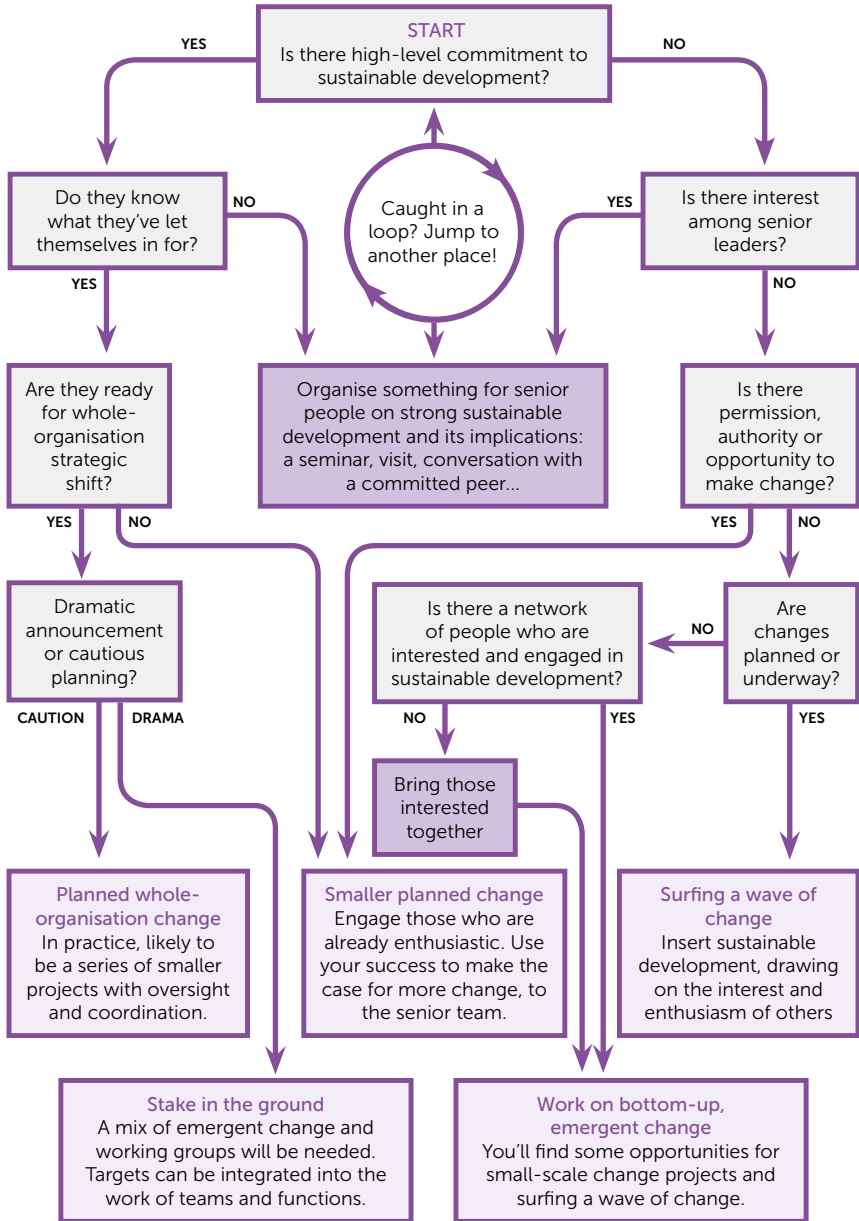
There are many pathways for you to make change in an organisation⁴⁵, and when one gets blocked, you can think about other routes. Your change story will be unique.

Having said that, it might look a bit like one of these:

- planned whole-organisation change
- smaller planned change
- stake in the ground
- surfing a wave of change
- emergent change.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ For change involving collaboration with external organisations, or system change, see Section Eight – What if... you need to collaborate to change the wider system? and Walker, 2013, 'Working Collaboratively: A Practical Guide to Achieving More.'

⁴⁶ This section of the book builds on Walker, 2007, 'Routes to Change' first published in The Environmentalist.



Five approaches to change⁴⁷

47 A version of this diagram first appeared in Walker, 2007, 'Routes to Change,' first published in The Environmentalist.

1. Planned whole-organisation change

This is the text-book scenario. Maybe it's a merger, or wholesale restructuring. Maybe a new business model is being introduced. This kind of approach includes careful attention to detail and strong project management. The new system needs designing and the change-over is planned carefully to happen in the right order. There is a very detailed idea of what things will be like following the change, and engaging people is more to win them over than to design the future. It's a nice idea in theory. In practice, I don't know of any examples where all the careful planning was done before the inspiration and experimentation began. People working in IT contrast 'waterfall' implementation (where it all happens at once) with 'agile', where active experimentation in real situations leads to rapid evolution of solutions. They tend to prefer the latter and disparage clients who want the former.

Perhaps when you look back and tell the story of the changes you helped bring about, it will look like a comprehensively planned transformation. A more sophisticated analysis will show that you've nimbly responded to new discoveries about what works and what's needed. It will be a collage rather than a tapestry.

Claudine Blamey's organisation already had a strong sustainability track record. When a new CEO came in, she wanted to transform the organisation's culture. Her story shows the importance of clear direction and leadership, full-on staff engagement, and working out the details with people.

"Our CEO knew that introducing a high-performance culture wasn't going to be instant. She picked me to lead the change, and I formed a group who were open to change, and we ran with a very bottom-up approach. We held lots of focus groups and consultation looking at what the problems were with how we do things now, what the opportunities are to change, what a high-performance culture might look like in practice. There were twenty-six internal workshops, run by staff, focusing on the behaviours we'd see when the new culture was in place, including how colleagues would challenge each other. We had a communications plan, little nudges to remind people, it's in our induction and training, in our recruitment ads, the performance management process.... Our office move in June will be another catalyst to continue the change: the new layout encourages collaboration." Claudine Blamey, The Crown Estate

2. Smaller, planned change

There are similarities with the first option, but the stakes are lower. Involving people in understanding the drivers for change and designing the future is more manageable, because the reach of the change is not so large. It might be used for something like launching a sustainably certified product line, introducing name-free stages into recruitment processes to reduce unconscious bias, or deciding to cut water use by five per cent year-on-year.

When Lynne Ceeney was at Parsons Brinckerhoff, an engineering consultancy, she wanted to move beyond operational eco-efficiency, and get some sustainability thinking into the core business offer.

“There were some teams who weren’t using sustainability to sell our services, or integrating it into their projects. And it’s hard to know how you might do that, when the client hasn’t asked for it. It’s hard to question the brief! So, the global sustainability council developed tools to help people have conversations with clients. We borrowed from Australian good practice: there was a training pack on how to open a conversation on sustainability with clients: topics like long-term costs, capex versus opex, what their competitors are doing. We tailored it for different countries, where the agendas are different: some places are more interested in climate resilience, others in the use of home-grown consultants.”

Lynne Ceeney

3. Stake in the ground

Someone very senior makes a public commitment to a very stretching target, without worrying that it’s not clear how (or even if) the organisation will achieve it. Think of President Kennedy’s commitment to put a person on the moon; or the Paris agreement to ‘holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels’. In organisational sustainability, Unilever’s Sustainable Living Plan sets a goal of halving environmental impact per consumer use while improving the health and wellbeing of more than 1 billion people. Kingfisher has declared its aim to be ‘net positive’, a restorative company. Governments, cities, universities and corporates are working to transition to a circular economy with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. The 400 member

companies of the Consumer Goods Forum are aiming for zero-net deforestation in their supply chains by 2020.

When Vicky Murray joined Pukka Herbs, there was already a stake in the ground.

“Pukka had committed to being carbon neutral ‘crop to cup’ by 2030. That’s a really positive ambition! But there wasn’t any measurement in place, or interim targets. I’ve been brought in to bring rigour to those ambitious goals. We’re measuring our baseline and will set science-based targets as interim milestones.”

4. Surfing a wave of change

Or trimming your sails to take advantage of the wind, even if it isn’t blowing in exactly the direction you want to head. For example, proposals for energy efficiency measures may be judged on their return on investment – a rise in the price of energy may mean that something which was rejected six months ago is suddenly back on the agenda. Or consider what happens when organisations are merging. Having a common new initiative like a mental health network or a community volunteering scheme may be a very helpful way of building a new sense of organisational pride and team work, as well as having environmental or social benefits. When the mergers team are looking for something to gel people together, the sustainability change-maker can offer them a solution.

David Bent describes working with a partner organisation, whose CEO had been looking for a cause célèbre,

“O2 had been spun off from a larger, long-established player. Ronan Dunne, the CEO was looking for the next challenge, as part of ongoing brand and cultural repositioning. He wanted to light a fire in the belly of the staff, to keep renewing and rejuvenating things. He heard another CEO talking about how sustainability was motivating and profitable, and he put those two things together. He saw the possibility of aligning purpose – doing good – with profitability at just the time he was looking for something new.”

5. Emergent change

Organisational culture – the conversations people have when the boss isn't listening, the topics which are considered out of bounds, 'the way we do things round here', the values that people actually live, rather than those which are written in the organisational handbook – emerges from the thousands of conversations that happen between people, and the way we observe others reacting or not to different situations. It is the soil which supports and nourishes new initiatives, and it can be very effective at poisoning them too! The paradox for the change-maker is that you can't force emergence in a particular direction – but you can put in place the conditions for a positive sustainability culture to emerge, through networks, experiences and information.

Academic institutions are organisations where a large proportion of the people – the students – are not employees. They can't be told what to do, in the same way staff can.

Professor Martin Bigg is based at the University of the West of England in Bristol, and says,

"There has always been commitment to sustainability: we include it in every course. Alongside strong sustainability leadership by academic and facilities staff, students play a huge role. We now have almost 1,500 students in the green team driving waste and energy management on campus, volunteering with community organisations and significantly influencing the new £350 million major campus development. Examples of improvements achieved by students range from the sustainable sourcing of the materials used in construction and green walls to improving energy use in buildings and more sustainable catering. Our graduates leave with the confidence, skills and experience to challenge and secure sustainability in everything they do."

These five approaches don't have to be used in isolation. Each one can support and benefit from a judicious use of the others. Having successfully surfed a wave of change, you may find you have catalysed some emergent change, which then makes it easier to recruit enthusiastic people for a smaller change project. If the boss drives a stake into the ground, setting up a series of working groups to understand the 'why' and come up with the 'how' may mean that you end up with a lot of small projects, which then need to be managed as work streams within a large organisation-wide change programme.

If there is a strong and authentic commitment to sustainable development at the highest levels in your organisation, then whole-organisation change is possible. The preferred style may be the 'stake in the ground', or the senior team may prefer to get a small group to develop detailed plans before making a public commitment.

If the commitment isn't there, or if you're sure they don't really know what they'd be letting themselves in for, an early step would be to organise a high-level seminar with a credible, charismatic external person, or a trip to a tropical forest or a food bank or other catalytic experience, to shake and wake them.

If there's no budging the senior team, perhaps there is someone at a senior level who will sanction a smaller project. If even this is not possible, then look out for coincidental changes which are happening anyway, that you can surf. And with all of the approaches, cultivate the soil – recruit and trust your colleagues to change things from the bottom up, through emergent change. Useful ideas include champions' networks, volunteer groups, and introducing the topic into formal and informal conversations like meetings, social events and training. Emergent change is not just for situations where planned change isn't permitted – it should be an integral part of any change. So, do it too, anyway.

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Section Four

The changes you want to make

As emphasised in Section Three, successful change is all about engaging key people: so, you will need to do all of this thinking again with your colleagues when you really get going.

You will want to go into those conversations with an open mind, but your colleagues will not expect you to have an empty mind. So, think of this section as a practice run, or a worked example, which will help you refine your ideas before those conversations.

Some change-makers I spoke to were keen that you should do a root-and-branch transformation:

"It's about the sustainability implications and aspects of everything that's going on. There aren't sustainability things and other things. There's just 'the thing'." Vincent Neate of Relationship Capital Strategies

"Yes! Once you have a successful sustainability strategy, rip it up and integrate it into your business," says Mark Gough

Perhaps you agree with the root-and-branch approach? Or perhaps you have something more specific in mind?

Smaller changes can help build your credibility, showing that you are someone who can make things happen. They can be especially useful if they help move the organisation along towards a higher level of sustainability 'maturity' (see [Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: What is its sustainability journey?](#)). Done well, they create allies and can open up a space for more far-reaching conversations.

Strategic tools

For change-makers who are inspired by the possibility of helping their organisation develop its strategy informed by a sustainability lens – with a view to organisational transformation – here are some tools recommended by the change-makers I spoke to for this book.

Moving along a maturity spectrum

There are a number of maturity spectrums in use – the one in Section 2.2 above, from Cranfield is an example. It can be used both to diagnose where the organisation is now, and to prompt thinking about where people would like it to be by when, what this would look like in detail, and what needs to happen to get from now to then.

B-Impact Assessment

There is an open source self-assessment tool which any company can use, without committing to certification. The results include benchmarking. B-Impact assessment is part of the B-Corp family, which also provides certification to companies. <http://bimpactassessment.net/>

Future Fit benchmark

Also open source, this benchmark is a self-assessment tool for any business, based on The Natural Step framework. <http://futurefitbusiness.org/>

Futures

‘Futures’ thinking allows you to take people out of their current environment and work through the risks and opportunities they may experience in the future. There are a range of techniques that people use from horizon scanning to identify trends, to visions to define the future you want, to scenarios that allow you to explore different plausible futures. For methods to help explore futures, see <http://thefuturesacademy.co.uk/futures/methods>.

Three Horizons

Used in the worlds of innovation and growth, this framework enables people to think about the current situation, the desired (or anticipated) future and the transition between the two, identifying those aspects of the current situation which will and won't fit with the emerging future. www.iffpraxis.com/three-horizons See also the book 'Three Horizons: The Patterning of Hope' by Bill Sharpe.

Sustainable Development Goals

Use the SDGs as a way of understanding current impacts, envisaging the desired future, and analysing where the organisation is helping or has opportunities to do so, or is getting in the way (and risks having its license to operate reduced as a result). WBCSD, GRI and the UN Global Compact have a platform which helps you identify tools to understand the SDGs <https://sdgcompass.org/>. UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development (UKSSD) supports organisations who are working to advance sustainable development and helps to facilitate the delivery of the SDGs in the UK. <https://www.ukssd.co.uk/>

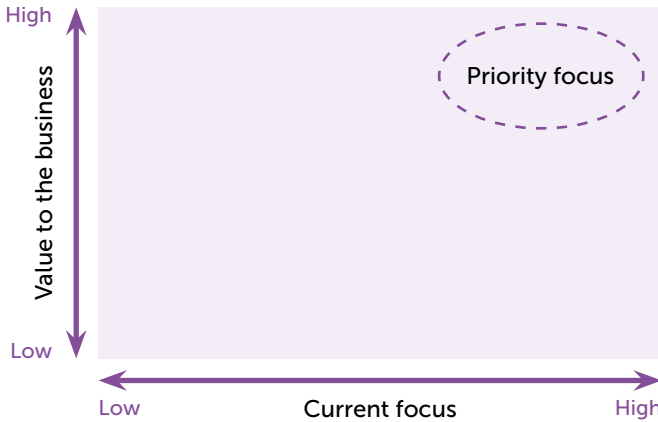
Tools for prioritising

If you are looking for something to help you robustly identify clear priorities for action, these tools have been tried and tested by the change-makers I interviewed. Of course, better tools may be developed, or you can always tailor something to your own situation.

Materiality matrix

Issues can be prioritised by plotting them on a materiality matrix. The axes are usually 'impact on the organisation's performance' and 'importance to stakeholders'. Methodologies vary for identifying issues and for assigning them a priority on the two axes. There is guidance in the GRI reporting framework, and many organisations publish their methodology as part of their sustainability reporting, so you can see examples and get inspiration on how to do it from them.

Jonathan Garrett uses different axes to prioritise issues and initiatives. Working with his team and senior leaders, the priorities are identified by finding those with the highest potential value for the business, which are currently being given least attention.



Prioritisation matrix: value/current focus

Beth Knight also uses a matrix to help decide where to focus effort, but her criteria are priority and timescale: high priority, low priority, now and later. *“There is a never-ending list of things to do and improvements that can be made. Unavoidably this means we must say no to things and pool resources where our impact is greatest.”*

Whichever of these tools you use, don't just use them alone, at your desk. Bringing together a group who use them collectively gives better analysis and, perhaps more importantly, entails really engaging conversations and an exchange of ideas which is the best way to ensure shared ownership. It might be your sustainability team, other internal or external stakeholders, or a group of senior leaders.

Talking about using spectrums or scales, David Bent advises *“Ask them where they think the company is on the scale now, and where they want to be in the future. Then you can come back and say ‘you said this’ not ‘I think this.’”*

Jonathan Garrett agrees. *“We had a materiality matrix. I went back to those people who had been involved in populating it, and used it as a tool to embed change. They had said regulators were important, so I asked the people who own those relationships if they needed my team’s help. If they said yes, we planned out how to do that. If they said no, I checked back again after six months to see if things had changed.”*

Your change

This section takes you through a structured ‘back of the envelope’ analysis of the change you’d like to make: you have already begun to think about this in the earlier sections of the book. Building on that (go back through it if you like), it’s time to feel your gut instinct again.

Think about how ambitious you want to be about the scale of the change. Do you want to raise awareness, tidy up the organisation, embed sustainable development in systems and behaviour, mainstream sustainability thinking, or shift the vision and strategy? And will the change be transformational or incremental?

What is the change you’d like to focus on?

Identify what will help you and what may get in the way, within your organisation and in the context you and the organisation are operating in.

Worksheet Eight


SWOT analysis

The change I want to make

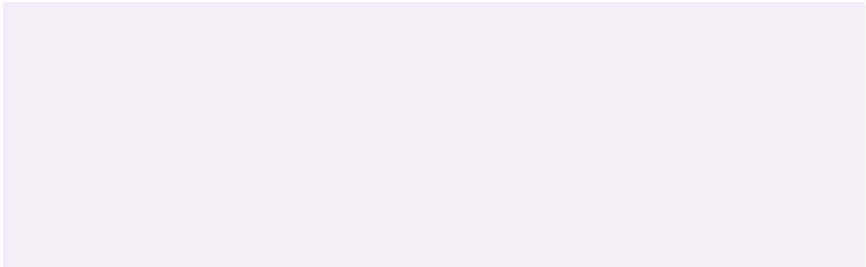
	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
Internal to the organisation	<p>Strengths <i>(e.g. focus on a cost reduction, the need for legal compliance, organisational commitment, enthusiasm, track record etc.)</i></p>	<p>Weaknesses <i>(barriers e.g. lack of resources, technical difficulty, up-front cost, lack of expertise etc.)</i></p>
External to the organisation	<p>Opportunities <i>(e.g. stakeholder interest, reputational benefits, investor or funder approval, existing sector collaborations, market demand etc.)</i></p>	<p>Threats <i>(e.g. competing product, lack of supplier availability, political turbulence etc.)</i></p>

If you need to, remind yourself of the kinds of things that might change, in [Section Three How does change happen: what might change?](#) In relation to the particular change that you are focusing on, what might change? And which of these would you really like to change? If you find it useful, think about this under five headings:

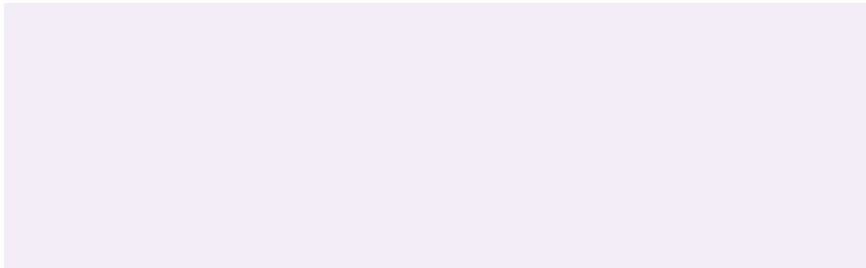
What I'd like to change about our direct environmental and social impacts



What I'd like to change about our indirect environmental and social impacts



What I'd like to change about what our organisation is like



What I'd like to change about the people, the other players

What I'd like to change about the external context and the system

How do you want it to be?

There are two really useful techniques which begin with imagining an ideal future state, and help you come up with an action plan to attain it – ‘future perfect’ (a ‘solutions- focus’ approach⁴⁸) and ‘backcasting’.

Both approaches rely on first building a vision of a sustainable X, or a ‘more sustainable’ X. Relax and let yourself go at this point – how would it be if it was as good as it could be? Ask yourself the ‘miracle’ question – if you woke up tomorrow morning and found that a miracle had happened and things had suddenly become sustainable overnight, what would it be like? You may find it helps to draw a picture representing your ideal.

48 See “The Solutions Focus – Making Coaching and Change SIMPLE”, by Paul Z Jackson and Mark McKergow

Worksheet Nine

Future perfect


This technique can be used individually or in team workshops. It works particularly well in situations where there is some existing positive experience to build on.

Step one

Create the 'future perfect'. Imagine the desired future you want to bring about. You wake up one morning, and there it is. Don't get caught up in how it happened. Instead, consider how you'd know that it has. Think about what you'd see, hear, touch, smell, sense, say. Really feel your way into it. Describe it to yourself.


Step two

On a scale of one to ten, where ten is the 'future perfect' that you've just imagined, where are you now?



Step three

Coaching – ask solutions-focused questions, like:

- What's helping you to reach that level already?
 - What small steps would take you one point further along the scale?
 - What would be the first tiny signs of progress?
 - When and where does the future perfect happen already, even a little bit and even if it's an exception?
 - What happens that makes that happen?
- 

Once you've identified what's already working well, build on that to go forward.

Source: Jackson, P Z and McKergow, M.

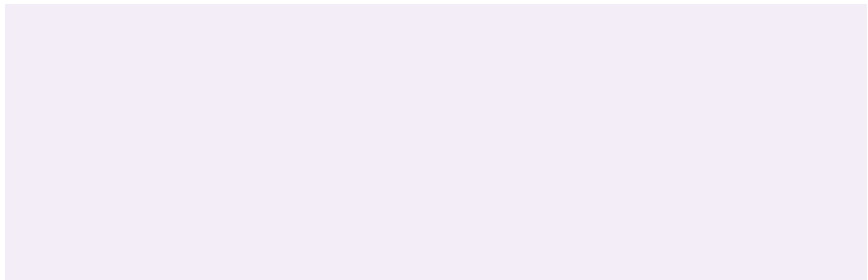
Backcasting

Backcasting is the opposite of forecasting. Instead of building on what you know about today's trends and situation, you define the 'desired future' and work back from there. Backcasting is particularly useful when:

- the problem you are looking at is complex and you need to step back and view things more objectively
- there is a need for significant, disruptive or transformational change (rather than incremental change)
- today's dominant trends are part of the problem
- the time horizon is long and there is scope for considerable amounts of deliberate choice.

When you have created your vision of sustainability, imagine that you are there, in the future, and tell yourself the story of how you got there.

- What were the critical things that happened, which allowed the change to occur?
- Who were the key players who made a difference?
- What barriers were overcome?
- What opportunities were grasped?
- Who helped?
- What made people change their minds?
- What made people change their behaviour?



If you want to introduce some inspiration about how different the products and services of the future might be, take a look at Forum for the Future's Futures Centre, which curates information on trends, signals of change and how people are making sense of the world that's emerging.

<https://www.thefuturescentre.org/>

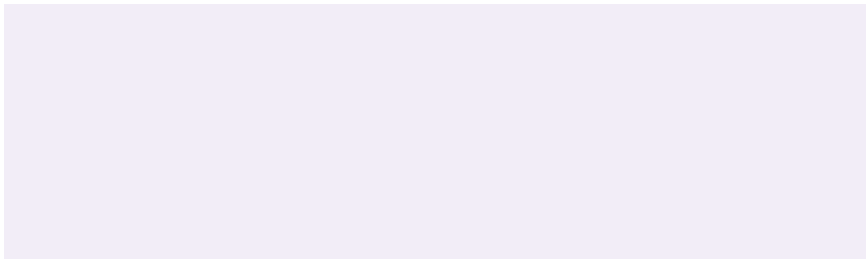
Who has a stake in this change?

Whilst you're still focusing on the specific thing you'd like to change, identify who else is involved. These are the key players and stakeholders – the individuals, groups of people or organisations who have a stake in the thing you want to change, or in how it will be if it is changed. Remember that having a stake means either that they can influence whether the change happens or not, or that they will be impacted on by the change.

Jennifer Ekelund recalls a near-miss from her time working at the University of Oxford:

"I was keen to offer paid internships to students to allow them to learn from our work on the estate sustainability plan. I contacted the relevant academic department I intended to work in partnership with and asked for their input on my funding proposal, which was successful. The problem was that I hadn't fully understood how their existing internship programme worked, and that I should have included funding for their administration time. I hadn't asked the right questions, but my contacts in the department appreciated the early engagement and my apologies! It didn't prevent the programme going ahead, happily, but it did slow it down."

Thinking about the change you want to make, who has a stake in this change?



Once you have identified the stakeholders, consider what their attitude to the change is. At this stage, you may not be able to do anything more than make some assumptions about where people might stand. Make sure you check these assumptions when you can – people can surprise you.

Active
resistance

Passive
resistance

Don't know,
don't care,
can't decide

Passive
support

Active
support



Where do people stand?

You also need to get a sense of how influential the stakeholders will be – whose decisions do you need to put most effort into influencing? And how much the change will impact on them – whose needs and concerns need to be taken account of? Use the mapping matrix in [Section 2.3 – Know the people: find out who the key people are](#) to discover which stakeholders are the highest priority for engagement.

Having thought about their likely initial attitude to the change, and their level of priority, you can begin to analyse in more detail.

Write a list of the stakeholders here. For each one, make an early judgement about what their attitude is, and how important it is that you involve them to find out their needs and concerns, and to design the change and your change strategy with them in mind.

STAKEHOLDER	WHERE DO THEY (PROBABLY) STAND?	PRIORITY FOR INVOLVEMENT	THEIR LIKELY MOTIVATIONS AND PRIORITIES

Include the people who are less likely to support what you're doing. Lynne Ceeney says:

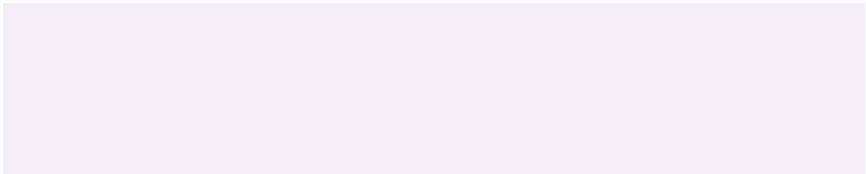
"Having a sceptic on the team is really useful when they represent a constituency within the organisation. It helps you test your ideas and approaches with potential naysayers in a 'safe space'. The arguments they put out will come later in the process anyway, so you may as well have your responses and point of view prepared earlier."

What can you bring to the party?

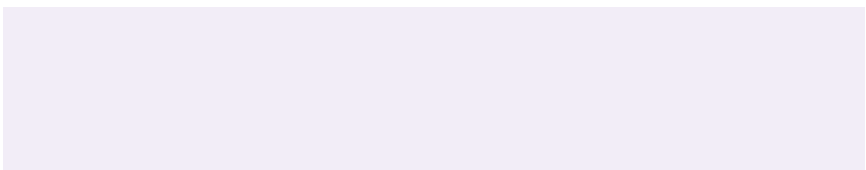
In Section 2.1 – Know yourself, you made an initial assessment of your own abilities and resources as a sustainability change-maker. These may include budgets, time, people, physical resources as well as soft power, expertise and intangible support. Consider also those you know you can draw on from your team, or from other allies and champions, both inside and outside your organisation.

In relation to the specific change you are thinking about now, what are the greatest strengths you can build on and play to? And where are your gaps or weaknesses?

Our great strengths



Our gaps and weaknesses



Section Four

Thinking about the gaps and weaknesses, how might you go about shoring them up by involving others?

Don't just think about the people who you think it would be easy to get on board (although this may be a good place to start). Think about the people who it would be fantastic to get on board. It may be helpful to look back at the list of stakeholders. What if some of them were part of the change team, rather than outside of it and needing to be persuaded? What first steps will you take, to build this wider team?

Priority gap (e.g. skills, power, authority over resources etc.)		
Who would it be great to have in the team, to fill this gap?		
I will... (action to take).	By... (date).	I will know I have been successful because... (how you'll know).

Don't forget that the strengths and weaknesses will change over time (as the team members develop or leave, as the context changes, as you tackle other challenges) so come back and update your action plan periodically.

"Build a team who are the yin to your yang. Don't recruit people in your own image. Some people love finding patterns in data. That's not me. But I need to bring that person in to the team. Play to your own strengths, and bring in others who have other strengths." Miles Watkins, BRE Group

How will you know when you've done it?

This sub-section is about monitoring progress and learning to do even better by considering how effective you have been. There is also a short consideration on setting targets: although not everything you look for as evidence of change will be something with a clear, or public, target attached to it.

There are two aspects to this:

- the change in the world
- your personal impact.

The change in the world

Depending on what you have identified as the significant elements of the change, you will want to monitor different things about the impacts of the change.

<p>Significant element of the change (see also <i>Section Three – How does change happen: what might change?</i>)</p>	<p>Kinds of things to monitor. These are just illustrations. For more on indicators, see sources like GRI (www.globalreporting.org) and sdgcompass business indicators (http://sdgcompass.org/business-indicators/).</p>
<p>Direct environmental and social impacts</p>	<p>This is, in some ways, the most straightforward. You may well be monitoring important impacts already, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO₂ emissions • water use • % of staff who earn a Living Wage.
<p>Indirect environmental and social impacts</p>	<p>What do you make? What do you sell? What services do you provide and how? What are the impacts in your supply chain? E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender split at director and board level • % of products sold which are at the highest rating for energy or fuel efficiency • net deforestation in the supply chain.

Section Four

<p>What the organisation is like</p>	<p>This is everything from KPIs and organisational structure, to the everyday conversations when the boss isn't listening (which shades into the next category...). The kinds of things that you might use include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a regular staff questionnaire on values and on how well they think the organisation is doing in relation to sustainable development • seniority of people who have environmental protection, social impacts or sustainable development in their job descriptions • overhearing people talking positively about sustainability initiatives.
<p>The people, the other players</p>	<p>What skills do people need to do their jobs? What are people's beliefs and values? What does the rest of the supply chain do? What do stakeholders think? The kinds of evidence you can use include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surveys of stakeholders and opinion formers • inclusion of sustainable development themes in staff induction • numbers of suppliers meeting minimum environmental or social criteria.
<p>The external context, the system</p>	<p>Are there regulations, national standards or sector policy positions which need to change? What about market conditions or costs? Do different players need to coordinate their activities, to unblock change? When you're trying to change the external context, it's much harder to pin down the extent to which the change is due to your efforts. However, you can still look for evidence of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passing of a new law, or amendment to regulations or government guidance • whether a sector sustainability collaboration of some kind has been formed, and the influence of its activities • feedback from customers or suppliers. • increase in sales of a more sustainable product or service.

Here are some general points about monitoring and assessing progress for you to bear in mind.

Look out particularly for the words being used and the stories being told – these are evidence of a shift in underlying thinking.

Listen out for new targets being set – existing targets becoming more stretching as well as entirely new things being brought into the frame.

When looking at targets, ask yourself whether they are about starting from where you are and inching forward (which may be a sign of greening the status quo) or whether they are more like stretch targets which will take you to an ambitious desired future.

Look at the desk you are sitting at. Imagine it is a graph showing your organisation's progress towards sustainability. Say your organisation has a target of reducing carbon emissions by one tonne a year. How far along the desk will it move each year? Then ask yourself where sustainability is? Is it at the end of the desk? Or at the wall? Or outside in the car park? Or sixty miles away?

With incremental improvements starting from where you are, you can see how far you have moved from your starting point. But if you don't have any sense of the end point, and when you need to get there by, it's pretty hard to know whether the action plan is going to get you there in time, or whether it is hopelessly inadequate and needs a radical shake-up. Benchmarking over time gives you evidence about the rate of change. Benchmarking against comparable internal or external peers gives you evidence about what's doable now. Benchmarking against national, international or sectoral targets can also be helpful: the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the Sustainable Development Goals, are catalysing a transformation in the ability of individual organisations to set meaningful targets, for example through the use of science-based targets.⁴⁹

Change-makers I spoke to took different views on targets.

⁴⁹ See for example the We Mean Business coalition: <https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/> and <http://sciencebasedtargets.org/>

"We live by the grace of our internal political capital, so I don't commit to what we can't achieve. I want people to see that we are high performing, not a team that doesn't meet its targets. People in other parts of the organisation don't always understand our role or know how long things take. I also need to keep my team motivated with a sense of achievement and ensure their performance linked bonuses aren't impacted by us over-committing." Beth Knight, EY

Dr James Robey prefers to shoot for the stars. *"I would rather set ambitious targets and miss, than low-ball targets and sail over them. We set a very ambitious target to reduce our UK carbon emissions from travel by 30% between 2008 and 2014. In the end, we achieved 22%. Ultimately, 22% was a very credible achievement in our industry, and I'm not sure we would have made 22% if we'd set the target at 15% or 20%. A high target makes you think harder."*

Worksheet Ten

How will you know you're making change?

In relation to the specific change that you want to make, how will you know whether it is underway, whether it has happened, or how well it has happened?

SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT OF THE CHANGE	THE EVIDENCE I WILL LOOK FOR
Direct environmental and social impacts	
Indirect environmental and social impacts	
What the organisation is like	
The people, the other players	
The external context, the system	
Other	

Your personal impact

Because the sustainable development journey is a long one, and you may not always get the change you intended, you should also monitor your personal impact as a change-maker. This is about:

- learning by doing, so you can have more impact and be more effective next time
- reassuring yourself that you worked hard and have had an impact, even if the change in the world is hard to spot
- understanding what you did that got a wildly better result than you expected.

A great forum for this sort of reflection is an action learning set, or some sort of coaching relationship. Other people use journals or learning logs. It can help to have a set of questions that you (and your team) routinely use to reflect on what's happened. Feel free to come up with your own. Here is one that has been helpful to other people – the ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretive and Decisional) model.⁵⁰

Objective

- What happened?
 - This should be confined to the facts – interpretation comes later. What did I see, touch, hear, smell, taste? This can include specific feedback that people gave. What did I do (the observable behaviour, rather than its impact or intention)?

Reflective

- What emotions did I feel?

⁵⁰ These questions are based on the ORID model, developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. www.ica-uk.org.uk

Interpretive

- How can I interpret that?
 - What was really going on?
 - What was good, helpful, effective or generated insights?
 - What got in the way of progress?

Decisional

- What should I do differently (or more of) next time?

Let's take a look at what change-makers have said about their early achievements.

"In this organisation, credibility is earned by delivering significant projects. I've made friends and allies through working hard to understand and articulate the benefits to the company and to individuals. My most significant early win was maximising the tax benefits for our partners when making charitable donations. I spotted a missed opportunity and raised awareness of the processes that already exist. This helped our partners and raised more money for good causes. It also really helped me with later initiatives, because people knew me and knew I was good at finding win-wins." Beth Knight, EY

Should you go for big changes or little ones?

Jonathan Garrett says, *"You need to do a bit of both. We're taking part in a paper cup recycling initiative, and everyone knows about it. Employees are excited, and we have to do it. But I also need to make sure that we're building towards the carbon 'ruler', going beyond the first centimetre into where we can really have an impact across our value chain. We're on a journey. Some things make very little direct contribution in terms of big numbers, but they help you gain traction."*

Section Five

Engaging people

"I drank an awful lot of coffee with an awful lot of people!" Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council.

Visit, listen, involve

Change-makers I spoke to for this book couldn't have been clearer: it's essential to build relationships, there's no substitute for face to face meetings, and the point of those meetings is for you to find out what's important to the other people.

"You've got to meet people where they are and learn about the business. The most effective thing was to shut up and listen." Colin Robertson, talking about his time at N G. Bailey

"Don't email, it's the worst way to get things done. Make relationships."
Tony Rooke, CDP

"When I was starting out in my role, I asked different kinds of questions in my early conversations with people. Being new helped: I mixed coaching questions with closed or loaded questions. I had a grace period where I could ask things like 'do you not have this?' and 'could we do better here?' in a non-confrontational way. I asked a couple of provocative questions in each conversation, prompting them to think about things. I picked up on what seemed to be important to them, personally as well as professionally. They were gentle exchanges, and I judged how far I could go in each conversation. I was then able to build programmes around the priorities of the functional leaders" Beth Knight, EY

"Listen closely, carefully, openly. If you think you already know the answers you only have half the story. Listen to different people: the coal face, the shop floor, the warehouse, on sites. See what's actually happening in the real world and don't assume anything." Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

"It's all about relationships. You're asking people to trust your observations to such a degree that this influences the way they do their job. They need to like and trust you. This is also the case with external organisations. And relationships are with individuals, not organisations. If people trust you, they will take personal risks and go outside their brief. And it has to be visits, visits, visits. You get so much more credibility by being seen to visit, by being present, being seen talking to leadership. And you get to see things for yourself. You remember it. You meet the people who run the business and they remember you. You should have something to say, your opinion and your narrative, but share your expertise lightly and really listen. Of course, the business case matters, but you can do a lot based on relationships and making the arguments face to face." Alan Knight, ArcelorMittal

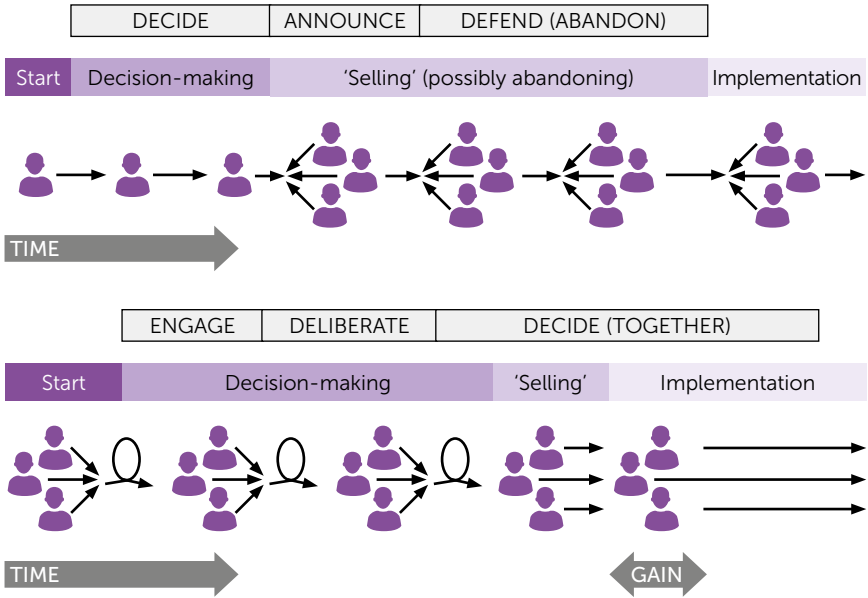
"My first question used to be 'what will you do for Plan A?' Now I say, 'what is your business trying to achieve and how can I use Plan A to help?'" Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

Involve people earlier rather than later. Beware the Decide – Announce – Defend model of making decisions and communicating about change (see below). Much better to build in ways of taking account of people's needs, concerns and aspirations through an Engage – Deliberate – Decide⁵¹ approach.

People often choose to go down the DAD route because they think it will save time, or they have concerns that the expertise of the experts will be diluted or ignored in favour of irrational or misinformed 'popular opinion'. In change for sustainable development, involving people early on is especially important, because engagement and buy-in are essential. In fact, your biggest critics and challengers can become your best allies if you listen and engage.

Attempting to impose change on people through the DAD model doesn't save time, if you end up having to defend against passionate resistance, discover that the plans have fundamental flaws, or meet a stubborn refusal to change. DAD triggers the negative resistance responses described in [Section Five – Engaging people: emotional responses](#). Involving people – so that they can question and understand the 'experts', explain how they see the current situation, put forward their own visions of how things could be and come up with their own ideas for getting there – leads to more robust plans with a ready-made constituency who want to make them succeed.

⁵¹ Sometimes also known as Discuss - Agree – Implement or Involve – Agree – Implement.



Traditional and involving decision-making processes⁵²

"Involve people in framing the problem and setting the destination. Source as much content, ideas and enthusiasm from as wide a range of people as possible. The more inclusive you are, the better. You can't have all the ideas. Crowdsourcing is helpful. Test the ideas, flush out the bad ideas early."

Miles Watkins, BRE Group

Involving people in coming up with the detail, and giving them a real opportunity to interrogate the core concept, is a particularly important way of avoiding unnecessary emotional barriers. It may be that some disagreements are inevitable – that there are people who will clearly lose out in the course of the change that you are putting forward. However, a lot of the unhappiness around change is to do with control. People don't, on the whole, welcome change that they are not in control of. You can help by giving more control to people over the specifics of the change.

⁵² Adapted from work by The Environment Council, later developed by InterAct Networks with the Environment Agency.

When people are resisting change, they will be very skilled at spotting flaws, contradictory messages, and a lack of alignment between what people say and what people do. This is especially the case in sustainability matters, where it is very easy to spot the many things that even the greenest or most ethical of people are doing wrong.

When working for a previous employer, Bekir Andrews was able to help colleagues find a solution in difficult financial times, and get an environmental benefit.

"I wanted to reduce our CO₂ / km, but it was hard to get traction. The wider economic situation was weak, and the business was finding it difficult to provide pay rises to staff. Many staff were entitled to car allowances. So, I sat with HR and finance, and we looked at how we might reduce the spend on vehicles while still attracting talent. Our solution was to change the car allowance, so that if people didn't spend it all, they could get a cash payment on the difference. At the same time, we specified that all cars had to emit less than 120gCO₂/km. I went to each board director and ran the idea past them individually. They approved it, but there were concerns that it could backfire. It didn't. We didn't get a single complaint, because we had good vehicles on the list, with plenty of choice, and we had asked people about the changes while we designed them."

As well as making sure that people are able to be truly influential in the things that affect them (e.g. the targets for their team, suggestions for resource efficiency measures, ideas for new products or services and so on), you need to keep a careful eye on what you and your team have said you'll do, and make sure that you do it. Also watch out for contradictions between your change initiative, and other initiatives or core activities.

As you take each step forward, make sure that it's clear what's been agreed or decided (e.g. criteria for use in future decisions, or membership of a working group), particularly specific actions that people will take – even if the actions are very simple, like writing a short piece for the project blog.

"When you involve key people in the initial analysis, then the work is based on their priorities, and it's their work that we're supporting. So now, when I meet people, I ask 'how's it going' and 'how can we help?'" Beth Knight, EY

Harnessing people's great ideas

If you're running a workshop or similar meeting, be clear about what you want by the end of the meeting that you don't have at the beginning. This could be better relationships, or for people to know or understand more about the topic than they did before, or for ideas and action plans to be created, or all of these things.

Make sure that the people coming to the workshop understand its objectives too, and consider asking someone who's not got a stake in the outcomes to run it. You can find excellent independent professional facilitators through the IAF's register (<https://www.iaf-world.org/site/facilitators/find/bycountry>).

Workshops can be a good method to:

- communicate your rationale and the evidence you have to back it up, with a live opportunity to test and improve it
- communicate or build a vision of how things can be
- discover what people already know and think, and what their concerns and enthusiasms are
- identify additional stakeholders to be engaged next
- get positive feelings going – curiosity, enthusiasm, confidence, fun
- build people's knowledge and understanding so they're better equipped to change
- generate suggestions, debate them, and prioritise them (see [Section Three – how does change happen: what might change?](#) for some prompts that you might ask people to think about)
- agree the ways that you will ensure that suggestions really do take you towards sustainable development (how to check their quality)
- come up with ways of communicating the ideas simply to other people (including different ways for different audiences)
- generate ideas for action, and agree what to take forward
- discuss how to measure progress, and do some initial benchmarking
- thank people and celebrate success.

The more creative and engaged you want people to be, the more creative and engaging your workshop design needs to be. Keep it positive and future-focused, and make sure it's the participants, rather than the 'experts' who do most of the talking. Use a technique like the 'future perfect' solutions focus (see [Section Four – The changes you want to make: how do you want it to be?](#)) to help get out actions which are practical and capture people's imagination.

"Keep it interactive. If you're training people, engage them, excite them. Find out what they think and ask for their suggestions. Don't just preach." Jane Ashton, TUI Group

Don't call something a workshop if it isn't going to be a sleeves-rolled-up, interactive event where things get talked through, created or decided. People – rightly – get annoyed if they expect to participate and then just get talked at or patronised.

Equip and empower

If you're involving people in coming up with great ideas to improve things, they need to be empowered to put their ideas into action. It's no good asking people to come up with proposal at a workshop, if their line manager or budget holder comes back with a flat 'no'. Part of knowing your organisation is understanding what level of decision-making people have, whether there's a budget, and what kinds of things need to be developed as proposals for decision-making elsewhere.

Anticipate what might be needed from people's line managers, from the human resources team, the IT team or facilities managers. Get these people on-side by including them in your early conversations.

People also need to be equipped with information and understanding. Have expertise readily available in a form that people can use. This might mean things like:

- having people with sustainability expertise at a workshop who can answer questions
- having your contact details available to everyone
- a call-off contract with an energy-efficiency specialist or other expert consultants
- details for organisations which provide practical support on environmental or social issues.

"We helped a client – Northern Rail – organise a Dragons' Den-style competition for great ideas to reduce environmental impact: water, energy, waste and so on. It gave a voice to frontline staff who see the problems day in and day out. There were loads of great suggestions. People could feed in by phone, on paper or there was an online suggestions box. There were workbooks for managers to use with teams, and a helpline to provide support in working up ideas. Suggestions were sent in on a form, with an outline of costs and benefits. Six were selected to be presented to the dragons. Their originators were given assistance to come up with their story and collect evidence, and the winning ideas were given support to make it a reality. Even after the competition closed, we were still getting calls, because people wanted to tell us about the problems. All suggestions were followed up in some way, and it saved money and generated a brilliant atmosphere."

Ann Durrant, sustainability consultant

Consider what competencies different people might need. Can your facilities manager be trained in resource efficiency? Does your corporate strategy team need introducing to the SDGs or the circular economy? Do your administration specialists need a two-hour eco housekeeping or a Mental Health First Aid course? Find out what additional skills and knowledge they think they need, to do what's been asked of them, and then help them get it.

IEMA is a good source to find out about specialist eco-efficiency and environmental management training.⁵³ For a different take, a broad introduction to sustainable development and business can be found in the online learning offered by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.⁵⁴

Face to face communication is by far the most effective, but there are other methods which can engage people. For example, suggestion schemes of one sort or another (whether based on notes put into boxes, apps, emerging from team meetings, e-mailed to a special address or whatever) demonstrate engagement is real, although only if some ideas are seen to be taken up and put into action.

And if you're really successful at making the change of attitude stick – which it will need to if it's going to outlast you and your ability to police it – then you'll see that people want to make changes outside of work too. Help them by providing information, experiences and even resources to do so.

Know them

As you visit key internal stakeholders and get to know them, listen out for what they care about, what motivates them and the language they use to describe their world. This is important because to engage them, you need to start where they are.

Change-makers talked about understanding what other people care about:

"You need to know what makes them tick: the organisational drivers, the personal drivers. CEOs, for example, are often really interested in their legacy." Dr James Robey, Capgemini

"Get the language right: business case, business case, business case. Focus on the core business drivers: growth, cost, trust, risk."

Thomas Lingard, Unilever

⁵³ www.iema.net/training

⁵⁴ <http://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/executive-education/learn-online>

"Engagement is about talking with people about what they care about. Consider the advantage to your audience: functional, emotional, social. Is it going to improve cost or effectiveness? Will it feel cosy, friendly? Can customers, investors, clients claim it for themselves and use it to improve their standing in the world?" Solitaire Townsend, Futerra

They also shared what has worked for them, to open people's eyes to sustainability issues and the importance of paying attention to them.

"I've found that the Sustainable Development Goals are a great tool for internal engagement in particular. They help people see that what we are doing has a bigger purpose and impact." Vicky Murray, Pukka Herbs

"When I was at Jaguar Land Rover, senior leaders in the organisation attended a three-day programme run by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership. They did come back changed. We couldn't send everyone on that programme, but we did get a bespoke one-day course developed which we put 100 people through from a range of functions. We asked the participants what had had the most impact, and it was going to the British Antarctic Survey ice core lab in Cambridge and experiencing the chemistry first-hand. This helped them understand the science of climate change and historic CO₂ levels going back 800,000 years! People in that company understand and respect data, so this really hit home."

Jonathan Garrett, Prudential

"Painful though it is to say this, if you're the sustainability person people won't always take you that seriously. So, get other people to deliver your messages. Bring someone in from the outside to tell their story, ideally a non-sustainability person. Charismatic individuals with high credibility, who are active on social media or have strong personal connections, who can call them out and challenge their personal accountability. People who can say outrageous things."

Thomas Lingard, Unilever

"You can find ways to push things further. Use evidence of recognised best practice and what competitors are doing. Provide the key people with evidence of what customers think, or things that will help them deliver what you're suggesting. Show the anticipated or actual ROI. Support their arguments." Ann Durrant, sustainability consultant

As well as looking at individual's role and drivers, it's interesting to consider some underlying characteristics too. According to some social researchers, there are broadly three kinds of people to be aware of ⁵⁵.

Pioneers

Pioneers are interested in new things and new ethical values. They question all versions of the status quo, and are open to change based on new information. They embrace their differentness and are often the harbingers of the new normal – sometimes decades before the mainstream. They form the core of most ethical movements.

Prospectors

Prospectors are the early adaptors of behaviours, selecting a wide range of behaviours they think gives them social status and coolness. They are more future oriented than other groups and tend to see scare stories as happening to others. Every dark cloud has a silver lining with which to gain an advantage over others. They are so busy wreaking havoc on others they seldom become involved in social movements until the movement is established and looks like a winner.

Settlers

Settlers prize safety, security and tradition. They value safety in all things, and tend to be the last to change in any cultural behaviour change. Their social inertia is caused by their natural scepticism that the future will be better than the past, or even the present. They will follow 'what is normal' and never be at the vanguard of any movement – they are life's natural followers.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Rose, C., 2011. 'What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers.' See also Cultural Dynamics, a research agency where you can take the survey and find out your own values category. <http://www.cultdyn.co.uk/>

⁵⁶ This summary from Dade, P. of Cultural Dynamics, personal communication, August 2017.

Supporting this approach, sustainability communications and strategy consultancy Futerra caution against being too worthy, and against assuming that facts are what people need to motivate them. They urge you to ‘sell the sizzle’, understanding the target audience and what will entice them to love what you love⁵⁷.

COIN (the Climate Outreach Information Network) also provide free guidance and resources, including peer-reviewed research into the messages which resonate most with centre-right voters. The effective messages were around patriotic support for home-grown, low-carbon technologies and a focus on avoiding waste as a critical part of saving energy. Although focusing on climate change, some of the insights will be transferable to other subjects. COIN also provides free climate change images, and guidance on where they will be most effective, as part of its ‘climate visuals’ work⁵⁸.

Tailor your language and medium

And when you’re talking about sustainable development, mind your language.

Jane Ashton has wrestled with language. *“We’ve learned and we’ve evolved. We think “sustainable development” goes over people’s heads. We tried ‘sustainable tourism’ but it wasn’t specific enough, and it didn’t make people think about our UK-based operations. We know that people are more comfortable with ‘environment’ but it’s not wide enough – the people side is neglected. We brainstormed names and messages, and decided to call our strategy ‘Better Holidays, Better World’ as that seemed to encompass a wide enough field and to be understandable. That’s what we’re developing as our sustainability ‘brand’ internally and externally. It has chopped and changed over time which is confusing. So, find a phrase that works for you and then stick with it.”*

Jane Ashton, TUI Group

⁵⁷ There are two free resources on their website: ‘Selling sustainability primer for marketers’ (written with BSR) and ‘Sell the sizzle’ on climate change messaging. Futerra www.wearefuterra.com

⁵⁸ COIN www.climateoutreach.org

"I find that 'resilience' is growing in currency as a word. Let's stop talking about 'climate'. Let's have a renewables plan or a high-yield agriculture plan. 'Sustainability' has a green taint, even if we all understand it in our bubble. We need more diversity." Thomas Lingard, Unilever

Know how your stakeholders like to communicate. It could be on professional social media like LinkedIn, or casual social media like Instagram or Snapchat. There are messaging apps and collaborative apps like Slack, Yammer and Trello, or places to post video like Vimeo and YouTube...

"There are so many ways to keep in touch instantly, to do the influencing you need to do, to engage colleagues and supply chains. Use them." Mark Gough, Natural Capital Coalition

Tony Rooke also sees lots of potential in harnessing the explosion in data gathering and analysis, to engage people. *"There's all sorts of new data we couldn't gather previously, like remote sensing of land use using drones and satellites. Apps can be used to mine that data, and then share it with the supply chain so they get something out of it too."* Tony Rooke, CDP

Solitaire Townsend expects sustainability reporting and transparency will be transformed through new tech. *"Sustainability reports are static, context-less and non-interactive. That will change. Scientifically relevant targets and reporting will catch up with each other, showing how much a company or sector is contributing to particular global goals. Tech can manage data more accurately and swiftly, but we're not seeing it being integrated with consumer experience yet. I can see rankings and ratings, harnessing the wisdom of crowds and intelligent use of your previous preferences."* Solitaire Townsend, Futerra

Show or tell?

Experience is a far more powerful tool than most forms of ‘telling’.

Tony Rooke’s own change of direction came about following a year of travelling.

“I read about climate change. I saw icebergs calving in South America. I visited Antarctica. I saw the impact of overgrazing by goats in Africa. I talked to locals who felt their world had changed already and researchers who had collected the data showing this.” Tony Rooke, CDP

Matthew Robinson is enthusiastic about HSBC’s Executive Leadership programme, which gets its power from the fact that it is experiential.

“Being not just away from the office, but in the middle of a rainforest in Borneo, a mangrove in Hong Kong, on the side of a mountain in Arizona or floating down one of the unseen canals of Mexico City, this is really special, different and unique. Senior management participants are physically collecting evidence and monitoring the impacts of climate change on the environment around the world, contributing 200,000 hours to science. They get to talk directly with scientists, they listen to sustainability subject matter experts from within and outside the organisation. They come back determined to do something, both personally and professionally.” (You can read more about this programme and its wider impacts in Section Six – Organisational culture, understanding emergence: how does culture emerge?) Matthew Robinson, HSBC

Days working as volunteers for organisations like the Wildlife Trusts can also bring people face to face with the natural world⁵⁹. The Environment Agency, for example, gives every staff member two days which they can use to volunteer on environmental or social projects. Structured visits or days out can be arranged at places like the Centre for Alternative Technology in mid-Wales or the Green Britain Centre in Norfolk, BedZED in south London, or Hockerton Housing in Nottingham, where low-carbon and highly resource-efficient technologies are in place and working⁶⁰. In Chicago, there's a brilliant community centre, venue, shared living space and eco-building called Greenrise, run by ICA-USA⁶¹. What about a farm visit, volunteering at a food bank, or a morning shopping at a Farmers' Market⁶²?

If your colleagues would be more inspired by high-tech solutions or engineering, then what about a visit to a Tesla factory or Electric Mountain in Wales. Or hold an off-site event at a venue like The Crystal, Siemens' showcase in London.

Business in the Community runs a programme of visits called 'seeing is believing', where you can visit community projects, schools and prisons, and discuss the experience with senior business leaders⁶³. People I interviewed for this book talked enthusiastically about the impact of a visit to see ice cores at the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge. There are also short courses which include an element of 'encounter' with nature, or even wild-living or bushcraft skills⁶⁴.

It is also possible to visit companies or organisations like yours, which have already got successes under their belts. IEMA's regions organise these kinds of site visits – perhaps there are some colleagues you could take along?

59 www.wildlifetrusts.org

60 Hockerton Housing Project in Nottinghamshire is at <http://www.hockertonhousingproject.org.uk/visit/tours/>
Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth www.cat.org.uk BedZED <http://www.bioregional.com/bedzed/>
Green Britain Centre <http://www.greenbritaincentre.co.uk/home>

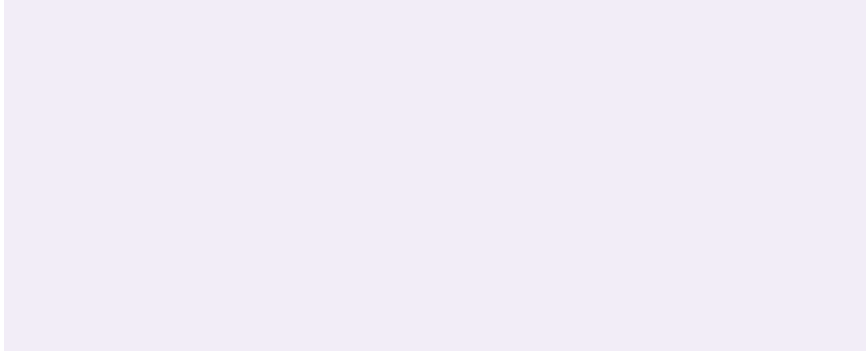
61 ICA-USA <http://www.ica-usa.org/>

62 For details of local farmers' markets in the UK

63 Business in the Community's Seeing is Believing <http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/princes-seeing-believing/upcoming-visits>

64 For bushcraft skills, see for example courses offered by the Field Studies Council <http://www.field-studies-council.org/>

What might you do, that would allow those you want to influence to experience your message?



Putting the case

There will come a point when you want to advocate for a particular issue or solution.

If this is something that you find hard or have little success with, then you might want to use this way of planning it. This model is called the 'four parts of speech', and it helps to make even simple conversations much more effective⁶⁵. As you read through it, pick out one conversation that you need to have, and plan it in your head.

Framing – say clearly what your purpose is, and give the other person some advance warning of what's coming. For example, "If you have five minutes later, I'd like a chance to explain a new approach to cost cutting to you" or "I'm really excited about the opportunities sustainability can bring us, and I want to get it on the agenda of our next meeting."

Advocating – asserting an option, perception, feeling, opinion or proposal. "Other companies like ours have made big gains." Or "Our team is very good at finding practical applications for big ideas."

⁶⁵ This model is from Fisher, D., Rooke, D. and Torbert, W. R., 2000. 'Personal and Organizational Transformations: through Action Inquiry', Edge Work, Boston.

Illustrating – telling a story to illustrate your point. “Miggins Pies saved around 5% of operating costs last year.” Or “Last year’s bushcraft skills classes for staff made lifelong learning real to people, and boosted morale.”

Inquiring – explicitly questioning your audience, to learn their reaction. “When would be a good time to talk about this in more detail?” or “Can I have a half-hour slot next Wednesday?”

People often miss out the framing and the illustrating, which can put the other person into a defensive mode. Think about what level of detail you need – plan to use a minimum level of illustration to begin with, but have more up your sleeve in case they ask for it. Be very clear about what’s in it for the person you’re talking to, and what you are asking them to do right now. Be prepared for an enthusiastic answer too – what if they say “yes, let’s do it right now”?

Begin with enthusiasts and show success

As you get to know people, you will discover who the enthusiasts are. They could be in surprising places. You can find them through one-to-one meetings, workshops, call-outs for volunteers or they may come and find you.

Work with them for early wins, innovative projects, and to show others that you’re succeeding.

“Find out who already gets it – these are the people who can help drive the change. At B&Q I found the one or two timber suppliers and buyers who wanted to work with the FSC. I gave them all the help I could offer in making it happen, and then held them up as examples to their peers.” Alan Knight

Matthew Robinson also found a positive response from suppliers.

"Our global REDUCE strategy is a hugely effective subject to engage suppliers on. They can bring ideas to the table and it helps build relationships with them, whilst making us operate more effectively and reducing our environmental footprint. Creating change is about collective and shared responsibility." Matthew Robinson, HSBC

Vicky Murray of Pukka Herbs included some feel-good sustainability behaviour-change engagement across the company, as part of a mix of change strategies.

"I ran an internal campaign using Do Nation pledges⁶⁶. People pledge to make small, sustainable changes to everyday habits at work and at home, on waste, food, travel, energy and so on. Different teams compete against each other, and the platform adds up the small pledges so each team and the company as a whole can see how we're doing. It was wildly successful, people really got into it. It improved people's everyday knowledge of issues and solutions." Vicky Murray

Success is a great motivator, especially if people are getting congratulated publicly for their achievements. Tony Rooke found this out when working for an IT consultancy.

"A big turning point was when we won a 'Sunday Times' 'greenest company' award, for some 'housekeeping' steps which reduced our carbon footprint quickly. Suddenly the interest level rose. Management became more personally involved. Board members knew my name. The experience shaped how I see being an influencer. If your company's in the spotlight, you want to look good and have the evidence to back it up. There was something new, different and positive for them to talk about. CEOs and C-level people respond to the outside recognition, which also means a lot to our clients and puts us ahead of our competitors." Tony Rooke

Solve their problems

Prioritise those areas where you think you can help people do their work more simply and easily, more cheaply or more effectively. Use your insight to help them with their priorities.

“At a previous company, the manufacturing division wasn’t getting enough orders. I saw a market opportunity that they hadn’t spotted, for manufacturing biomass pellet stores. So, we developed our own storage solution. This innovation helped us generate a new business area.” Bekir Andrews, talking about a former company he worked for.

Changing people’s behaviour

Sometimes the changes you want to bring about will rely on people changing their individual, everyday behaviour: using resources more efficiently, pulling each other up on unsafe practices, counteracting unconscious bias. Or maybe you are using small behaviour changes to raise awareness of an issue before introducing other kinds of changes.

If you are going down this route, make sure you have a clear ask: what is the new behaviour you want people to adopt? There should be good evidence that the new behaviour is practically doable and will lead to improved outcomes. Don’t just assume that because a few colleagues have suggested using an interactive whiteboard instead of paper, that it really has a lower environmental impact! Do your homework.

Behaviour change is hugely influenced by routine, habits and social norms. So how do you influence staff behaviour?

If you want people’s behaviour to be more sustainable, then it helps if they have the right attitudes? Well, yes, but much less that you’d think. According to Professor Ken Peattie of Cardiff University’s Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS), research shows that attitudes towards the environment explain less than 20% of the differences between low-impact choices and high-impact ones.

Even if people have them, eco-values are a very poor predictor of eco-action. So, if you want to change people’s behaviour, changing their attitudes may be a very slow and unreliable way of going about it.

Fortunately, individual motivation is just one of six key sources of influence which together provide a sound foundation for getting the behaviour you want.

The six sources of influence on behaviour divide into ‘motivation’ and ‘ability’. You need to address these two crucial components at the level of the individual, their social setting (peers) and the structures within which they work. The more sources you utilise, the more powerful your behaviour-change lever will be.

	MOTIVATION	ABILITY
Personal	1 Make the undesirable desirable.	2 Surpass your limits
Social	3 Harness peer pressure.	4 Find strength in numbers.
Structural	5 Design rewards and demand accountability.	6 Change the environment.

Six sources of influence⁶⁷

67 Grenny, J. Patterson, K. Maxfield, D. 2013. ‘Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change.’

Let's look at each of those sources of influence in turn.

1. **Make the undesirable desirable.** Give people reasons to do the new thing, or stop doing the old thing. Not just your reasons (which may be altruistically ethical or environmental), but reasons which match their own motivation (which could be completely different – see [Section Five – Engaging people: know them on settlers, prospectors and pioneers](#)).
2. **Surpass your limits.** Find out what people need, to be able to adopt the new behaviour and put it in place. This could be skills, equipment or permission.
3. **Harness peer pressure.** Encourage those who are prepared to, to prompt and comment, to lead from the middle.
4. **Find strength in numbers.** Does the change need critical mass (for example, a car sharing scheme), are there economies of scale (for example, buying Fairtrade refreshments)? Put them in place.
5. **Design rewards and demand accountability.** Make sure people get feedback. Will anyone notice if the behaviour changes? What will the consequences be for them if people adopt the new way of doing things, and if they don't?
6. **Change the environment.** Ensure that the equipment, resource, and physical environment prompt and enable the new behaviour.

A complementary approach – particularly relevant to point 6 is to use 'nudges'. These are micro changes in the settings in which people make the choices that you want to influence: it's influence without coercion.

The authors of the core book on nudges⁶⁸ say *“To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. Nudges are not mandates. Putting fruit at eye level counts as a nudge. Banning junk food does not.”*

Nudges are just one of many ways of influencing people’s behaviour, as the six sources of influence show.

Tom Knowland had this experience:

“We got senior officer and councillor support to change the corporate waste contract to one where we only pay for waste that goes to landfill. This created a financial incentive to reduce waste and increase recycling. This was reinforced by removing desk-side bins and providing centralised recycling facilities in every office.” Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

Tommy Nederman, Acting Director Sustainable Business at Scandic Hotels, says that small changes to serving utensils, plate sizes and the availability of trays all encourage people to take the breakfast they will eat, rather than taking too much which then gets thrown away. Coupled with changes to the way food is arranged on the buffet, changing the selection based on what they know about who is staying at the hotel, and behind-the-scenes innovation in the kitchens has led to savings in food waste of 15% to 50% in Scandic’s hotels.

68 Thaler, R. and Sunstein, C., 2008. ‘Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness.’

Bringing the outside in

If you need to include a greater diversity of voices, shake things up, call on specialist skills or knowledge, or use the power of someone who has more cachet or credibility than you, you may be looking to bring in people from outside the organisation.

"When we worked with Jordan Dorset Ryvita, the head of sustainability set up advisory committees with a mix of internal and external people on them. We could scrutinise data, seeing how well the organisation was meeting its goals. We also looked at forward plans, asking ourselves whether they will deliver, is there enough resource being put into them, are they best practice? The committee challenged, positively. It was a regular drumbeat that people had to deliver against." David Bent

Bekir Andrews uses multiple sources of external input. *"We have had specialist advisors like Forum for the Future, and stakeholder panels, to help us with our strategy. We get feedback from clients, and from third parties. The conversations can be very honest and are not always easy to handle. However, these allow us to tackle difficult topics with legitimacy."*

"It's a great thing to bring a diverse set of people to the table. Different teams, stakeholders, people from different cultures and parts of the globe. You get richer conversations, it creates relationships, work becomes easier as you understand each other and trust each other." Matthew Robinson, HSBC

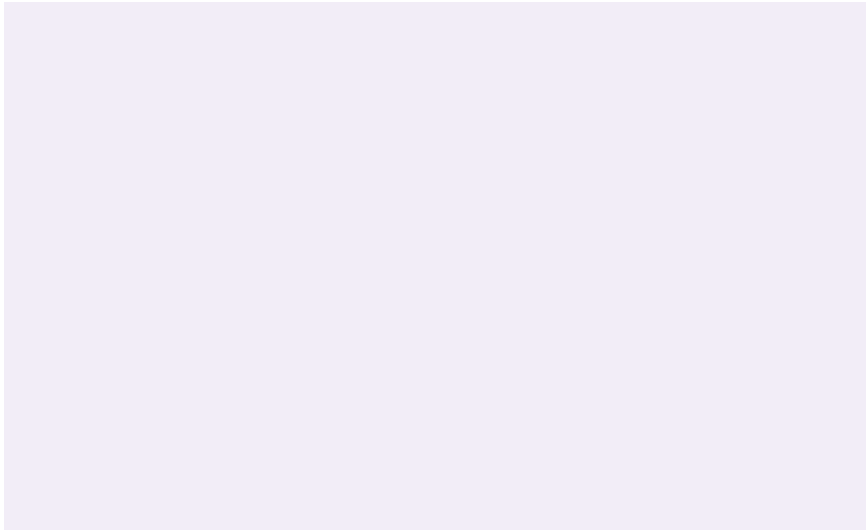
There were some cautions, too, especially in relation to external consultants.

"Use external consultants and external partners like Business in the Community or CISL when you need specialist expertise, or as a catalyst. The companies I have worked for have benefitted from expertise including economic input-output modelling and from high-quality academic input, as well as being able to talk closely with peers. But if you're always relying on consultants, you don't move on, so build internal knowledge and expertise too." Jonathan Garrett, Prudential

And beware of 'not invented here' syndrome. David Bent and his team at Forum for the Future were given the task of developing a vision and strategy for a company.

"It seemed obvious to me that the vision should include being 'carbon positive'. I pushed that at them and it went down really badly. People hated it and tore it apart. The good thing was that we had this conversation in a workshop setting, so we could hear all of this. But it was a cul de sac. So, we changed the process so that the vision was built by looking at the things they were already working on as new initiatives and priorities – some sustainability related and some not – and asked 'what's the most ambitious version of this?' We needed to match the breadth of their reach. Looking at it this way meant the sustainability team opened up avenues the company hadn't thought about before, even on obvious cost-saving areas like energy efficiency. The next iteration of the business strategy did have carbon targets – that for each tonne of carbon emitted, they would be taking ten tonnes out of the wider economy. At that point, it was their idea. I didn't remind them about the previous strategic cycle!" David Bent

Which of these ways of engaging people have you already used? What's worked well and less well? Which are new to you? Which do you think have the most potential to help you with the change you have in mind?



Emotional responses

This is a little detour about emotions and feelings, and the role you may find them playing in your change project.

The North Wind and the Sun disputed as to which was the most powerful, and agreed that he should be declared the victor who could first strip a wayfaring man of his clothes.

The North Wind first tried his power and blew with all his might, but the keener his blasts, the closer the Traveller wrapped his cloak around him, until at last, resigning all hope of victory, the Wind called upon the Sun to see what he could do.

The Sun suddenly shone out with all his warmth. The Traveller no sooner felt his genial rays than he took off one garment after another, and at last, fairly overcome with heat, undressed and bathed in a stream that lay in his path.⁶⁹

Feelings are important motivators for change. People change when they are afraid of or strongly dislike what's going on (or what's likely to happen). People also change when they are inspired or excited about the new way that things might be.

Feelings can also work to prevent change – when people are very happy with how things are and therefore don't desire change, or when they are afraid of or suspect that they may dislike what the change will bring. They may also resist because of resentment at how the change came about and who proposed it, giving rise to obstinacy and contrariness

⁶⁹ There are many versions of this fable of Aesop's. This one was sourced from: www.islandnet.com/~see/weather/arts/aesop.htm

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
For change	Excitement Curiosity	Unhappiness Dislike
For stasis	Contentment Satisfaction	Fear Resentment Obstinacy

And it can get complicated – people may feel excited about (or fear) the new way that things could be. Or they may be excited about (or fear) the existence of change – whatever it is that is changing.

You can harness the power of emotions. You can try to get people dissatisfied with the way things are, or afraid about what might happen if they don't change. You can try to inspire people with the way things could be, and help them feel confident about the chances of successful change. The Climate Optimist⁷⁰ campaign is based on this latter approach.

What might motivate the people you are working with?

- Financial success
- Recognition and status
- Identity and feeling part of a group
- Competition and being the best, achieving goals
- Curiosity
- The wonder of nature and how things work
- Spirituality, moral values or religious faith
- Family security or protection

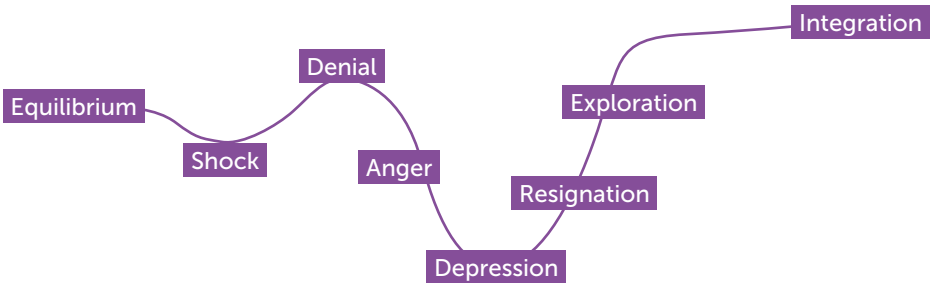
If people think (or believe, or feel) that changing will help them achieve these things more than staying the same will, they will want to change. If they think change will endanger these things, they will want things to stay as they are.

70 <https://www.climateoptimist.org/>

Remember that different people are motivated by different things. And be aware that they may have a different analysis of what change will bring and what staying the same will bring.

You may also be faced with emotional responses – sometimes quite strong and sudden – not only because people get emotional about proposed changes, but because of the nature of the subjects you’ll be asking people to think about. As part of persuading people that change is needed, you’ll almost certainly touch on the really shocking data about environmental limits and where we are in relation to them. You may also cover distressing information about human rights abuses, lack of access to basic resources and the human cost of current unsustainable practices.

There is a classic model of the emotional responses to change, which was developed from pioneering work with people with terminal illness⁷¹. There are countless adapted versions of the model, and you may well have seen a simpler version called the change curve. It’s a useful way of understanding the stages people may go through in relation to changes at work like restructuring and shifts in strategic direction. The model isn’t linear: people can move backwards as well as forwards.



The emotional response to change

71 Kubler-Ross, E. 1973. 'On Death and Dying: what the dying have to teach doctors, nurses, clergy and their own families.' Tavistock.

Since we're looking at change for sustainable development, it's also helpful in understanding the emotional responses people may have to things like news reports about the impacts of climate change or ecosystem collapse.

Equilibrium

This is the 'ignorance is bliss', comfortable stage when people are genuinely unaware that there is any problem or change on the horizon.

Shock

The first response to very bad news – like being told about a serious accident, getting a diagnosis of terminal illness, or a credible report of ecological disaster. "Oh God!" The hand covers the mouth, there may be physical reactions.

Denial

Behaving as if it's not true and it isn't happening. There may also be indifference. "It's happening but it's unimportant" and cynicism "They're only saying that because they want to put up the price / raise funds / get at me."

Anger

Anger at the circumstances may also include blame for the guilty. "It's all their fault." "It's all my fault." There may be a victimised response "Why me? Why is this happening?" There may also be bargaining. "If this turns out OK, I'll never miss church / step on a worm / leave my TV on standby again."

Depression

"It's all so awful, nothing I can do can make any difference." "Someone else needs to take responsibility for me and the problem, because I can't." If people don't find a way to feel as if they can make a difference and take some control back, then they can slip back into anger or denial. Slipping back into denial can be so successful that people forget that they once believed it or have even heard about the problem.

Resignation

With support and a sense of agency, people can allow themselves to move on to the stage of letting go and experimentation. "I loved having a long hot bath three times a day, but I realise those days are gone. I'm ready to experiment with showers instead." "This change is happening, and I will accept it. I've finished grieving for what's been lost."

Exploration

When people can see the benefits of changing, and the possibilities for doing so successfully, then they begin to explore and to get enthusiastic. "I'm going to explore how the future may be, and how I will be." "I think I'm going to like this."

Integration

When the changes are fully integrated, people take ownership of the new situation and the new way of doing things. "This is how we do things." "This is the new me."

Section Six

Organisational culture: understanding emergence

Section Five looked at people as individuals, and how you might engage them. Put a few people together for more than a few hours, and they will develop a group culture – norms, expectations, a collective history. And organisations are just complex groups of people. So, we turn now to look at organisational culture: how it emerges, the influence it has, and how it can be influenced.

What is emergence, what is culture?

Emergent change – or just ‘emergence’ – is a feature of complex systems. This way of understanding change says that organisations are not best understood as machines, where you pull a lever and get a predictable result – but as complex systems with multiple feedback loops interacting with each other. Organisational culture emerges from these many interactions.

Planned change will be more successful if you also make time to understand the organisation’s prevailing culture, and its readiness for change. Even if you have a mandate to change policies and systems, leave room to spot and shape emergence. This is especially so if the culture of the organisation already leans towards empowerment and learning. If you cannot get a mandate for significant planned change, then catalysing emergence is a very important strategy.

Emergent change is inescapable, as it is the inevitable results of all the tiny conversations, actions and responses that go on every day in and around any organisation. And if we accept that change towards sustainable development must involve society at large, and cannot be achieved without people’s beliefs and everyday actions changing, then emergent cultural change must be a part achieving sustainability.

Richard Seel links culture and emergence in this way:

“Organisational culture is the emergent result of the continuing negotiations about values, meanings and proprieties between the members of that organisation and with its environment”⁷²

Organisational culture is an invisible force that can blow you off course or put the wind in your sails. It is there – whether you can see it or not – and if you’re not succeeding with your sustainability efforts, perhaps it is the organisational culture that is the problem.⁷³

In his book ‘Organisational Culture and Leadership’⁷⁴, Edgar Schein defines organisational culture as the “pattern of shared basic assumptions”. He says that these influence how people in an organisation behave and how they make sense of the world. That is why organisational culture is often described as: “the way we do things around here”.

Initially, the basic assumptions of the founder and the early leaders of an organisation set its culture. The choices they make early on underpin and colour everything that comes after – at least, they do if those choices lead to the organisation’s success and survival.

For example, do they work silently in an office with the door shut, or does ‘work’ take place in noisy debate? If there is a choice between opportunities that make the most money and others that are interesting, pioneering or socially valuable, which path does the organisation follow? What is considered ‘long term’ – a week, a month, one year or 10 years?

Organisational culture – that is, assumptions about what the world is like, what the organisation is like and how the two interact – is also created and revealed at moments of crisis. If income drops, do people get laid off or reduce their hours of work? Is communication with the outside world open or defensive? Is the unexpected greeted by research with customers, stakeholders and benchmarking, or is the response to look to internal experts, first principles and core ethics?

⁷² Seel, R., May 2000. ‘Culture and Complexity: New Insights on Organisational Change.’ *Organisations and People* vol 7 no. 2, pp 2-9.

⁷³ This section is based on an article which first appeared in *The Environmentalist*, June 2014: How we do things around here, Walker.

⁷⁴ Schein, E., 1992. ‘Organizational Culture and Leadership.’

The specifics of an organisation's culture will also be influenced by the wider national culture and by the sector it operates in – engineering, law, campaigning, regulation or retail, for example.

As the organisation grows and new people come in, they either adopt the culture and thrive or stay uncomfortably and then leave. As long as the organisation continues to function well enough internally and succeeds sufficiently to survive, the original culture will persist. As the organisation changes from a start-up to an established institution, the culture may shift further.

Subcultures may arise related to people's places in the hierarchy or their basic job – customer- or user-facing, design or management, for example.

If organisational culture, including sub-cultures, is a pattern of shared basic assumptions, what kinds of assumptions are they?

According to Schein, the basic underlying assumptions will be about:

The nature of time

– What constitutes long term and short term? Is time linear or cyclical? Can time be 'used' or 'wasted'? How controllable is time?

The nature of space

– What does it mean to 'have' space? How much is enough? How is it allocated?

The nature of reality and truth

– How do we know something is real or true? Is it through argument, evidence, gut feeling or by listening to an expert?

Human nature

– What is good or bad? Can people change? Should we motivate or control? Can someone's essence be seen in what they achieve or who they are?

Human relationships

– Are we basically cooperative or competitive? Do we value respect or intimacy? Are we concerned primarily about the group or the individual?

William Bridges, in his book 'The Character of Organisations'⁷⁵, has a different approach. He applies the same underlying theory as the famous Myers-Briggs personality type indicator to describe what these shared assumptions might consist of. Bridges thinks they include:

extraversion or introversion

- primarily oriented towards markets, competitors, regulators and stakeholders; or primarily oriented towards its own vision, competences and culture

sensing or intuition

- in this context sensing means gathering information about details and the 'here and now'; intuition focuses on the future, the big picture and the possibilities

thinking or feeling

- decisions are made based on consistency, efficiency and in an impersonal way; or based on individuality, creativity and the common good and

judging or perceiving

- judging organisations reach clear, firm decisions with definitions and closure; perceiving ones keep their options open.

An organisation's culture need not be at the extreme of any of these pairs. What you look for is the broad preference. Bridges' approach provides 16 categories that an organisation might fall into, while Schein's is more open-ended. The latter deliberately resists creating a list of 'types' of organisational culture.

Another useful model for understanding the things that make up organisational culture (what he calls the paradigm) comes from Gerry Johnson.⁷⁶

The paradigm	Stories and myths Symbols Power structures Organisation structures Control systems Rituals and routines
--------------	--

⁷⁵ Bridges, W., 1992. 'The Character of Organizations: Using Personality Type in Organization Development.' Davies-Black.

⁷⁶ Johnson, G., Scholes, K., and Whittington, R., 2007. 'Exploring Corporate Strategy', FT / Prentice Hall.

When you're thinking about your own organisation – or sector, or neighbourhood, whatever your focus is – these are the things to look for if you want to build up a good understanding of its existing culture – its paradigm. Remember to take account of the unspoken or informal – but nonetheless significant – versions of these: the unofficial heroes (someone who stood up to the boss, or undermined a rival team), the under-the-radar ways that people control each other (shunning, interrupting, holding grudges), the informal rituals (how new recruits are treated, or leaving dos). These can be far more powerful than the official versions.

Whether you call them basic assumptions or character, the things that make up organisational culture can be profoundly influential on what is done and how.

For example, a judging organisation would rather tie down the budget for a small onsite renewable energy project it can deliver on its own, than leave it open while it waits for the results of discussions with other nearby organisations – even if this means missing out on the chance to achieve much better overall results.

In an organisational culture that assumes that you discover the truth through debate, the sustainability strategy will be developed through workshops and various committees until it is signed off at the top. If the culture assumes the truth is 'out there' waiting to be discovered, the strategy will be based on benchmarking and an analysis of external drivers, written by a small group of experts and supported by referenced evidence.

The problem is that underlying culture is so embedded, and feels so non-negotiable to the people who share it, that it can be difficult to perceive clearly. You can turn understanding organisational culture into your life's work. Tempting as that may sound, there are some short cuts. Bridges' book contains a questionnaire, while Schein's includes a design for a one-day workshop. Either can be a great place to look for a method of diagnosing the current culture.

Meanwhile, there are some places where organisational culture reveals itself. If someone is new to the organisation, they will not yet have learned the culture. Perhaps they will stick out a bit – saying things that do not fit or doing their job exactly as suggested by the company guidance, rather than in the spirit of the culture. By noticing these mismatches, you will get some clues about your organisation's culture.

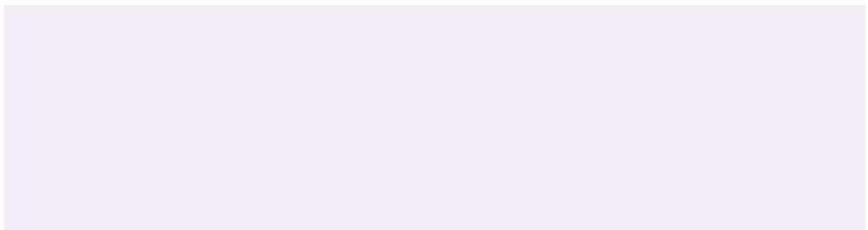
Other places to look are the discrepancies between what people say the organisation does (its stated priorities or values) and what it ends up doing in practice (because the unspoken underlying assumptions are so strong). For example, a retailer might promote equality and diversity in its workforce, but market its science kits at 'boys' and its cookery kits at 'girls'. Exploring this discrepancy might uncover a basic underlying assumption about intrinsic differences between genders. But do not take this for granted: the assumption may be something quite different – for example, that you have to sell what you think the market will buy rather than shift the market in line with your values.

Remember the four elements that Futerra draw attention to? (Section 2.2 – *Know your organisation: what is its sustainability journey?*) Culture will be most obvious in the symbols and stories, but it will also be manifested in how the organisation expresses its vision and what its maps look like and contain. For example, the vision may not be explicitly or clearly articulated; maps may exist but be ignored. Both these situations are features of the organisation's culture.

Interpreting the 'artefacts' of culture – observable actions and physical objects – is not straightforward, and Schein recommends a workshop made up of diverse people from within the organisation carries out the analysis rather than leave it to one person, however expert.

Organisational culture can be a tailwind or it can push you on to the rocks.

What would it mean to have a sustainability culture? What beliefs, values, symbols, rituals, power structures, heroes and villains would exist, in an organisation that was sincerely and effectively pursuing sustainable development?



How does culture emerge?

Sometimes you have an opportunity to create a space and open up new conversations.

"We're trying to change the culture, and I know it will take a while. One thing I'm doing is to put the spotlight on information coming from other people in the business. Presenting new data that we haven't looked at before, tracking it over time. Changing the focus from one set of data to another, from the why to the how." Miles Watkins, BRE Group

How does culture emerge?

It just does.

Seel says:

*"Emergence, then, cannot be control, predicted or managed. There are no 'levers' which can be pulled to give us a particular kind of emergent result. But still two questions remain, which are key for those interested in organisational life and change: can emergence be facilitated and can it be influenced?"*⁷⁷

And it emerges most strongly from the thousands of conversations that people have every day – confirming or undermining the espoused values, activities and motivations of 'the organisation' or 'the management'.

This leaves change-makers with a bit of a conundrum.

But not one that means you can't try to put the pieces in place, and guide the emergence. If you want to set in place the conditions for the emergence of a new – a changed – culture, then these are the things that will really help⁷⁸:

⁷⁷ Seel, R., 'Emergence in Organisations', www.new-paradigm.co.uk/emergence-human.htm

⁷⁸ Adapted from Richard Seel.

Connectivity

There is an existing pattern of connections between people – teams, departments, sites, functions, employees and stakeholders who are outside the organisation. In order to get new conversations going, have assumptions exposed and questioned, and catalyse learning, there will need to be new connections. Bring people together in new patterns, and get them talking – and listening – to each other. Let them hear each other's stories and perspectives. Get them talking together about what matters to them and what they notice about changes – particularly those related to sustainable development – in the 'outside world'. The informal connections are crucial here too: staff cafes, working from different locations, social events.

Look for the 'nodes' – the people who are connected to loads of others – and get them talking too.

Diversity

An increase in diversity – in types of people, in activities, in points of view – is necessary for a new 'paradigm' to emerge. Stakeholder dialogue is great for this. Organisations so often unwittingly (or deliberately) recruit in their own image. This isn't just about gender or ethnic origin, although this is often the most obvious sign. It's also about intellectual leanings, emotional preferences, cultural heritage and political persuasion. Going out and seeking different perspectives from neighbours, critics, peers, suppliers, consultants or thought leadership organisations (like Forum for the Future, CISL, Futerra, SustainAbility) or other stakeholders stirs up the pot. In the longer term, asking questions about how diverse the workforce is and increasing diversity will also help.

The rate at which information flows

Greater connectivity leads to a greater potential for information and impressions to be shared. But it doesn't guarantee it. The frequency and the quality of the interactions between people needs to be high. Quality means good listening, exposing assumptions and being open about doubts and uncertainties as well as about vision and wishes.

Getting rid of inhibitors

People with power can suppress the emergence of a new culture, and will do so if they feel threatened by the potential changes, or just anxious about what they might mean. [Section Five – Engaging people: emotional responses](#) looks at influencing individual and emotional responses in more detail.

Setting good boundaries

Clear goals, deadlines, fixed points about size or timescale or clear criteria – like carbon neutrality for example – seem to be necessary for emergence (rather than chaos) to be the result. There needs to be ‘a well-bounded space within which the emergence can occur’. So, the role of the change-maker is to ‘freely let go of control and yet to still retain enough autonomy to be able to “referee” when required’. You do this by ‘laying down very strict boundaries specifying what is not permitted, adding a clear goal, and then giving people freedom to experiment within those parameters’⁷⁹.

These good boundaries might be set by ‘stake in the ground’ commitments, or by introducing frameworks like the SDGs. Change-makers I spoke to particularly like the ‘wedding cake’ way of presenting the SDGs⁸⁰, which shows how the economy depends on society, and society in turn depends on the biosphere. Others talked about ‘net positive’ as an inspiring way of conceptualising the overall goal while leaving the detail open.

In the case of sustainable development, people may need help developing their capacity to understand the boundaries and goals that have been set, and how to stay within them. This is where training, expert help and other ways of building capacity can be crucial.

⁷⁹ Richard Seel, as above.

⁸⁰ <http://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/research-news/2016-06-14-how-food-connects-all-the-sdgs.html>

Intentionality

Believing that positive intentions lead to positive outcomes (or at least, behaving as if you believe it) helps to free people up and influences the feedback people get and give each other, as they experiment with new points of view and actions. Keeping your intention in mind, as you facilitate others' conversations and take part in them yourself.

Watchful anticipation

It's important to be patient – emergence can't be rushed. This may be the hardest thing to plan for – because it is about how you are as a change-maker, moment by moment. Richard Seel says "premature closure can inhibit emergence, or at least prevent its full blossoming ... The desire for action in human systems may be almost overwhelming, but emergence cannot be rushed; it requires a kind of expectant waiting and a sensitivity to the unfolding moment." Richard urges us "don't just do something, stand there!"

Some of the change-makers I interviewed were working to foster emergent change.

Matthew Robinson is responsible for running a global programme of experiential learning for senior leaders in an international finance business. He describes it as a powerful and unique experience which is driving unprecedented change not only in how the bank operates and serves its customers, but is also leading to wider culture change. Matthew Robinson told me the bank has run over 100 programmes globally, in locations such as Hong Kong, Borneo, Arizona, Mexico, China, India, Costa Rica, and Brazil, graduated 1,300 senior leaders from over 50 countries, contributed 20,000 hours to science research, and covered every business and function within the company.

"Senior leaders come on the programme to learn about human-driven environmental change, with a specific focus on climate change, why HSBC is involved in sustainability, and then how they can go back to the office on Monday morning and embed their learning and experiences into what they do day-to-day. This ranges from a process change to turn off paper and printing, presenting at global town halls, having new conversations with clients about sustainable financing to simply empowering staff to get involved in sustainability

at work and in the community. Because the people who come are senior leaders, they can make change happen quickly. We invite targeted people to come along: we know how significant hierarchy is in our organisation. Hearing that their peers have been on it gives them confidence. And the programme itself is unique. It's engaging, people get a chance to decompress, get re-energised. It brings together a diverse set of people outside of an office setting. People feel privileged to be invited onto it.

"They see professional benefits and better financial performance, but it also hits home emotionally: people, a legacy, something for their kids, bringing their values to work.

"The programme has ended up being a vehicle to influence leaders and build a network of expertise. The success has led to it being expanded to include supply chain partners, and there are plans to develop client-centric programmes to engage clients on sustainability."

Matthew Robinson says, *"It is critical that we engage and connect a wide spectrum of stakeholders in sustainability, promote its importance, and motivate individuals to create meaningful and lasting change."* Matthew Robinson, HSBC

Janice Tyler's awareness-raising targets new starters, rather than senior leaders.

"One of the first things I did, was to include an interactive presentation at our monthly new starter inductions. I can have site operatives, apprentices, contracts managers, branch managers, estimators, quantity surveyors or admin staff to induct. So, the induction covers a wide range of operational environmental subjects as well as legal, moral and business reasons why it is important to adopt a sustainable attitude and more. But I always start with a quiz looking at each inductee's individual ecological footprint, which shows how many planets we need to exist. I find this a great way to raise awareness and encourage involvement and it always starts a discussion so people then feel happy to interact with the rest of the session. One thing I will always do is spend time on whichever topic has inspired the most debate." Janice Tyler, Environment and Supply Chain Manager, Briggs Amasco Ltd

Thomas Lingard reminds us that things can suddenly shift gear:

"Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan was launched in 2010, but there's a fifteen-year backstory." Thomas Lingard, Unilever

What might the new culture look like?

There will be an ability to grapple with and manage complexity.

Mark Gough says, *"Organisations have to take account of complexity, that's our job now."* Stephanie Draper agrees, *"We can't avoid engaging with complexity, and that means shifting people's mindsets so that they can take the leaps needed to be a really sustainable organisation."*

An interviewee who wanted to stay anonymous told me:

"The level of discussion is getting surprisingly high. When I took a climate strategy to a senior internal committee before the Paris climate meeting in 2015, they said 'if it's as bad as you say, this strategy is nothing like ambitious enough'. That was a bit of a shock to hear!"

Sustainability will be present widely, rather than in a niche offering.

Dr James Robey's company is looking for mainstreaming rather than a niche approach.

"We haven't built a dedicated sustainability consulting practice. Instead, we're embedding sustainability into our different service offers, like supply chain, IT and so on. This is a journey we're on, and we're helping our client relationship managers see there is a real opportunity to help clients with their sustainability challenges. I often say to our account executives, a sustainability report is a change manifesto and we're in the business of helping our clients deliver change. We're empowering our people to have intelligent conversations with clients, flagging the sustainability issues they find by understanding their clients' issues and opportunities." Dr James Robey, Capgemini

And people will take the sustainable option even when you're not in the conversation.

Matthew Robinson has seen his colleagues pushing sustainability without needing prompting from the sustainability team, following their exposure to the Executive Leadership programme.

"We were letting a new \$5billion global facilities management contract. The people heading it up pulled in a wide group of internal stakeholders – legal, communications, corporate real estate, IT and sustainability – who had been on the programme. They could see the importance of this contract, in achieving reductions in environmental impact. Everyone was willing to help redesign it. The contract was a first, in terms of including both an incentive structure to drive positive gains in sustainability, as well as a penalty clause, that financially penalised the winning bidder for poor sustainability performance. Leaders who have been on the programme therefore see the commercial as well as sustainability benefits of going from the typical silo approach to the collective and collaborative 'we must and we can' mentality. To me, this is a win-win!"

Matthew Robinson, HSBC

Section Seven

Planned change

Introduction

If you've got a mandate for change, and the right kind of senior support, then you can plan and implement a change programme. This might be as ambitious as a whole-organisation cultural and strategic change initiative, or it might be to introduce sustainability thinking to a specific area or team.

"Getting ISO 14001 implementation was a big deal at the time. We were putting a process-based thing into an organisation that didn't have processes, competing for resources with other initiatives. No-one else in our sector had the certification. But there was a strong mandate from the CEO. He didn't know what good looked like, but he did know he wanted us to improve. We had to do so much to get from A to B. It was a massive programme. We met our targets and our deadline, certifying around 200 locations." Miles Watkins, talking about his time at Aggregate Industries

If you don't have a mandate for change, then you'll need to start where you are – build the case for getting a mandate, seek out those who do have one and find out more about their priorities and pressures, help them work out how sustainability thinking can help them solve their problems and bring opportunities. Demonstrate the practicality of your arguments by setting up and running successful initiatives on a smaller scale. Find creative ways of stretching the mandate you do have. Look out for possibilities to influence emergent change, and to ride a wave of change. Go back to [Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: how do you and your role fit in?](#) if you need a reminder on your mandate.

Remember that even with a planned change programme, emergent cultural change and 'riding a wave' can be very useful. And sometimes it only looks like a coherent plan in retrospect. The steps and successes will include many opportunistic responses, all pointing in (roughly) the same direction.

"Nothing in life is linear. It is always a circle, with feedback loops, challenges, and alternative paths you did not know were there. There is no end, only another beginning." Mark Gough, Natural Capital Coalition

Cycle of planned change

Bekir Andrews describes his approach:

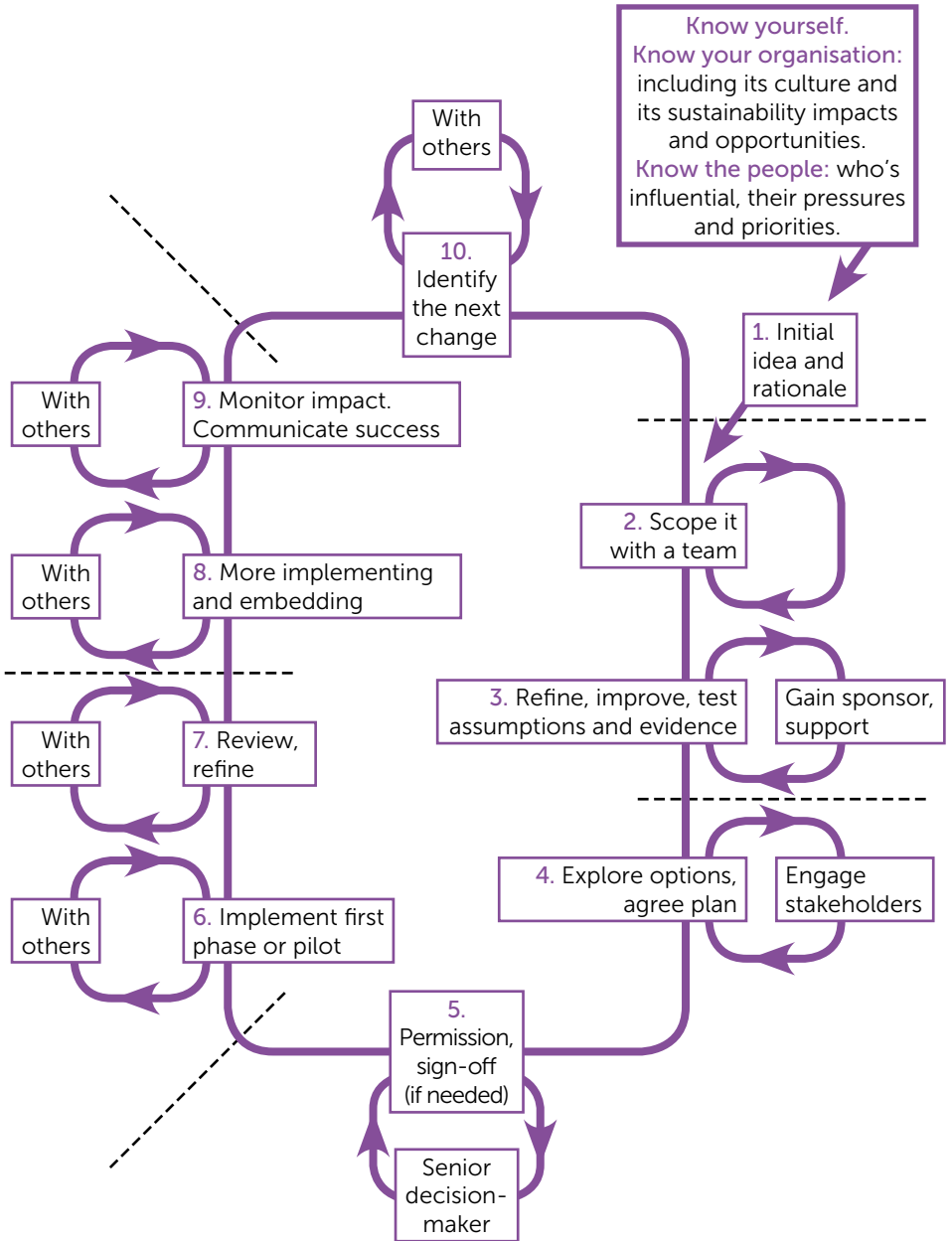
"If you see an opportunity or a solution, something simple or complex, trial it. If the trial succeeds, the next step is to mainstream it. If you can't do that, forget it. Our success depends on mainstreaming things. If you're happy with the results and you can identify other benefits, put it all in a business case. Test with the right stakeholders to ensure your solution won't run into barriers to do with safety, data protection or IT security, or whatever else needs to be considered. Cover off the flaws and objections. Adjust it. Improve it. Ideally you want your solution to become 'business as usual'. To do this you cannot afford constant tweaks or changes, so spend time on getting it right before you launch it. Make your solution easy for people to implement, something they'd do anyway. Know how you will measure success so people can see it. Work out your implementation approach and see it through. You need to do this otherwise people won't value the benefit or recognise the change." Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

All this careful planning needs to be held lightly: be prepared for the goal posts to move, for what seems ambitious now to be commonplace in a few years' time.

"It's important to fail fast, to experiment and to learn from it." Stephanie Draper, Forum for the Future

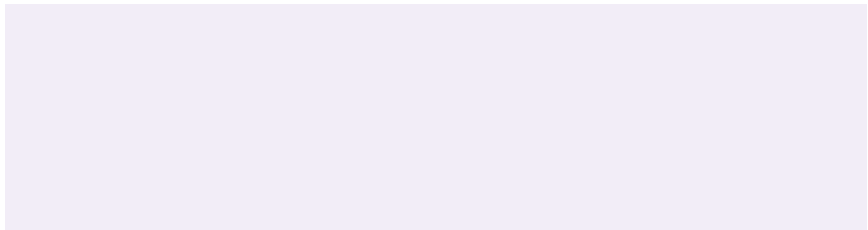
The book will take you through ten stages of planned change, built on a robust foundation of understanding your organisation really well.

1. Initial idea and rationale
2. Scope it with a team
3. Refine, improve, test assumptions and evidence
4. Explore options, agree plan
5. Permission, sign-off
6. Implement first phase or pilot
7. Review, refine
8. More implementing and embedding
9. Monitor impact, communicate success
10. Identify the next change.



"Our sustainability strategy was launched in 2010, under the leadership of a new CEO. His leadership meant there was board-level engagement in drawing up the strategy and the targets were hard-wired into the business. But big companies launch initiatives like this all the time. It took three years before the penny dropped for some people, that this was not a temporary thing. When people saw we were tracking progress, using scorecards, with an infrastructure that held people to account against the targets – when people with the power to influence decisions were getting pulled up on how well they were doing against these targets – they understood. It became a competition between one part of the business and another and a leadership team conversation." Interviewee who wished to remain anonymous

What kind of story would you like to be telling, when your change programme has been successful?



Initial idea and rationale

"Being new into the role meant I had a mandate to review things. I ran a simple SWOT exercise, first with my team and then with the senior leadership team. This gave me my focus and sustainability priorities." Jonathan Garrett, Prudential

In Section 2.2 – Know your organisation, you analysed your organisation, including its culture. You delved into culture more deeply in Section Six – Organisational culture, understanding emergence.

In [Section Four – The changes you want to make](#), you spent some time thinking about a particular change that you'd like to bring about. You looked at:

- the context
- the particular things that you'd like to see change
- who the key players and stakeholders are
- what resources you are able to bring into play
- how you would know if the change is successful.

Section Four also pointed you towards some ways of thinking about big strategic shifts, and for prioritising more focused ambitions.

This is the point to get even greater clarity about what the focus of your planned change programme will be. You might be thinking very big:

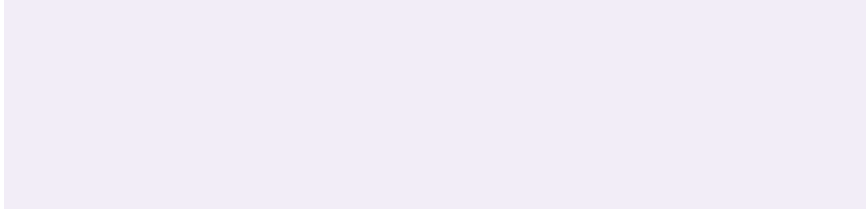
- to get the organisation to be a net carbon capturer within five years
- to reposition the business as an ethical company with a sustainability review of every product line
- to ensure that everyone in the organisation can explain what it means to have 'sustainability' as a core value.

You might be more short term or modest:

- to develop and implement one successful waste reduction initiative on one site within the next three months
- to set up a work experience programme for disadvantaged children
- to establish a recognised sustainability forum in your sector, which holds a seminar on a sustainability theme.

There might be some inter-linked initiatives and outcomes, which together would create a significant platform for further change, or demonstrate the benefits of thinking sustainably.

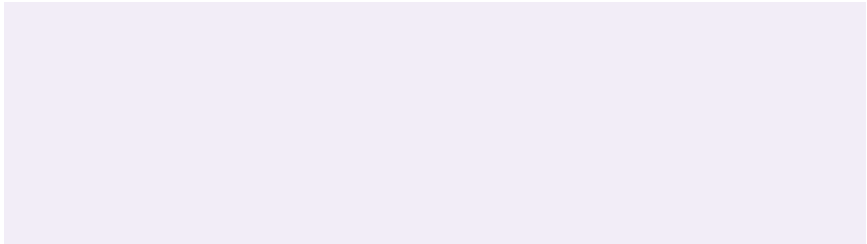
Here is some space for you to note down the very specific intention that you have for your change, and how it links to other initiatives or goals. Make sure it has a deadline, and that there is a way of telling whether you've done it or not.



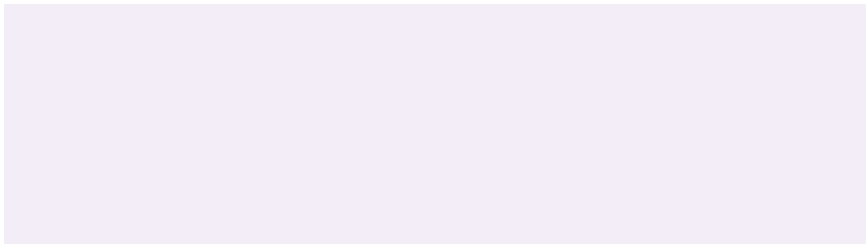
Also note down how doing this well will help:

- move society as a whole that little bit closer to sustainability
- the organisation (or department, or team) to meet its own goals (sustainability or non-sustainability ones).

Helping society move to sustainability



Helping the organisation meet its goals



These are the arguments that you will need to have at your fingertips, when you get the precious two minutes in the lift or at the bike racks to talk to the boss.

Scoping it with a team; refine, improve, test assumptions and evidence

These stages will feel distinct for some situations, and merge into one fluid, iterative phase in others. The team and the stakeholders will change, the idea will evolve. Some of the conversations will be one-to-one, others may be in larger workshops. By the end of this phase, you and the wider team will feel sufficiently confident that you have a good enough picture of the 'desired future', and sufficiently senior active support and sponsorship, that you can move forward into planning.

Tom Knowland is working with a climate change committee made up of people from different organisations. *"At our first meeting, we used an ancient exercise – but it's really effective. There are two stages: first we asked ourselves 'what does success look like', and got a picture of our future achievements. Then we looked at 'what might prevent it'. Our next conversation was about what we do about each of the problems."* Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

The initial scoping should be done with at least some involvement from a wider set of people: your team, one or two key stakeholders. It could be done in a workshop setting, or through a series of one-to-one meetings. Scoping includes coming to a shared initial understanding of:

- the status quo, and the opportunities or threats it contains
- the 'desired future', at least in broad terms; consider what kind of change this implies: incremental, transformative
- the relationship between this and the prevailing culture: are you working with, or against, the grain?
- who the stakeholders are
- some ideas about how to get from now to the desired future (but retain a very open mind).

In [Section Four – The changes you want to make: who has a stake in this change?](#) you identified who else you need to involve. These might be the key decision-makers who can say yes or no to the programme, the people affected by it whose views and situation need to be taken account of, and the people who you want to get actively involved as part of your change team.

Remind yourself of whose permission or support you need, and who you'd like to have on the team. What do they already know about your ideas? What's their view at the moment? Wherever possible, identify a specific name or at least a specific job title.

"At N G Bailey, it was essential to get internal stakeholders on board, I spent time building relationships. When coming up with proposals for the sustainability strategy, there was so much extra credibility when they were proposed by others. At Betty's and Taylor's, the culture is collaborative: we spend time talking in teams, getting buy-in before going forward. This avoids getting a spanner in the works."
Colin Robertson

"I don't tell people how to run their business. I work with them to isolate the small number of things that matter, and give them options."
Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

For each person that you'll need to get on board, you will need to identify the approach or argument to use. Ask yourself:

"What might make them enthusiastic about the idea?"

"What style of approach is most likely to work?"

What might make them enthusiastic? Are they more motivated by a moral case, or by financial savings, or by winning the approval of others? Are they a pioneer, a prospector or a settler? Take a look back at [Section Five – Engaging people](#) for more on motivations. Is there a particular problem they need to solve just now?

For some of your targets, it may be obvious. For others, you'll need to do some research (ask around, get to know them a bit) or make an educated guess.

Worksheet Eleven

Ways to engage stakeholders

WHO I NEED TO GET ON BOARD	WHAT MIGHT MOTIVATE THEM TO BE ENTHUSIASTIC?	WHAT STYLE OR APPROACH IS MOST LIKELY TO WORK?

Whatever approach you use, remember that everyone likes to be listened to, so build this in to your plan.

Lynne Ceeney explains how she made progress with staff travel at a previous organisation.

"The analytics we did for the CRC showed business travel as our biggest spike. I had a chat with the CEO, and he said, 'I won't make people do this' but we had the go ahead to find ways to reduce it. With three other colleagues, we looked in detail at travel from all angles: working time lost, health and safety implications of driving, the impact on clients of us being there... We mapped the system and we came up with ideas of what might motivate people. We deliberately and carefully tested our ideas, and looked for responses.

"The key to unlocking it was productive hours lost and antisocial hours working. We tracked the working time lost when people were driving to see clients. So, we ensured people could work on the train. We changed the policy so that people could buy first-class advance tickets. Teleconferencing was pushed. FM needed to be involved, as well as people who look after training, incentives, support functions. And we found two keen early adopters who set far more rigorous policies and targets than we would have done alone: they were directors so they had the power to do it. It wasn't a formal pilot as such, but other departments watched what they were doing." Lynne Ceeney

Vicky Murray needed to include suppliers in a tricky innovation challenge.

"For years we have been working on our packaging Achilles' heel. It's a known issue that the company was already working on when I arrived: our tea bags don't have staples, we use organic string, and they are 100% compostable. But they are individually wrapped, to keep the essential oils which are central to the taste and health benefits of the product. And the wrappers aren't recyclable, because of their thin polyethylene laminate. The purchasing team worked with the supplier to innovate. There needed to be trial runs and quality tests. The supplier needed the confidence to invest. The buyers need to know we aren't going to compromise quality. They all need to be happy with the solution."

Vicky Murray, Pukka Herbs

If you need to talk to a group of people, think about any suitable ready-made occasions or fora that you can get on to the agenda of – like a regular site meeting or board meeting. If you need to target people individually, then do so.

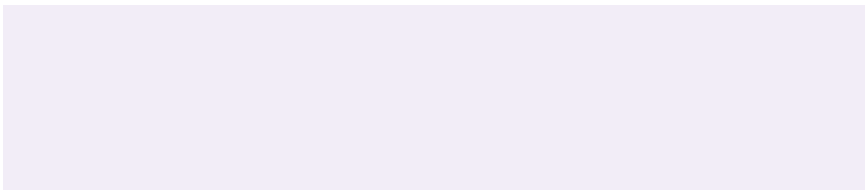
As you talk to more people, your ideas can and should develop – so that they are becoming more widely owned. This is the essence of the Engage – Deliberate – Decide approach (see [Section Five – Engaging people: visit, listen, involve](#)).

Your conversations will bounce between the more senior decision-makers who don't need to know so much detail, other stakeholders whose views and expertise you need to draw on, and the change team that you build around you who are co-creating the vision of the desired future. You may find yourself having more or less the same conversation a number of times, as things inch forward and you work to keep everyone on board.

When you have identified the things that are likely to motivate them, and the way you intend to approach them, you may realise that you need to gather some evidence and plan your communication. (Alternatively, you may discover that it doesn't need to be so complicated and that you can get up now and go and talk to them.)

As you engage with people, the evidence you need to design the best solutions and win people over will become clearer. Remember that for some people, it's the 'emotional evidence' that will be important: the sense that people they look up to are inspired and enthusiastic, or the 'social proof' that there is a groundswell for change. For others, it will be more objective evidence about financial or other organisational benefits that are important.

What evidence do you think you need, to put together a convincing case for each person or group of people that you want to get on board?



Generalised arguments about reputation or cost savings can be good for catching attention and showing where to look in more detail, but will not be robust enough for some people. The best evidence of all is that which comes from within the organisation – from pilot projects, or data from ‘business as usual’, analysed or interpreted in a new way. In some cases, a report or recommendations from a credible third party or internal expert (e.g. a lawyer or accountant) may carry a lot of weight. If there isn’t evidence from your own organisation, then evidence based on organisations which are like your own (similar size and mission, from the same sector, in the same town etc.) may be useful. For this kind of information, good places to look are your trade body or professional body, or your sector organisation, especially if it has a sustainability sub-group or project stream. People I interviewed spoke highly of the Strategy for Sustainable Construction and the sustainability project stream of the Food and Drink Federation.

Evidence produced by the sector often carries more weight with colleagues than that produced by generalist sustainability sources. In the UK, for data on eco-efficiency, organisations like WRAP⁸¹, Ellen MacArthur Foundation⁸² and The Carbon Trust⁸³ provide case studies and guidance. Business in the Community⁸⁴, BSR⁸⁵, SustainAbility⁸⁶, the World Economic Forum⁸⁷ and CSR Europe⁸⁸ provide case examples and information across a range of sustainability issues.

When putting together a business case (or a ‘values’) case, consider the short-term and long-term predictions about the context and drivers, and the impact this difference in time scales has on the case. And remember what you learned about how decisions are made within your organisation, in [Section 2.2 – Know your organisation](#).

When thinking about how to present the case, ask yourself whose voice and evidence will be the most credible – an outside ‘guru’, a hard-nosed finance manager, an accredited professional advisor, a marketing whiz?

81 <http://www.wrap.org.uk/>

82 <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/>

83 <https://www.carbontrust.com/home/>

84 <http://www.bitc.org.uk>

85 <https://www.bsr.org/en/our-insights/case-studies>

86 <http://sustainability.com/our-work/reports/>

87 <https://www.weforum.org/system-initiatives>

88 www.csreurope.org

David Bent saw first-hand the importance of where the evidence and arguments come from when working with a global food and beverage company.

"We were running a scenario-planning exercise with them. The scenarios had been constructed by interviewing their teams, asking them what the major uncertainties were, which would affect the business significantly. When it came to the final strategy workshop, the Head of Strategy questioned why climate change featured in all of the scenarios: wasn't it an uncertainty? We pushed back: climate change will be present in any future; the variable is how we respond. Because of the provenance of the climate change information – the expert input, the high level of colleague involvement – he did accept it. Once he had, he then had major insights about the significance of resilience in their agricultural supply chains, which he hadn't spotted before."

"I was asked by a director 'how do you know these figures are correct' and I could answer 'because I got them from your team'." Lynne Ceeney, recalling her time at a previous organisation.

Exploring options, agreeing the plan, getting sign-off

Having engaged widely in scoping the 'desired future' that you'd like to bring about, the change team will be ready to come up with options for how to get there (including interim milestones, targets and a firmer communications and implementation plan). You may well have begun to do this already, as people respond to your ideas by asking for 'how' details early on. Your plan will change later – but nonetheless doing the planning is an incredibly useful practical thought-process to do with the change team.

When Nick Blyth worked for Lincolnshire County Council:

"We brought in a light-touch reporting system across all departments. Performance was reported against core corporate policies but most of the targets were set by the departments themselves." Nick Blyth

David Bent thinks ownership is key.

"If a business case needs to be worked up, get the accounting people to do it."

Depending on the size of the change project, you may need formal permission or sign-off from an individual or a committee. Preparation is key: no-one at the meeting should be surprised by your agenda item.

"It's essential to talk to everyone informally first, to go in with the decision already made. Don't ambush people. If there are remaining disagreements, have a plan to resolve the problem." Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

You may want to refresh your memory about the 'four parts of speech' in [Section Five – Engaging people: putting the case](#).

If not already in place, this is also the time when you would expect there to be a formalised governance arrangement: as simple as reporting to a more senior individual, or oversight by an existing committee, or a bespoke steering group being set up. The role of this governance is to drive progress and show visible leadership, monitor success, trouble shoot at a senior level if needed, and champion the change with their senior peers. It should be nimble enough to deal with the unexpected – good and bad.

Thinking about the change you have in mind, and what you know about your organisation, what kind of sign-off or governance will it need?

HSBC's Matthew Robinson explains what happened after his ex-boss came back from the citizen science volunteering programme, with an idea to take it further.

"He knew that the junior staff who were on the programme didn't really have any traction to change things in the company when they returned from the programme. But he did, and he had an idea about how to spread the enthusiasm among many more influential people. He was well connected in the company, in particular with our US COO. That person agreed to be the sponsor and funder for a pilot one-week programme for senior leaders. He found 12 senior managers from the operational side of the US business to be the first participants." The programme is now well established in the business, and is being used to engage key clients and suppliers too.

Consider also how you will know whether you have enough of a mandate, and what you need to have in place, for others to see that you have that mandate. Do you need a formal minuted statement from senior management? Do you need a memo to all staff from the CEO? Do you need enthusiastic support from a group of influential middle managers? Do you need a budget and a job title? How do other changes get a secure mandate where you are?

People will know I've got a mandate, because...



Somewhere between this phase and the next, you will need to begin wider communication to people who haven't yet been involved. Tell them about your plans and why you're so enthusiastic about them. Ask them for their ideas. Be clear what you're asking them to do at this stage. [Section Five – Engaging People](#) reminds you of some key considerations.

Implementation – first phase or piloting, reviewing and refining

"It's a classic approach. Use a pilot project to prove it in one area, then roll it out. See how people respond. Recruit champions, get board support." Sunny Pawar, Green Collar

This is another fluid phase. Maybe your plan will include a formal piloting phase, with a clear review point. Or maybe implementation is designed to be interactive, with constant refinement as everyone learns how to do it better.

The formal governance will continue, monitoring implementation and troubleshooting, removing barriers, spreading the learning about how to make it work really well, driving and inspiring people with the vision of what better looks like and why it's a great idea.

This phase needs to be designed to include quick wins (for morale and engagement) and ways of spreading the word.

Perhaps you have a really big set of champions who are taking it forward in multiple parts of the organisation, in addition to the smaller change team. If so, make sure you regularly brief them with updates, listen to their experiences of what's working and what's not, congratulate and inspire them.

As you, your team and the people you have engaged to help, get on with implementing the jointly agreed plans, you will need to build in ways of reviewing progress. In [Section Four – The changes you want to make: how will you know when you've done it?](#) you considered how you would know if your change is underway or successful. With your change team, you will need to discuss and agree what to measure, and what to gather qualitative or anecdotal evidence about. The criteria you review your success against need to be central to the things you were wanting to achieve with the programme.

You will want to gather evidence about:

- the difference that has been made 'out there' (e.g. carbon emitted, sustainable products sold, mental health absence reduced)
- the difference that has been made 'in here' (e.g. job descriptions rewritten, new products developed, recycling schemes underway)
- how we are doing as a change team (e.g. what have we done that's worked, what have we done that hasn't worked, how we are working together).

It can help if there has been some assessment of your performance by a credible outsider.

As well as formal reviews where data is presented to a senior team or in a published report, build in temperature checks for the team – how is the team getting on, what are people feeling?

If the change isn't having the impact you hoped for, you may need to bring people together to understand why. Don't be afraid to say things aren't working. Take time to understand why and find ways to fix the problems.

"We had a policy to reduce energy use and buy more energy-efficient products, but it wasn't happening. We brought together key internal stakeholders for a workshop to try to work out what the problem was. We used root-cause analysis and it turned out that buyers were appraised on the up-front cost of the equipment, which was slightly dearer in many cases, and weren't incentivised to save the organisation money in the long term. The solution was to pair up the equipment buyers with the energy buying people in virtual teams, and appraise them jointly on the savings. We found this solution because we worked together with curiosity, using a recognised tool which structured the conversation and kept us looking at causes, not blame." Clare Taylor, consultant, talking about a previous employer

More implementation and embedding, monitoring impacts, communicating success

After an initial phase, be it a formal pilot or not, the team will be confident enough in the direction, practicalities and effectiveness to roll the change out further:

- more parts of the organisation
- addressing a wider range of issues
- getting further into strategy and brand (remember Futerra's four elements – moving from 'map' to 'vision', 'symbols' and 'stories').

"As we rolled out the Executive Leadership programme, we began with the support functions. In effect, we put our own house in order, by involving Corporate Real Estate, IT Ops and Procurement, combined with engaging our supply chain partners. We then moved on to the other two-thirds of the business – the client-facing, income-generating parts. Doing it this way not only helped reduce our environmental footprint, but also gave us a story to tell externally."

Matthew Robinson, HSBC

If it hasn't embedded, it's not a real change. Embedding is especially important for sustainable development, because it's inherently a long-term journey, with an uncertain destination, and there will be downsides as well as win-wins. If you or the other committed champions leave or get side-lined, an embedded change will outlast you.

Embedding is partly about getting the changes intimately bound up with the written policies, procedures, targets and strategies – the ‘artefacts’ of the organisation. It is also about cementing it firmly within the culture of the organisation – so it becomes ‘the way we do things round here’. And it’s about the core purpose and mission of the organisation – ‘what we’re here for’.

When the possibility arises of getting sustainable development written into the organisational ‘bible’, take it. Take up the opportunities to catalyse and support the right kind of culture change.

“I’d say sustainability is well incorporated into our strategy and operations. It’s just the way we do things. Our mission is ‘brilliant places through conscious commercialism’, and business resilience is one of our four corporate pillars. Every development we undertake has sustainability principles, and there are minimum targets and more stretching aspirations to meet. Development managers drive this in their teams, and there’s an overall set of aspirations for 2030, for zero carbon, zero waste and for all our buildings to be healthy places that support wellbeing.” Claudine Blamey, The Crown Estate

Monitoring is a part of embedding, as well as being critical to understand what impact the change has had in the world. You will want your monitoring to include useful management information that allows for rapid adjustments if things are not having the intended impact (and allows you to celebrate and congratulate if they are). So, the monitoring data shouldn’t be hoarded by the sustainability team – mainstream managers need to see it, own it and pay attention to it. Be clear about why you need certain data: don’t put unnecessary burdens on colleagues, collecting ‘interesting’ data that you don’t know what to do with.

“We built our own tools, like a software platform to measure the sustainability of projects. This allows people on our projects to review their performance. This has helped our visibility as a team across the business and improved the information quality.” Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

Periodic aggregation of the data will allow you to see trends over time and benchmark between teams, sites or other relevant ways of dividing up the organisation.

And of course, you may want or need to report publicly, in a sustainability report or integrated report.

"I was a sustainability advisor before I worked inside companies. I was a bit scathing of sustainability reporting. Since joining Pukka Herbs, I've developed a better understanding of its value. Yes, it takes a hell of a long time to gather data and make it engaging. But it is a great way of making sure things get done – it's a tool for accountability and meeting targets. And you know who does read our sustainability report? People preparing for job interviews!"

Vicky Murray, Pukka Herbs

Be sure to communicate and celebrate your successes to colleagues and stakeholders. This will spread the word, build confidence and credibility, win allies and help change people's view of 'the way we do things round here'.

Identify the next change

When you're ready, it's time to go back round the cycle again – from as fundamental a point as seems right. Now that you have a larger, more experienced and better-informed team around you, make sure to involve them in the thinking.

Perhaps each of them could do some thinking about the questions in [Section Four – The changes you want to make](#), as preparation for a discussion. You may want to use the downloadable worksheets – especially if you've written in the book! See IEMA's website www.iema.net/cmsd

Expect the unexpected – things may suddenly shift, opening up new possibilities or closing down things you thought were good opportunities.

Someone who wanted to remain anonymous said: *"My next challenge is R&D. We do have sustainability built into our new product development and evolutionary product development processes, with staging gates and sign-off. But it's cumbersome and too reliant on a single person's knowledge to vet options and speak up at the right point. It needs to be embedded in the wider team, and it would be great to pick up issues earlier in the process."*

Some of the changes you want to make, may only seem possible once you have a track record and a good reputation.

“High Fliers’ was an initiative that identified the top 10% of employees who travelled by plane. Both the individual and their management were asked to make commitments to reduce their flying. This was then included in their performance evaluation and in some cases a travel ban was put in place to curb both carbon emissions and costs. The CFO worked closely with my team and fronted all employee communication. We knew it would be unpopular because people were being told not to do something, so I waited until my third year in-role when we had enough senior support to push the programme through. It proved to be really effective and year-on-year the average carbon emission attributed to air travel per employee dropped.” Beth Knight, EY

Sometimes the ‘next change’ is a logical build on the earlier changes, as in this story from Tony Rooke:

“When I came back from travelling the world, I was really fired up about climate change. I took my ideas to a strategy director, who colleagues in my network introduced me to. That person was really receptive, because climate and energy were already starting to be on his radar. There was an away day coming up, with pitches for new ideas. So, it was a case of the right time, the right place and the right gobby mouth. My idea was to offer energy-efficiency and carbon-reduction services as a consulting service, with lots of use of data, which fitted with our IT and tech expertise. My pitch came second, which I was pretty pleased with. There were some challenging questions, but the strategy director saw that we had to do it ourselves first. So, he sponsored me to take it to the FM team, who liked it.

“The early stages were very low cost: I did a visual audit at the weekend, just looking at what was switched on. Plugs measured power consumption, and I estimated the night-time and weekend wastage. I did a business case based on this, helped by the FM team and our CFO, with the cost being just my time and permission to talk to others about it. We had most of the data we needed already, without needing to put in new equipment. We just hadn’t paid this kind of attention to it. Working now with the FM team, in the first six months we saved 10% of our utility bills.

"We did the same for transport and travel costs, promoting teleconferencing. That saved £7m in the first few months and along the way, momentum and involvement grew with colleagues and management. More savings followed and within the first two years we made £10m savings.

"This done, I had the mandate to put together a consulting team and a develop a portfolio of services. We had a lot of the offers already, so some of that was about showing that we had a business. Then I was able to start up a new consulting practice within the business. It really was a bottom-up transformation – I wasn't in a management position and I didn't have an environment or sustainability mandate. But I did what I could, helped by getting backing from key management influencers and decision-makers, and each success gave me more ability to make the next move." Tony Rooke, talking about his time at an IT consultancy

And sometimes the next change may be transformative.

"I know that we are in the early stages of a business transformation, with Plan A. We're engaging the people who materially influence the performance of the business through centralised systems: the specifications, the suppliers, the way we manage energy and so on. We can include maybe three of the buyers out of a total of three hundred in the conversations we have to make sure the policy we develop and roll out works for them. But the next phase is to fully engage all 86,000 colleagues. Those people are proud that this is happening but not yet actively involved in making it happen. People underestimate these leaps."

Mike Barry, Marks and Spencer

"The Sustainable Living Plan Steering Team is effectively a sub-committee of the Unilever Leadership Executive. It includes the Chief Supply Chain Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Presidents who run our big global businesses. Many of them weren't on the Executive ten years ago. The quality of discussion is really high. We're able to talk about the tensions and level of ambition we should have." Thomas Lingard, Unilever

Section Eight

What if...?

Earlier sections have looked at things in a broad-brush way, with questions and exercises which should make sense whatever your circumstances. But there are some specific situations which you may face, which require more focused responses.

This section includes experiences and insight from change-makers, which you will find useful in these situations. The situations are:

- You start a new role
- You can start (again) from scratch
- Change starts somewhere else
- You inherit something
- Things don't work out
- There's a merger or acquisition, or your part of the business is sold or outsourced
- You have a champions network or loads of bottom-up ideas and enthusiasm
- You're leading a change team
- You need to collaborate to change the wider system

You start a new role

Your fellow change-makers had a lot to say about this. Their experiences have given them clear views about what they plan to do – or wish they had done – when starting in a new role. Their message is twofold: invest serious time and effort in learning about the organisation and meeting people; show some rapid added value with quick wins, to build your credibility.

"I had a plan for my first hundred days. Every Friday afternoon I reviewed progress against the plan. There was a pre-entry phase, when I came up with a personal learning plan to get up to speed on the sector, which was a new one for me. I found some quick wins to establish credibility and add value, including what mattered to my boss. I did research and interviewed people, visiting as many internal stakeholders as I could in the first few weeks. I felt ready to do a SWOT analysis for the company. I made sure I understood the approvals processes.

It's critical to understand the current challenges and opportunities, existing processes and commitments, the details of the priorities that have been identified already, and compare that to what you think they should be."

Jonathan Garrett, Prudential

"In the first six months, I asked as many questions as I could. I asked, 'Who are the right people to ask?' I wanted to get across the organisation – find the vertical and horizontal layers. I made sure I understood their objectives, their sustainability maturity. What have they done? What have they said? Have they been caught out? Reflect on which part of the organisation you have been hired into: communications because they need engagement or want better PR, or HR because they want culture change, or the CFO's team because they see sustainability as about reducing risk and taking out cost. It's important to understand the organisational sustainability maturity and history, and to understand who can help you get things done." Tony Rooke, CDP

For Alan Knight, it's about understanding the product story.

"If the product could tell a story, what would it say? Does it include tropical forests, child labour...? It's an obvious place to start. Even if there are systems in place, go back to the basics. What would you be proud to talk about, and what would embarrass you? What don't you know? Also make sure you understand the most material issues, the hard to measure as well as the measurable. Don't be distracted by the GRI or the SDGs, the 'do everything' menu."

Alan Knight, ArcelorMittal

For Colin Robertson, the interesting unknowns were around processes:

"The questions I had, when I came to this company, were about the processes: how do you get things done, what are the underpinning processes, where is the ambiguity, what new processes and guidance are needed? I like to understand the ambiguity, it's a place you can step into and bring clarity. I like to break down the problem, decide on the steps to take, check them with people and check I've understood it correctly. I jot down and map out what I think I'm seeing and what I think I'm missing. I think about who might point me to something I'm not aware of." Colin Robertson, Betty's and Taylor's

You can start (again) from scratch

Sometimes you can start (again) from scratch. Perhaps the organisation you're working in is very new. Perhaps changes at the top mean you have a mandate for a serious reboot. Perhaps you're the first person playing this role in the organisation.

This is the time when a thorough look – internally and externally – can be fantastically beneficial. Drawing on the insights of internal and external stakeholders, you can show how looking at things through a sustainability lens illuminates dependencies, risks and opportunities in a systematic and practical way. You can identify the most material issues and how they relate to mission-critical activities, influencing both operations and strategy. You can understand the characteristics and culture which make the organisation what it is, and tailor your strategy to them.

This is your time! Make the most of it.

Colin Robertson was in this situation in his previous company, N G Bailey.

"The senior people had some nascent ideas, but it was pretty challenging to begin with as there wasn't any precedent. Some people saw sustainability as about charitable giving, some reduced it to a focus solely for our own operations. Some wanted to understand how it related to customer needs. There were a few false starts and it was months before I had the opportunity to have conversations about how the strategy might evolve. But there was a space to occupy, and the most influential people had to be bought in. In the end, we took advantage of our competitive distinctions: that it was a family-owned building services business and that we owned our own buildings. Our strategy developed to set corporate targets to reduce our own carbon emissions, through using our own buildings as demonstrations of what you can do with retrofitting and refurbishing. Investments in renewables, ranging from wood chip biomass, fuelled from our own estate, solar thermal and PV, allied to energy-efficiency strategies including more sophisticated energy monitoring and management systems delivered results. New service offerings could then be taken up by the business development teams, to support clients."

When Claudine Blamey started at Slough Estates Group, she wasn't just the first in her company in this role, she was the first in her sector in the UK. What she did would be a benchmark for the sector.

"I worked hard to get them to be ambitious. You need to understand what's going on in your organisation, listen, look, learn. Find out about the processes that are already in place that you can adapt. Look outwards, too, at the competition, at the trends in the world. What are thought leaders like Forum for the Future saying about the sector? And understand the organisational appetite: do they want to be leading or following? Look at what customer surveys are saying, for nuggets of information. Put together an internal team, made up of people from different levels: middle management, leaders, younger people. The agitators will gravitate towards you! Depending on the business, different job roles will be important but it needs to include the ones who deliver the core business day to day as well as marketing, corporate affairs, HR and so on. Look at the evidence you've found and come up with the areas to focus on."

Start-ups give you huge opportunities. It is harder to retrofit sustainability thinking into an established organisation, but at the start things are more fluid. The organisation is likely to be smaller and with founders or senior leaders who are open to new thinking, so get to know them and join in the enthusiastic conversations about how things could be. Be clear about the business case for using a sustainability lens.

Look back to [Section Four – The changes you want to make: strategic tools](#) for tools that are particularly useful when you are taking a thorough strategic approach.

Change starts somewhere else

Change-makers are entrepreneurs – opportunist duckers and divers – as much as planners and managers of change. Stay alert to the changes that are already going on around you, so that you can catch the wave and use it to move things in the right direction.

Go back to Section 2.2 – Know your organisation: how does the organisation change and what is its capacity for change? and see what the changes are that are already going on around you. They might be planned or responsive, incremental or transformative, chosen or imposed – it doesn't matter. They might be led by HR, IT, sales teams, the corporate strategy unit, a diagonal-slice working party or a single senior leader. They may be trends or discontinuities in the context outside the organisation – like water shortages, population movements, rising energy costs, increased interest in gender equality or sharing and repairing. If there is movement, use it to your advantage.

Alan Knight took a leading role in mobilising business in response to the shocking outbreak of the Ebola virus in Liberia in 2015. Rather than closing down its operations, as many subcontractors did, ArcelorMittal became the founder of the Ebola Private Sector Mobilisation Group. It collaborated with other companies to share learning on how to protect their people and communities using and sharing communication channels, resources and expertise. When things were back under control, Alan Knight found that his colleagues better appreciated the company's potential to collaborate with others.

A much happier opportunity to ride a wave of change came for Tom Knowland, when the Grand Départ of the Tour de France took place in Yorkshire in 2014.

"All the local authorities wanted to make a success of it, and to do that we needed to collaborate. This built relationships and trust, and we saw that collaboration between us was possible. At about the same time, Leeds City Council had identified eight wicked problems that it really wanted to solve, but which needed a collaborative approach. Off the back of the success of the Tour de France, collaboration is the way we are tackling those problems. Two I'm working on directly are fuel poverty and carbon reduction. We want to solve these at a city-wide level, not just in our directly owned and managed operations."

Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

Lynne Ceeney worked in a consultancy, heading up the sustainability consulting practice. But the organisation didn't have a CSR or sustainability function looking across the board at its own activities. Change started to make itself felt in what customers were asking for. She says:

"We had lots of tenders coming in, asking questions about our CSR. We didn't have a corporate team, so my team ended up supporting other teams in answering these questions. But, frankly, the response was pretty poor. My team put together some model responses and let people know we had done this. This planted seeds, and soon a part-time CSR role was created. So, we had a bit of resource and a mandate. Once in place, we went looking for data. We monitored: who's asking these questions, what they are asking about? Now the issue was on the board table, and things moved fast. We were able to bring in a carbon strategy, because we could say 'customers are asking for this:'"

Lynne Ceeney

Sometimes the change is regulatory, like the introduction of integrated reporting. Sometimes it is technological:

"There's so much potential for data to be aggregated and compared to global targets. Yes, you're working to eliminate malaria. But how are we doing as a whole, and what's your contribution to that? When we put our effects together with other's, are we making a big or a small difference? Tech can also be used to curate products and services, make things much more efficient, harness the wisdom of crowds. We've barely scratched the surface."

Solitaire Townsend, Futerra

"We can use data so much more powerfully now. We recently worked with a client in the water sector where we used a years' worth of data to develop a way of predicting water leaks with 70% plus accuracy, and on average three weeks before the leak would be reported by the public. Big data analytics can also lead to predictive maintenance and much earlier diagnostics."

says Dr James Robey of Capgemini

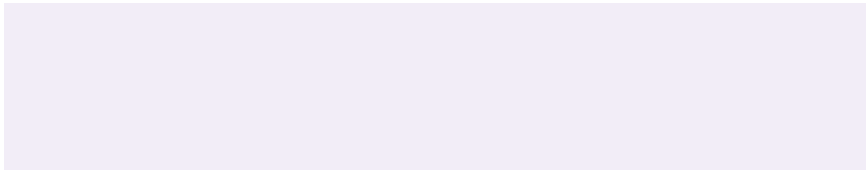
But he's cautious too, and sees a role for sustainability specialists in helping shape these changes for the better.

"Technology and data are not a panacea or without negative sustainability impacts. It all relies on electricity, for a start, and we don't have an infinite supply. Artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality could all be fantastic for transparency, monitoring data or engagement, but these innovations could also drive unsustainable as well as sustainable trends. So, getting involved with the CTO is really important, helping them explore the sustainability implications of technological innovation is crucial if the innovation is going to deliver good. And it doesn't always have to involve complex solutions – it could be as simple as building in defaults that help customers save energy, for example configuring lower-energy settings on devices when they first arrive with the customer."

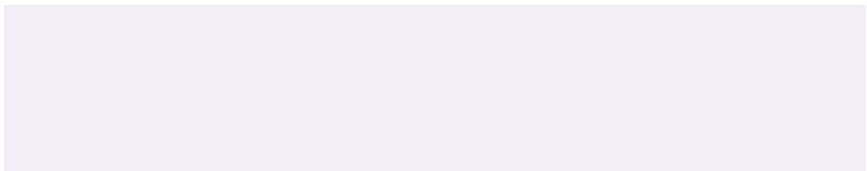
Dr James Robey of Capgemini

Think about your own situation, and the waves of change you might be able to ride.

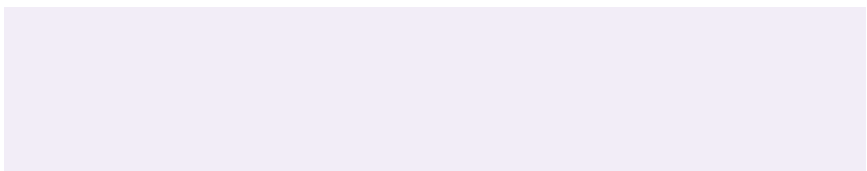
This is where change is already happening:



These are the positive things that people are trying to get, from the change:



These are the negative things that people are trying to avoid, from the change:



In trying to get sustainable development into these changes, consider the opportunities and the advantages.

- Are there things being reviewed or planned, where you can suggest using criteria or boundaries which are related to environmental or social issues?
- Are there consultations going on, where you can argue the case?
- Are people trying to meet targets (e.g. cost cutting, boosting reputation, improving sales, accelerating innovation) where consideration of environmental and social matters can help?

These are the ways that sustainability could be built in to the change process:

These are the ways that sustainability could help meet the objectives of the change:

These are the ways that I can influence things:

Using the same approaches and techniques described in Sections Six and Seven, you can influence change that is being planned or is already underway.

You inherit something

You may move into a role with a history. There may be long-standing commitments to honour, existing embedded ways of doing things, networks of people with sustainability in their jobs or who are champions. So, there will be things demanding continuity, as well as an opportunity to ask how things could be done better. Where something isn't working, don't be afraid to review or stop it.

When she joined Pukka Herbs, Vicky Murray found that *"the ethos was there from the start, and sustainability was entrenched. But the previous person in my role had a narrower remit. They mostly covered functional areas, warehouses, direct office impacts. We had zero waste to landfill in our operations. I inherited a wide-ranging strategy which covered climate change, product excellence, community involvement and fair trade, resource conservation and ethical business. There were really positive aspirations in place, and some goals, but very little measurement. I was brought in to add rigour and implementation to some ambitious long-term targets. My early work was in helping the company think through what 'net positive' would mean in practice, across the whole supply chain from 'crop to cup'."*

Things don't work out

Not everything you do will be successful. Sometimes you will lose the argument or a decision will go against you. Sometimes you will run a project or put a new way of doing things in place, and it won't deliver the impact you intend.

If you don't succeed, but you still believe in the change you were trying to bring about, wait and try again when the time is right.

Sometimes, you will need to recognise that something just isn't going to work.

"One of the early 'aha' moments of anyone's sustainability career is that: although some of our efforts will have an impact, others may not. Sometimes you try and you fail. A few years ago, I worked on a project to help companies strengthen their tax position from a sustainability perspective. As time passed it became clear that participants were primarily focused on managing their reputational risk were

– *which wasn't necessarily wrong but it meant that sustainability considerations secondary. My team became increasingly frustrated and de-motivated by the participants' competing priorities. It began to impact other areas of their work and ultimately, we stepped away from the project. It was a hard lesson on where to place our effort for best results.*" Beth Knight, EY

If things don't work out, you need to keep a steady course: neither blasé and complacent, blaming circumstances and everyone except yourself, nor defeated and downhearted, beating yourself up.

"I'm not afraid to mess things up, but I'm reflective. I learn from it."

Miles Watkins, BRE Group

Talk it through with a trusted colleague or coach, who will help you see clearly what went well, what didn't go well, and help you work out what you'll do differently next time.

There's a merger or acquisition, or your part of the business is sold or outsourced

This kind of change can feel very uncomfortable for a lot of people. There is likely to be fear, distrust, anger and grief. (In fact, all of the negative emotions that accompany change being 'done to' you, which we looked at in [Section Five – Engaging people: emotional responses.](#))

Despite this, there are opportunities to be grasped, as well as potentially a need to defend those aspects of existing sustainability practice that you definitely don't want to lose.

Sunny Pawar has been in this situation a few times, and has made a bit of a specialism of helping organisations in these times of transition. *"Lead change, be part of the change, be changed or be left behind! It takes years to integrate businesses. Cultures can be very different, both geographically and in terms of business values, and people may be much more interested in protecting their own position than in making the new situation work. You need to find people who'll listen, from either side. Create relationships, knock on doors. Some will open.*

Some will be useful years later, as people open doors to other people. Meet face to face, on their terms. Find the people with the authority to implement change, find the champions.

"When you are new to a business, which is about to be sold, acquired or merged, it is important to establish yourself as a subject matter expert. You'll need to defend the things you think are important, as well as selling and listening.

"Research the culture of the organisation that you don't know yet. Things to look for are where the ideas come from: a central unit or different parts of the business? Work out if it's a culture you want to stay in: is this an opportunity to show what you can do, or an opportunity to move elsewhere? Volunteer to be part of the change management project or integration team, if the opportunity is there. Develop yourself this way, and get sustainability thinking in at an early stage."

Lynne Ceeney advises you to go back to your own first principles.

"Mergers and acquisitions are really hard. In times of uncertainty, be authentic. Be able to look rationally at the situation and ask yourself: do I have access to the fulcrums? These kinds of changes can be positive and lead to good things, if the approach is about asking 'how can we bring people together to find strengths?' Find the ways that you can get sustainability into the DNA of the new organisation, how open and willing the new leaders are to it. If you discover that you no longer have access or influence, or the champions have gone, you need to ask yourself 'do I rebuild, or cut my losses?' Lynne Ceeney

Jane Ashton is optimistic about the opportunities. *"Change is always good for sustainability! When we went through a merger, our headquarters moved to Germany. It was an opportunity to take a fresh look at structures, strengthening what works and changing the weaker aspects. We could show again how it was really evident that sustainability has to be part of what this business is about. And there are opportunities to push parts of the business further, to re-examine core questions about strategy. Different countries see the level of ambition differently, and my team can help them develop."* It hasn't been all roses, however. *"With change of management there is the challenge of rebuilding senior colleague understanding and awareness, but in this case we gained formal representation for sustainability at executive board level which is a bonus."*

You have a champions network or loads of bottom-up ideas and enthusiasm

You may have generated a great group of volunteers in your change project, or perhaps the network of enthusiasts was part of your inheritance when you moved into the role.

Either way, you'll want to avoid alienating people while you review how effective it is.

Inga Doak, Sustainability Manager at Siemens Rail Automation, had to systematise her organisation's CSR programme, which covered staff volunteering and corporate donations.

"CSR participation was very organic, growing out of people's enthusiasm, but with limited structures and tracking. There weren't any formal guidelines or requirements within our particular business unit, and no clear identification of responsibilities." Through her Sustainability Manager's remit, Inga Doak was able to address this, and started by capturing key requirements in a formal procedure, accompanied by a user-friendly one-page infographic. This was shared in draft with a few targeted internal stakeholders including a communications representative, an existing CSR 'agent' and the Siemens plc CSR Manager.

"The CSR programme was formally launched via an all-staff email sent from the MD and was followed up with a UK-wide roadshow. At the same time, associated initiatives were launched, including a business-wide CSR Committee, local CSR 'agents', tracking and reporting processes to monitor volunteering efforts and corporate donations, and ongoing communications."

"We now have increased staff awareness and engagement, and lots of positive new stories we can use internally and externally. We also have actual performance data we can track over time. I'd say it was both a top-down and bottom-up change. We needed senior management to buy-in to the importance of the programme, but equally we needed staff to support what we were trying to achieve. We got it done quickly, in less than six months, but that needed a significant investment of time and commitment."

Inga Doak, Siemens Rail Automation

Once people have stepped up to share the change journey, they will need support, exactly as you and your fellow change-makers do. They will need time to get used to new ways of doing things, to let off steam, share their enthusiasms and achievements, keep learning together and tell their own travellers' tales. Action groups or champions networks can provide this, as long as they are well structured and purposeful.

It will be helpful to set a structure, purpose and way of working for these networks – in conjunction with their members – early on. Once they are underway, you might be able to step back and let others coordinate, but be aware that a network like this always needs active management and this takes real people's real time. So, it needs to be recognised in a job description and someone's performance plan (or equivalent).

Think about:

- the ongoing briefing they need
- how to help them feel connected to each other
- how to help them learn together, from external experts and from each other
- enabling them to identify their collective recommendations on how to improve things
- enabling them to collaborate on projects or work streams
- how they can help you get the message out to colleagues
- what kinds of initiatives and changes they might be able to initiate (and how to give strategic direction to this)
- the permission and reward they need to really play their part without creating tension with their role, if being a champion is a voluntary activity on top of the day job.

The change team, sustainability network – or other appropriate groups of people – can get useful support from each other if they build in an 'action learning' approach, rather than simply checking progress against 'to do' lists in regular meetings. Reflecting on what has happened, and what other approaches might work, is a useful discipline that can help leapfrog months of trial and error.

As well as providing support structures and mechanisms, feedback is critical. People like to know their actions have been noticed and approved of. They also like to know how much of a difference they are making, individually and collectively. Think of the '% raised' meters on online fundraising pages or petition pages. So, build in mechanisms to make sure people get simple and easy-to-understand information on what they've achieved, and that they feel appreciated. This might extend to getting discussion going on how the appraisal, reward and advancement system in the organisation recognises achievements in the sustainable development arena.

A great way to give people a sense of confidence and inspire them to keep on going is to show them the positive outcomes of their actions. Visits to suppliers or projects, with short video interviews or blog posts showing the positive impact that the organisation has made, is an engaging way to do this.

Innovations which develop into income-generating products or services can come from the ideas generated by volunteer champions. Lynne Ceeney worked for a company which had informal sustainability groups in all its UK offices.

"All the offices had to have one, but they chose what to work on completely independently. It might be office housekeeping, or partnerships with community groups, or raising funds for charities. They were partly about binding each office together, breaking down silos, creating an inclusive culture. We provided some resource, and I visited to spur them on, as an ambassador and listener. There was a quarterly forum bringing everyone together. Out of one office, an idea for sustainability assessment emerged which ended up being something we used with a national infrastructure operator to improve the sustainability of new developments. But it's the indirect benefits too. Small wins are steps on the path to big wins. This kind of network helps you win allies for the big problems later."
Lynne Ceeney

You may find yourself getting frustrated or tense, as your ideas and expert understanding are challenged and refined by people who have a different way of seeing things. This 'letting go' stage is necessary and inevitable, if the change is to be truly embedded. So, you need to welcome it. Make sure you understand where the boundaries are for you – what kinds of suggestions or plans do you think are genuinely not good enough, or too much like greenwash, or unlikely to succeed.

When you recognise that this process is underway – and you're feeling the tension of the transition between guru (lonely but right) and facilitator (keeping your mouth shut while others are talking) then you will need to embrace it. Accept that this is a positive part of the change journey. Celebrate the fact that more people are learning and getting switched on. Raise their capacity to understand sustainable development. Build in processes or policies to 'correct' serious map-reading errors and guide people's decisions. This might include developing criteria for judging whether something is more sustainable or not, or having an agreed 'expert review' phase.

"Create a habitat, an environment for change to happen. Give it resources, enable innovation." Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

"You need to distribute ownership, to let it go. Stop the suicidally useless things, but let loads of ideas and projects bloom, and then nudge them in the right direction if they need it." Miles Watkins, BRE Group

Jane Ashton has successfully embedded sustainability thinking in the part of her organisation that develops and runs excursions for customers when they are on holiday – creating a differentiated and value-added product in the process – with a strand of more sustainable excursions under the name TUI Collection.

"We have a strong sustainability umbrella team, and we have also invested in educating and enthusing people across the business. To make sustainability part of their day job, we have let go of the reins, and not micro-manage, so our people on the ground work out their best response to the goals the business has set. But, in letting go, we still need to make sure that things are robust. We have embedded processes to audit excursions, and clear guidelines on certain issues like animal welfare. It doesn't mean things are always plain sailing, there was for instance an industry trend to organising excursions to schools and orphanages,

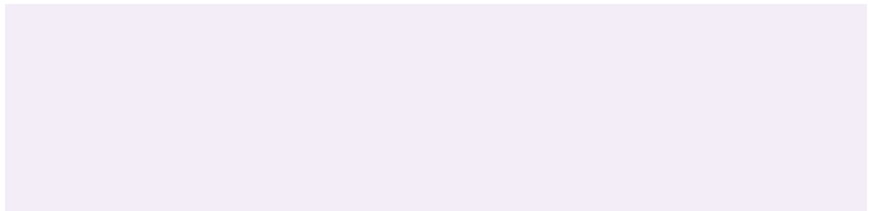
for really good reasons: getting a flavour of the local life and culture, and supporting the income of those that needed extra funding. But we recognised that such trips could be disruptive for the children and there were also potential safeguarding issues. So, our excursion managers now anticipate and avoid unintended consequences, and also help ensure that the claim that an excursion is a more sustainable choice is authentic and consistent."

Jane Ashton, TUI Group

You're leading a change team

One of the things that any great change-maker has around them is a team of other great change-makers. This needn't be a formal team with a name, office and budget (although if it is, that has some advantages). It can be a looser collection of people who all share the same desire to see change for sustainable development, and are willing to do something together about it. You may be part of a team at work – these people might all end up being in your change team, but they might not. Free yourself from the constraint of thinking that formal organisational structures dictate the answers as you think about these questions.

Who else can you call on to help you in making change?



As well as developing your own skills, you can make sure that between you, your team can do all the things that are needed to make change happen. If you add their skills and abilities to your own, does that help you to fill any of the gaps you identified in [Section Four – The changes you want to make: what can you bring to the party?](#) Which areas do you still need to build strength in? Who do you know who it would be great to have in your team, bringing those skills with them?

WHO IS IN THE TEAM, WHO COULD BE?	WHAT SKILLS DO THEY BRING, WOULD THEY BRING?

If you are pulling together a change team, or engaging your existing team, then you will need to think about the personal relevance of change to the members of the team. Maybe being part of a change team will feel good, be meaningful or personally rewarding, or provide opportunities for innovation and progression. You could build 'change for sustainable development' into performance assessment and reward schemes, or seek external recognition for everyone's efforts in the form of a prize or accreditation.

"Our organisation places a lot of value on technical expertise and external credentials. So, I make sure we spend the team's training budget on courses which add to their credibility as sustainability professionals. Things with recognised certification or which build their professional skills and give them exposure to emerging thinking. We also invest in coaching and matching people with suitable mentors." Beth Knight, EY

Tony Rooke also focuses on his team's professional development.

"I introduce staff to others outside the organisation, or outside their immediate team to learn from their experience. Peer-to-peer mentoring is also helpful and can help build your motivation." Tony Rooke, CDP

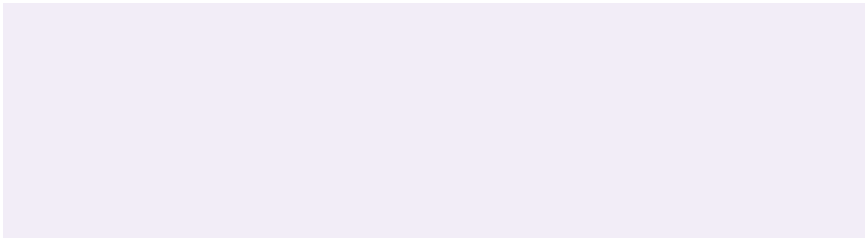
When Jonathan Garrett joined Prudential, there was a small team in place already and some vacant positions.

"There was scope to redesign, and I'm using a model for organisational design from HR to help me. I now have a vision for the team, a one-pager. Why we exist, what our responsibilities are, our capabilities and interfaces, our key external stakeholders. It helps to be really clear about these things, for focus and a common approach." Jonathan Garrett, Prudential

If you already have experience of running successful teams, then you may not need this section. If you'd like a reminder of the key points, read on...

- Your team needs to recognise itself as a team, with an agreed purpose and sense of direction.
- Each team member's skills and contributions should be valued and used.
- Make sure there are clear roles and responsibilities, and clear action points.
- Hold regular progress reviews – reflect on what's happened, what's been achieved, what hasn't gone according to plan. If things aren't working, try something else. Celebrate achievements.
- Learn together, from reflecting on experience and in structured ways.

These people are in my team, and know that they are:



These people should be, but I need to make sure that they are:

We do / do not have a clear role and plan, that everyone in the team understands.

We do / do not have clear roles within the team, that everyone understands.

Our next meeting is on this date:

The agenda should include:

We'll review our progress on this date:

You need to collaborate to change the wider system

Transformational change will always involve the wider system – market, sector, place – that an organisation is part of. If the change you want to make is compelling enough, and you can't do it alone, you will need to collaborate with others to achieve it. The kinds of change that need this approach are systemic or wicked problems. Perhaps there are systemic incentives which make it hard for individual organisations to change except at considerable risk and cost. Maybe the risks of acting alone are large. It may be that no one organisation can have an impact without the other players joining in.

Your collaborators might be organisations of all kinds (regulators, customers, campaigners, neighbours...) with an interest in your site or sector. They will come together for successful collaboration if there is a strong enough shared problem or shared aspiration. Powerful collaboration involves sharing risks and rewards, innovating and taking coordinated action.

Less-intensive collaboration might involve working with others – peers, NGOs, academic or research bodies – to learn and do low-risk experiments together.

Be aware that collaboration is harder than working alone: it's worth it when the prize is big and when you cannot get to it alone. So proper planning and effort needs to go into convening, hosting and facilitating a collaboration. The people at the centre need to understand the typical challenges that arise during collaboration, and be ready to help the collaborators keep their heads when those challenges appear. Convening, hosting or leading a collaboration needs two aspects, which are unlikely to be in the same organisation and certainly not in the same person: neutral, independent focus on the process of collaborating; charismatic credible track record in the field, world, issues that the collaborators are working on⁸⁹.

So, consider where you will get the process skills and convening capacity from.

⁸⁹ There is much more on this in Walker, P., 2013. 'Working Collaboratively: A Practical Guide to Achieving More.' Do Shorts/Greenleaf.

Organisations like the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, Forum for the Future, ISEAL Alliance and the Aldersgate Group convene focused collaborations around particular areas of interest that their member or partner organisations most want to work on. There are also organisations which keep strictly to the process focus, enabling collaborators to do their thing without having a view on what that 'thing' should be. US-based Collective Impact is one such organisation. Sometimes alliances or campaigns give rise to stand-alone networks or collaborations become institutions: We Mean Business, the UKSSD or the Sustainable Shipping Initiative.

When Nick Blyth worked in local government, he set up a sustainability forum. It had a clear structure and a neutral chair. He explains the usefulness of planning structures and processes rather than stumbling from meeting to meeting.

"I had face to face meetings with people from different parts of the area – county council, district councils, community groups. There was an overall steering group and four sub-groups. I worked with stakeholders early on to identify the characteristics we thought the overall chair needed. We envisaged the situation we wanted to create, getting people together. We needed someone neutral, and with the right skills and personality. We ended up with the Bishop of Grantham, who played the part very well. Over time, we went from having a tiny group planning things from meeting to meeting, to having a more actively planned process, thinking about the people and organisations we needed to get on board." Nick Blyth, talking about his time at a local authority.

Tom Knowland has also collaborated as part of his work in a local authority.

"Collaboration has become one of the biggest features of my work recently. We can do so much more by working with other organisations in the city. We have worked closely with the two universities which are based here. These are strategic collaborations, where we benefit from their research expertise and they are able to show more impact and can carry out research on their doorstep. There is so much we can experiment with and research: low-carbon vehicles, district heating, solar power, domestic energy efficiency. We have got much closer engagement through part-time secondments between the council and both of the universities, explicitly aimed at identifying opportunities to collaborate." Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

But that's not all. Tom Knowland is also involved in helping Leeds City Council set up a city-wide multi-stakeholder Leeds Climate Commission, to include the universities, NHS, other public sector organisations and the biggest businesses in Leeds. An early activity will be to identify the largest carbon emitters in the city, so that action can be prioritised.

"Collaborative working should enable us to share the workload in developing business cases and procurement." Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

Businesses can also collaborate.

One multi-stakeholder collaboration, catalysed and convened by sustainability not-for-profit Forum for the Future, is the Protein Challenge 2040. Waitrose, The Hershey Company and Quorn are among the businesses working together on the question 'how can we feed nine billion people with enough protein in a way that is affordable, healthy and good for the environment?' What makes this collaboration special is its focus on system-level change and innovation. The organisations involved are not content with the easy and incremental. They want win-win solutions and have identified innovation for immediate action and longer-term scoping.

Sometimes the collaboration is aimed at securing policy change, not just changes in practices in a single sector or supply chain.

Thomas Lingard of Unilever says, *"We know that as well as touching the lives of millions of consumers through our products, we have a powerful voice, and can bring others to the table. A lot my work relates to our policy work, and we collaborate with other businesses and non-state actors through bodies like the We Mean Business network and the Global Climate Action Agenda."*

When thinking about changes that need to happen in the wider system, and where your actions can be most effective, a great model to use is Donella Meadows' 'Leverage Points: places to intervene in a system'.

Places to intervene in a system

(in increasing order of effectiveness)

12. Constants, parameters, numbers (such as subsidies, taxes, standards)
11. The sizes of buffers and other stabilizing stocks, relative to their flows.
10. The structure of material stocks and flows (such as transport networks, population age structures).
9. The lengths of delays, relative to the rate of system change.
8. The strength of negative feedback loops, relative to the impacts they are trying to correct against.
7. The gain around driving positive feedback loops.
6. The structure of information flows (who does and does not have access to information).
5. The rules of the system (such as incentives, punishments, constraints).
4. The power to add, change, evolve, or self-organise system structure.
3. The goals of the system.
2. The mindset or paradigm out of which the system – its goals, structure, rules, delays, parameters – arises.
1. The power to transcend paradigms.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Meadows, D., 1999. 'Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System.' <http://donellameadows.org/archives/leverage-points-places-to-intervene-in-a-system/>

Section Nine

Investing in yourself

To help make your organisation more sustainable, you have to sustain yourself. An out-of-touch, ill or burnt-out change-maker isn't going to help anyone. This section looks at investing in yourself, to get you to the top of your game and keep you there.

Developing yourself

In [Section 2.1 – Know yourself: skills, strengths, weaknesses, power](#), you looked at the skills or expertise that you have, and that you lack, and at your sources of power. Personal and professional development can help increase some of these power sources (e.g. expertise, scarcity).

You may have noted down the general opportunities you have for developing your skills. These may be:

- formal – even accredited – courses with clearly set out learning objectives, curriculum or syllabus
- action learning sets or coaching where you bring your own work problems to talk through with others
- secondments where you learn by being part of a team doing something new
- self-directed learning through books or e-learning

...or something else entirely.

Choose the most important area that you think you need to develop in order to make the change you have chosen, and note down the opportunities that you know about for learning more. If you don't know about any opportunities, note down the steps you can take to find opportunities. Write down the action you will take, and by when. Also note down how you will know that you have been successful – this might be very simple, e.g. 'I will have a place on the course' or more outcome-oriented, e.g. 'I will give a presentation to the senior management team about sustainable development'.

MY PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREA		
I WILL... (ACTION TO TAKE)	BY... (DATE)	I WILL KNOW I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE... (HOW YOU'LL KNOW)

"I'm constantly reskilling, rebuilding my career ladder. I've done a Masters-level PGC, industry qualifications, the Climate Reality Leaders Programme with Al Gore, taken on IEMA regional and committee roles, been an employer and an employee, worked with a mentor and been a mentor."

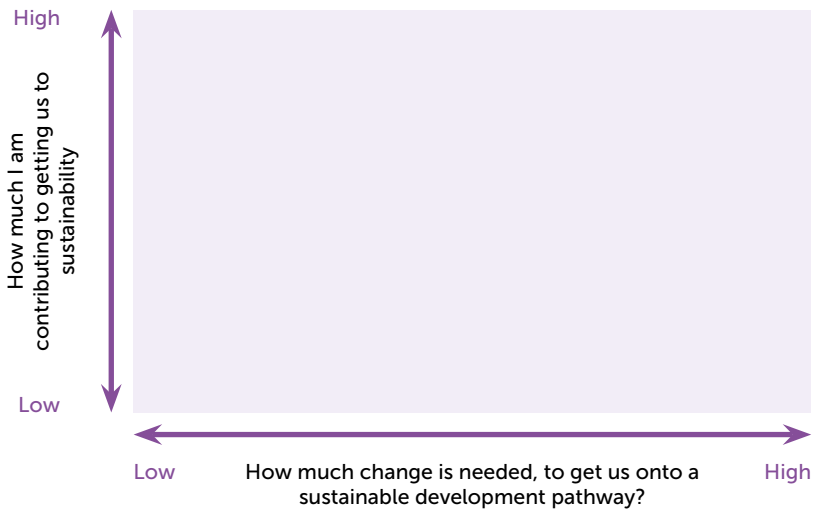
Sunny Pawar, Green Collar

Acknowledging your feelings

In my experience, the vast majority of sustainability change-makers carry a lot of turbulent feelings with them. Am I doing enough? Will we get through the climate crisis? Are small steps a good thing or a bad thing? Why don't people get it? Can I switch off?

Perhaps you're the same?

Where would you put yourself on this map? Are you always in that place, or does it change?⁹¹



How does your response make you feel?

⁹¹ To compare yourself to other sustainability change-makers, see Walker, P., 'What's it like from the inside? The challenges of being an organisational change agent for sustainability', a chapter in 'Change and Sustainability' edited by Chris Galea, Greenleaf Publishing, 2012.

Explore this a bit more.

Think about how things are at work at the moment, for you. Imagine your Sunday evenings and your Monday mornings. Picture your work space. Hear your colleagues, your boss, your team. How do you feel?

Think about the environment and society, as things are today. Hear a news reporter talking about a significant sustainability topic: maybe climate change, tropical forests, food supplies or population movements. Imagine you're giving a presentation about the same thing. Listen to the sounds outside your window. How do you feel?

Think about what a sustainable society might be like. What can you see? What can you hear? What will you be doing? What will your surroundings be like? How do you feel?

Think about the journey between here and there. Picture the length and complexity of the journey. Imagine the things that will no longer happen and the new things that will happen. Hear the things that people will be saying about the changes. Imagine the conversations you will have and the things you will do, to make change. How do you feel?

How do your feelings compare with these, which come from conversations, survey responses and interviews?

"The facts about climate change are so scary and disempowering that I just don't think about them anymore. When I see a newspaper article about glaciers melting or water tables falling, I don't read it."

"My colleagues don't give a monkey's. It's a very macho culture and I'm afraid of looking foolish and being teased when I mention things like recycling paper."

"I can't really visualise what a sustainable society would look like. Is it quite like this one, with all the changes being 'behind the scenes', with just as many cars but running on clean fuels? Or will we be living in small communities weaving our own cord out of willow bark? Or something entirely different? Because I can't describe it to myself or other people, I'm afraid that I won't be convincing when I try to whip up enthusiasm."

"I'm really excited about what can happen when people wake up to a problem and have easy solutions provided for them. Look at how fast cycling has grown in London and other cities. Look at the growth of fair trade. It's happening! And people are making a living from it"

"I try to live a green life, but like everyone else I compromise quite a lot. I still have a car and it's not very efficient. My kids still like to get new toys and I use quite a lot of energy in the house. I sometimes feel like a hypocrite and am worried that colleagues will see me like this too, if I try to get them to behave differently."

"When I see wind turbines turning, and solar panels on buildings, I feel proud, almost elated. They are a sign of hope and they're there, right now."

"I want there to be massive change, and I want to be part of it. I can feel low when I think about all the things I haven't achieved yet – but then I look at what I have done and feel reassured."

"I veer between pessimism and denial. When I really think about what might happen in 20 years – climate refugees, water wars and so on – I think the best thing I can do is to teach my kids how to set a snare and purify water."

"I feel lots of things – I'm a turbulent cauldron of emotions. But my role at work is to point out the relevant facts – about our impacts, about what our competitors are doing, about what the law says and so on. Sometimes, I point out that particular emotions are being expressed, and draw attention to them. That can turn the conversation around!"

Which emotions help you to be more effective? And which are a barrier to effectiveness?



On the whole, positive and forward-looking emotions like curiosity, excitement and confidence are more useful than the negative emotions like fear and anger. Strong negative emotions can be a spur to action, but generally only for quick bursts. They are just as likely to make people run away or surrender (both forms of denial). The Climate Optimist⁹² campaign is based on the assumption that positive emotions are more effective.

Having said that, it wouldn't be helpful to dismiss the negative emotions or try to squash them or make them off-limits. It is legitimate and reasonable for people to feel angry, depressed or powerless. The distinction between seriously tackling the sustainability challenge, and rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic, is more than spin. The choice of whether to veer more towards the pragmatic, 'realistic' and upbeat, or to challenge complacency and push for ever greater change, is not just one of presentation. It is more than a matter of being in the right 'state', and it is not trivial. It's a real choice – although you may come back and revisit the choice as circumstances change.

As a change-maker, one of the things you may find yourself doing is helping others articulate their frustration, doubt or anger about the choice that has been made, and their role in implementing it. You will sometimes find yourself challenging others to be more ambitious and imaginative. You will sometimes find yourself cautioning others not to over-reach themselves, and

⁹² <https://www.climateoptimist.org/>

to curb their enthusiasm. You will have to manage your own feelings about this, and sometimes you may feel you have made the wrong choice. You will sometimes find yourself having to help a group of people deal with their disagreements about what to do – and find that conflicting emotions are part of what is preventing a good decision being made. This tension – between doing something and doing enough – is a permanent feature of the landscape.

The negative feelings can and should be acknowledged and respected. But you'll want to have strategies for putting them back in the box when you need yourself and others to feel confident, empowered and inspired.

Some fellow travellers talk about their feelings:

Jane Ashton has been working in sustainability for a long time. *"I used to feel I was working on something new and exciting. These days, it doesn't feel so revolutionary, and as it becomes more business-as-usual you have to work to keep up the excitement."* Jane Ashton, TUI Group

"If you can tell yourself after a long day's work: I changed this, I made a contribution. That's good. If you can't say that, move on."
Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

"Because Unilever is emphasising policy work as well as its direct impacts I believe I can play a role in driving a bigger change in the world."
Thomas Lingard

"I take pride in the fact that when I started my career, it was an uphill struggle to get sustainable options considered in anything more than a tokenistic manner. Nowadays however, sustainable options are considered at the outset and we have to demonstrate how they can work, rather than argue for their inclusion. The emphasis is now on how sustainable solutions work in practice not what sustainable solutions are." Tom Knowland, Leeds City Council

You can help yourself and others by:

- being aware of the emotional dimension
- asking how people feel about what's going on, and being comfortable to hear the answers
- saying how you're feeling about the status quo, the change journey and the destination.

If you want to help people feel more effective and positive about change some simple approaches are:

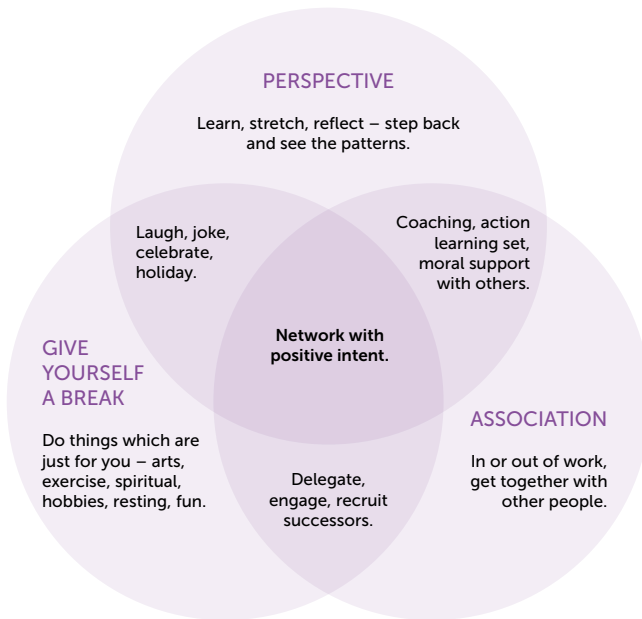
- use music and singing – pick a song or a piece of music that consistently lifts your spirits, and play it or sing it
- make a list of your achievements
- share stories of heroes and role models who have succeeded against the odds in making change
- share examples of things that are moving in the right direction
- envisage how you'd like things to be – in detail
- use the 'future perfect' solutions-focused approach when drawing up plans and discussing what to do
- talk it through with others who understand your situation – and will only give advice if you ask for it.

Supporting yourself

A change-maker for sustainable development needs to be able to keep the change going. It doesn't have to always be you who leads things – so learn to delegate and engage others – but we all need to accept that this is a long-term societal change.

You may make a certain amount of progress in one organisation, and then move on to create change in a new organisation, handing the baton on to someone else. Your legacy will be a platform for others to build on.

It's important to share the load, and to look after yourself. This is especially the case if you have additional caring responsibilities outside work. It's important to spend time building your capacity to be resilient. It's also important to do the same for your team and champions.



Supporting yourself: three pillars

Fortunately, many of the things which help you to do this will also bring you other benefits which are easier to justify – in traditional organisational and management terms – like developing new skills, developing others, networking with potential clients or suppliers.

Perspective

Perspective is about learning from the doing. Every day, week or year you will have done things which pleased or disappointed you. Your actions may have moved things closer to a sustainable development path, or you may have tried and failed to do so. You don't have to reflect on every single thing you do (or fail to do) every day. But taking some time out to think about what's worked well and what's not will help you to do better next time.

Perspective is also about stopping yourself from getting stuck. If you only ever see the big picture, then you'll miss out on the chances to make some of the thousand little changes that will bring sustainability closer. If you only ever see the details, you'll miss out on the mid-course corrections that are needed, and never see the progress you've made along the route. Sometimes the optimist needs to see the emptiness in the glass and the pessimist needs to see the fullness.

Give yourself a break

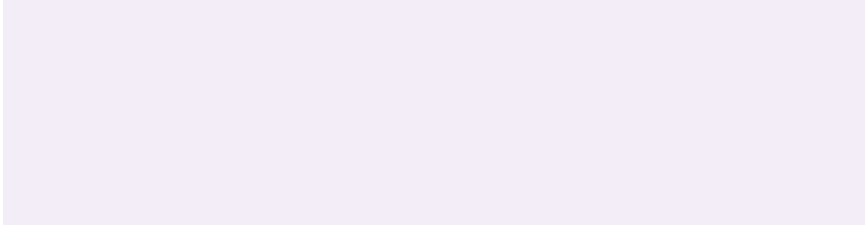
Marry perspective with giving yourself a break, by having a laugh at failures⁹³ and celebrating achievements. Or take a holiday which combines relaxation with some other kind of activity or learning – music, drawing, bushcraft skills, yoga.

Time off and time out are essential – this is a long-distance path, not a sprint. Recharging your batteries is not self-indulgence, it's part of the plan.

People recharge their batteries in lots of ways – listening to a great piece of music, going to a show, drawing, meditation, running, cooking a meal for someone, walking in the countryside. And there are things that can just make you feel good about yourself – finally finishing that niggling job around the house, doing a good turn for someone, getting in touch with a relative or old friend.

⁹³ See, for example, <https://www.sustainablestandup.com/>

What are the things that feed your flame?



Open your schedule and book in one thing – even if it's just 10 minutes' worth – for each of the next seven days.

Make time-off possible by getting really good at delegating, engaging others in implementing things, and plan for your successor(s).

Association

Inside or outside your organisation, find like-minded fellow travellers to share the journey with.

Use these people as a resource to help you reflect and learn, and to give each other moral support.

And as you network – formally and informally – build up the kind of listening and coaching skills which mean that the conversations are useful and effective, rather than descending into being superficial or a moan-fest.

To get really good support and mutual learning, it helps to network with others who are also trying to make change for sustainable development. As well as structured and informal opportunities to share experiences, networks can help when you need to build alliances or find people to give your efforts external credibility. You can find people like this in various ways. Here are just some ideas – research the equivalents in your area and of course as provided through IEMA approved training and networks.

Section Nine

<p>Academic courses and programmes</p>	<p>Graduate and executive programmes and courses run by Cambridge University's Institute for Sustainability Leadership http://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/</p> <p>Ashridge Business School's Masters in Organisational Change https://www.ashridge.org.uk/executive-masters-in-organisational-change/programme-detail/</p> <p>University of Exeter One Planet MBA http://business-school.exeter.ac.uk/study/masters/opmba/</p> <p>Cranfield Management and Corporate Sustainability MSc https://www.cranfield.ac.uk/SOM/Masters-Courses/Management-and-Corporate-Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability MSc at Anglia Ruskin University http://www.anglia.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/sustainability</p>
<p>Short courses and events</p>	<p>Courses and conferences run by IEMA www.iema.net/training</p> <p>Courses run by the Schumacher College https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/</p> <p>Nature retreats for sustainability professionals https://www.changeinnature.org/</p> <p>She is Sustainable – for women working in sustainability https://sheissustainable.org/</p> <p>Peer learning such as Still Conversations for Sustainability Leaders http://www.penny-walker.co.uk/still-conversations-for-sustainability-leaders/ or Terra Infirma's Corporate Sustainability Mastermind Group http://www.terrainfirma.co.uk/servicesandtraining/corporate-sustainability-mastermind-group.html</p> <p>Monthly discussions organised in London by The Crowd http://thecrowd.me/</p>

Section Nine

<p>Networks</p>	<p>IEMA's regions and specialist networks (and now incorporating GACSO – Global Association of Corporate Sustainability Officers) www.iema.net/regions https://www.iema.net/engage/networks/</p> <p>The Association of Sustainability Practitioners www.asp-online.org/</p> <p>Two Degrees https://www.2degreesnetwork.com/</p> <p>ICRS https://icrs.info/</p> <p>ISSP https://www.sustainabilityprofessionals.org/</p> <p>The environmental, ethical or sustainability interest group for your specialism or sector</p>
<p>Organised volunteering</p>	<p>STEM ambassador programme. https://www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassadors</p> <p>Mentoring others e.g. via IEMA https://www.iema.net/membership/mentoring-scheme</p>
<p>NGO-run and alumni networks and collaborations</p>	<p>CISL – Alumni network for people who have attended a course or programme. http://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/network</p> <p>Forum for the Future –network of organisations ambitious for big change for sustainability https://www.forumforthefuture.org/forum-network</p> <p>BiTC http://www.bitc.org.uk/</p> <p>UN Global Compact https://www.unglobalcompact.org/</p> <p>UKSSD https://www.ukssd.co.uk/</p> <p>B Corporation https://www.bcorporation.net/</p>
<p>Online conversations and groups</p>	<p>LinkedIn has a number of relevant groups, including IEMA groups and others like Sustainability Professionals</p> <p>IEMA is working with members to develop new networks for professionals and change-makers. To get involved visit https://www.iema.net/engage/networks</p>

Structures for conversations

Solutions-focus or 'future perfect' (see Section Four – The changes you want to make: how do you want it to be?) and ORID (see Section Four –The changes you want to make: how will you know when you've done it?) are two very useful ways of structuring conversations when the session is about reflection, learning and working out what to do next. They are great for using in networks, because you don't need to know much about the person's situation to use them. Your role is not to give advice, but to listen well and ask great questions so that the other person can find the solutions they need.

Another useful structure is that of 'intention, action, outcome' where the person doing the talking briefly describes the situation beginning with their intention, then what they did, and then what they observed about the outcome. The listener(s) ask questions which clarify and which help the talker see the links and disconnects between the three phases.

A fourth conversational structure which can be very powerful is the 'thinking partnership', developed by Nancy Kline⁹⁴. In this process, considerable attention is given to the environment and atmosphere of the conversation, and to the 'generative attention' that the listener provides to the thinker. Some simple questions are used to enable the thinker to identify their 'limiting assumptions' and replace them with freeing assumptions.

If there isn't a real person to talk to, you may find it easier to keep a diary or a learning log, or even record yourself thinking aloud in a voice memo.

94 Kline, N., 2002. 'Time to Think.' See also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thinking_Environment

Put it in the plan

These are the ways I already support myself:

PERSPECTIVE	ASSOCIATION	GIVING MYSELF A BREAK

These are the things I am going to do to improve the support I give myself:

Perspective

I WILL... (ACTION TO TAKE)	BY... (DATE)	I WILL KNOW I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE... (HOW YOU'LL KNOW)

Giving myself a break

I WILL... (ACTION TO TAKE)	BY... (DATE)	I WILL KNOW I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE... (HOW YOU'LL KNOW)

Association

I WILL... (ACTION TO TAKE)	BY... (DATE)	I WILL KNOW I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE... (HOW YOU'LL KNOW)

Section Ten

The way forward

“Make sure you understand the key impacts of your organisation. Prioritise your projects and the areas you work on. Understand your key stakeholders. Capture the relevant data you need to measure performance and the success of your work and track it. Tell the story of your successes and communicate this back to all your stakeholders. Stay visible. Be professional. Get things done.” Bekir Andrews, Balfour Beatty

This book has, I hope, taken you through an exploration of change which you have made very specific to your own situation.

You have looked at yourself – your ambition, skills and role. You have looked at your organisation: its priorities, context and how it works as well as its sustainability opportunities and risks. You have identified the important people you need to engage, listen to and win over.

Section Three introduced some different views about how change happens, and the role that change-makers can play, and you compared your own situation and views with those of the theorists.

You identified the changes you’d really like to make, and what your strategies for getting those changes might be, given the context and the resources you can bring to the journey. You looked at what you might need to do to as part of a planned change project, to maximise the possibility of emergent change, and whether there are waves of change you can ride.

You also spent some time considering how to invest in yourself – your knowledge and skills, and your resilience.

That’s a lot of reading and, if you’ve done it, a lot of thinking and decision-making.

Well done.

Which parts of the book did you find most helpful, surprising, insightful or effective?

Which parts of the book did you find least interesting, most familiar, confusing or unhelpful?

Why not give us some feedback – you'll find contact details at www.iema.net/cmsd

Even if you haven't filled in anywhere else, do this bit.

What are the very next steps you will take?

I will

By (date)

Make one of your actions spending thirty minutes reviewing progress against what you've decided to do – and checking your analysis. What's the date today? What will the date be in six months' time? Write this action in your to do list or work scheduler for six months from today.

And make another action – celebrating getting to this point in your change journey.

"First, they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win."
Mahatma Gandhi

About IEMA

We are the worldwide alliance of environment and sustainability professionals, working to make our businesses and organisations future-proof.

Sustainability in Practice is a new series of 'how-to' publications from IEMA, supporting environment and sustainability practitioners to meet recognised challenges and deliver solutions.

Join us at www.iema.net

Author: Penny Walker

Foreword: Tony Juniper, CBE

IEMA Project Lead: Nick Blyth

