Chapter 9

Creating Desire

Ultimately *desire* is about personal choice. Even in circumstances of great pain or promising hope, the choices people make can appear to defy logic or be unpredictable. It is, perhaps, this uncertainty and lack of control over another person's desire to change that cause some leaders to disengage from this part of the change process.

Yet, the actions and words of managers and executive leaders have a tremendous influence on an employee's desire to support a business change. Even if managers and business leaders cannot dictate the decisions of their employees, they can greatly impact the process.

As a basic principle, managers must first view the task of creating *desire* as more than managing resistance. Adopting a "resistance management" focus can take a business leader down a trail of reactive management actions that often turn into firefighting and damage control. In other words, you should not introduce a change and then wait to identify those groups or individuals who are resistant to that change. Rather, you should adopt those strategies and tactics that have been used by effective leaders of change that are positive and proactive. Your goal is not to drag along the unwilling and uncaring, with all your attention focused on this minority. Your objective is to create energy and engagement around the change that produces momentum and support at all levels in the organization.

Recall the primary factors that influence desire as introduced in Chapter 3, including:

- The nature of the change
- The organizational context for the change
- An employee's personal situation
- What motivates them as an individual

This chapter examines the change management tactics that influence these factors for creating desire.

Tactic 1 –Effectively sponsor the change with employees

Tactic 2 –Equip managers to be change leaders

Tactic 3 –Assess risks and anticipate resistance

Tactic 4 –Engage employees in the change process

Tactic 5 –Align incentive programs

Tactic 1 – *Effectively sponsor the change with employees*

The top three roles and responsibilities of executive sponsors during change, as presented in Chapter 8, include:

- Participate actively and visibly throughout the project
- Build a coalition of sponsorship with peers and managers
- Communicate effectively with employees

These roles are not only needed to build awareness of the need for change, but are essential to create desire among employees to support and engage in the change.

Participate actively and visibly throughout the project

Too often executive sponsors engage early in projects and then move on to other business priorities. The role of sponsorship, however, is just as critical during implementation as it was during the launch of a project. Senior managers must be willing to interact on a personal level and be visible throughout the entire change process.

A senior manager for a government agency scheduled a face-to-face meeting with her managers and supervisors to review a new organization structure and strategy for the upcoming year. Some members of the leadership team were surprised that the supervisors and managers in attendance were criticizing the new direction. Despite complete and concise communications sent out months before the meeting, resistance to change was evident among many managers. When it became clear that forward progress was stalled, the senior executive changed the agenda. She requested that the group split up and document their specific objections in breakout sessions. Later she candidly addressed each objection, head-on and face-to-face. The discussions were not rushed nor were any questions out of bounds. She actively and visibly engaged in sponsoring the change. She was *present* to address the hard questions. The leadership team was surprised to find that by the end of the second day, much of the conversation had shifted from "This is why we should not do this change" to "What do I need to do to get my group on board?" In this example, the senior executive demonstrated active and visible sponsorship of the change.

If a sponsor, on the other hand, decides to disengage from a change or engages only at the beginning of the project, the momentum and support for the project will diminish over time. The consequences of this disengagement include greater resistance to the change from employees, slower adoption rates throughout the organization and in some cases failure of the project. These same effects can be seen when there is a change of leadership during the implementation of a major initiative.

Employees watch closely to see if the new leadership actively and visibly supports the change to determine if the change is still important.

Build a coalition of sponsorship with peers and managers

The second component of sponsorship that creates a *desire* to change among employees is the building of a sponsorship cascade or sponsorship coalition. A strong sponsor coalition creates engagement among senior and mid-level managers that generates a desire to change among supervisors and front-line employees. A weak sponsorship coalition allows resistance to grow in the organization without consequence or recourse.

An example of a weak sponsorship model was evident in a large manufacturing company that had multiple change initiatives occurring at the same time. They were encountering mixed acceptance of the changes between different divisions or departments. In some cases departments were on board and willing to engage. In other cases groups expressed extreme resistance. A sponsorship assessment was conducted by the project teams for each change. The term *sponsorship assessment* as used here represents an analysis of both the level of support and the sponsorship competency of all key business leaders involved in the change. For this particular assessment, the resulting diagrams appeared as organization charts shaded green, yellow and red.

Green represented managers who were supportive of the change and who were able to sponsor the change within their group. Yellow reflected all managers who were indifferent to the change or who did not possess the skills to sponsor the change. Red indicated managers who were opposed to the change and who were perceived as threats or barriers.

For many of the projects, red or yellow boxes occupied nearly 50% of the organization charts. The sponsorship coalitions were too weak to support the types of changes that were being deployed. This lack of sponsorship throughout the management ranks was visible in the lack of *desire* to change among employees. In other words, employees were following the lead of their direct management chain.

Persistent resistance to a change from one or two senior managers or from middle managers can undermine an otherwise strong sponsor coalition. In these cases, executive sponsors must manage this resistance proactively. Tolerating resistance from senior or mid-level managers creates a mindset that it is "OK" to opt out of the change or that there are no real consequences for resisting the change.

The term *sacrificial lamb* is often used when referring to the removal of a key manager who is demonstrating persistent and damaging resistance to a change. When resistance to change is persistent and the change is necessary for the success of the organization, definitive action is required. In many cases, managers who are demonstrating resistance over a long period of time are ready to move on anyway. What appears to be resistance to the change is often related to other personal and professional concerns.

Removing a resistant manager sends a powerful signal to the organization as a whole. The message is:

> *We are serious about this change.*
>
> *Resistance will not be tolerated.*
>
> *The consequences for not moving ahead are real and severe.*

In most cases, the primary sponsor is in the best position to handle this type of situation with care and professionalism. Removal of a resistant manager is most effective when other employees and managers already see the damaging impacts or obstacles created by this individual's behavior. Taking action against a manager will set a precedent for the organization and should be used as a last resort for dealing with threatening resistance. Note that this action does not necessarily imply termination. In many cases managers can be moved to other jobs in the business. This provides them with a new start and removes the point of resistance for the change at the same time. Use this method with caution and with involvement of your Human Resource group and legal department.

Communicate effectively with employees and managers

Executive sponsors must communicate effectively with employees throughout the project. The sponsor plays a critical role in communicating those messages that employees want to hear from the person in charge:

- A vision of where the organization is going
- A roadmap that outlines how the vision will be achieved
- Clear alignment of the current change with this vision
- Specific goals or objectives that define success
- His or her personal commitment and passion for the change

Business leaders often underestimate their ability to create hope and to engage employees on an emotional level. They may underestimate the degree to which employees look to them for direction and leadership. In the book Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman provides numerous examples of how leaders can effectively engage their employees at a level that captures their hearts and minds.[1] This leadership competency is a developed skill and is necessary for the process of creating hope within employees.

In addition to sharing their personal commitment to the change, executive sponsors should directly communicate the

benefits of the change to employees. They should make clear connections between the objectives of the change and the overall direction of the business. Executive sponsors may want to share success stories or struggles from other departments or from early trials with the change. Employees want to hear about the challenges endured during the transition and how they were handled. They want to hear the good and the bad, the suffering and the rewards. They want to hear that success is possible and they want to learn from the mistakes of others. Most importantly, they want to hear the primary sponsor speak about the opportunities and benefits for the business as a whole.

Most common executive manager mistakes

The three roles described above for executive managers represent the type of sponsorship that creates desire among employees. However, business leaders do not always assume these roles. According to the 2005 Change Management study results,[2] the most common mistakes made by executive managers included:

Mistake #1 – Failed to engage personally as the sponsor for the change. Project teams reported that their sponsor:

- Abdicated sponsorship to lower-level managers, the project team or consultants
- Was absent or ignored the project; failed to stay involved and track progress; was not visible after the initial kick-off
- Failed to communicate the need for change and risk of not changing
- Failed to reinforce a consistent message; the sponsor was not visible and active throughout the entire project

Mistake #2 – Changed priorities mid-stream. Project teams reported that:

- Commitment wavered or support dwindled over time
- Other projects took priority
- The sponsor moved on to the next "flavor of the month"

Mistake #3 – Did not create a sponsorship coalition. Project teams stated that the sponsor:

- Assumed support from other business leaders would be there; moved too fast without ensuring that key managers were on board
- Underestimated resistance and the impact of the change on employees
- Assumed the message trickled down; assumed everyone understood the need for change
- Failed to set expectations of other business leaders
- Tolerated resistance from mid-level managers

These common mistakes by executive sponsors directly impact employees' desire to support and participate in a change. Executive managers who delegate the role of sponsorship or who are absent during the change process indirectly tell employees that this change is not very important. Executive managers who change priorities mid-stream send the message that "If you wait long enough, this too shall pass." Executive managers who fail to create a sponsor coalition will often see one or more managers not supporting the change. The employees who work under that chain of command will have less desire to support the change if their own manager is not on board.

Tactic 2 - *Equip managers and supervisors to be change leaders*

Employees ultimately turn to their immediate supervisor for direction. In order for supervisors to create desire within their employees, they need to:

- Conduct effective conversations about the change at a group and individual level
- Manage persistent resistance to the change
- Demonstrate commitment to the change through their behavior

A customer service manager was required to implement a process change in her call center to increase cross-selling of products. She met with each employee to discuss the change and provided general guidelines for how cross-selling would be initiated with customers. A training session was conducted that included role plays and scripts for the agents to use. Several weeks later the manager noticed that one agent in particular was not cross-selling to customers. The manager met face-to-face with the employee to talk about the issue. The conversation centered on the training scripts and methods for engaging customers. The manager left the meeting believing she really made an impact and did a good job training this employee. The performance data came out two weeks later. This agent was still not cross-selling. The manager decided that the employee did not have the ability to cross-sell products and decided to move this agent into a different role. When the agent found out that she was being moved out of her team, she immediately confronted her manager and asked for one more chance. The employee stated that she was unaware of the consequences associated with this change before now. The supervisor agreed and two more weeks passed. The manager was surprised to find out in the next reporting period that this agent had crosssold more products than any other person on the team. Over time this agent repeatedly showed the best cross-selling performance of any team member.

In this case study, the supervisor erroneously started the conversation about change with her employees at the *knowledge* element of the ADKAR model (she began with training). She did not build awareness of why the change was needed nor did she assess the desire of this employee to support and participate in the change. When performance issues surfaced, she focused again on the *knowledge* for cross-selling. However, the agent that would not cross-sell lacked *desire*, not knowledge or ability. If the supervisor had taken the time to diagnose the barrier point to this change, she would have found out that this employee was uncomfortable pushing products onto customers. The agent was happy to take customer orders and hang up. It was not until the customer service agent faced the consequence of a reduced role, different from her colleagues, that she made a personal choice to support the change. The quality and content of the conversation with the employee had a direct impact on the success of the change.

Having the right conversations with employees

Conversation was deliberately chosen for naming this interaction between supervisors and their employees during change. Conversation in this context does not mean to debate, argue, present or persuade. It simply means to talk about the change.

A supervisor should be open to having conversations about all aspects of the change. Some employees may want to talk about past failed changes and why this change will be any different. Others may need to talk about their personal circumstances and how this change will affect them. Still others will want to debate the reasons a change is being made. All of these topics must be part of effective supervisors' conversations with employees. Supervisors should not assume that an employee

will be resistant to the change. The purpose of the conversation is to allow the employee to sort out their questions and concerns over the change in a professional setting.

The process for enabling managers and supervisors to have effective conversations with their employees begins with managing the change with the supervisors first. When changes occur in an organization, a supervisor or manager is an employee first and manager second. In other words, they will have their own questions and potential issues with the change that must be resolved before they can effectively sponsor the change with employees. That means the project team and the executive sponsor must play an active role in managing change with supervisors and managers in the organization.

Managers and supervisors may also need training on change management. A common error is to assume that supervisors are by default effective coaches and change managers. The competency to manage change effectively with employees is a developed skill. The change management team in partnership with HR should ensure that training programs are in place to teach supervisors how to manage change, and when necessary, how to manage resistance.

Managing persistent resistance

Resistance to change from employees and managers is a common obstacle to successful change projects. The current state has a powerful hold on employees. In the parable told by Spencer Johnson in <u>Who Moved My Cheese?</u>, each character views the change in the cheese differently.[3] One character was so fearful of the unknown, that even in the face of starvation he resisted change.

In Prosci's 2005 Change Management report,[4] the top five reasons that employees resisted change as cited by study participants were:

1. Employees were not aware of the underlying business need for change.

2. Layoffs were announced or feared as part of the change.
3. Employees perceived the need for new skills that they currently lacked.
4. Individuals resisted the change in an attempt to maintain the personal rewards, sense of accomplishment and fulfillment provided by the current state.
5. Employees believed they were being required to do more with less, or more for the same pay.

The top five reasons that managers resisted change were:

1. Loss of power, responsibility or resources.
2. Overburdened with current responsibilities and workload.
3. Lacked awareness of the need for change.
4. Lacked the skills needed to manage the change – believed they were unprepared to manage the change with employees.
5. Felt fearful or uncertain about the changes being made.

Although this data provides a general understanding of the primary causes for resistance to a change, the data does not reveal why a particular individual may be resistant to a change. Therefore, several techniques can be used to identify and manage resistance from an employee.

Identify the barrier point to this change

To begin the process of managing resistance, a manager must first consider which elements or building blocks of the ADKAR model are currently strong or weak for an individual. In other words, what is the *barrier point* to change for this person? For example, you would not want to use resistance management

steps that focus on *desire* if the barrier point for that employee was *knowledge* or *ability*. First assess where that person stands in terms of the ADKAR model. If *desire* is determined to be the barrier point to change, then the following techniques will be useful.

Listen and understand objections

A critical first step when creating desire to change is to stop talking and start listening. Supervisors and managers who are not skilled in managing resistance tend to begin with attempts at persuasion. If that does not work, they often resort to threats. Yet, in many cases employees simply want to be heard and to voice their objections. Understanding these objections can often provide a clear path toward resolution. It is useful to ask "What are your specific objections to this change?" or "What are your biggest concerns with this change?" and then to listen to the employee. Often the resistance is not about the change itself, but rather how the change will impact them personally.

Remove obstacles

Obstacles to change may relate to family, personal issues, physical limitations or money. Managers must fully understand the individual situation with this employee. What may appear to be resistance or objections to the change may be barriers that the employee cannot see past. Identify the obstacles clearly. Determine ways that the business may be able to address these personal barriers or assist the employee in thinking through solutions to these concerns.

A vice president for a public services company was resisting a change that involved moving to another role in the business. When the CEO asked point-blank what the barrier to change was, the VP responded that the work location for the new position would require an additional one-hour commute on top of his existing 45-minute drive. This would directly impact his ability to spend more time at his son's after-school activities, a recent commitment he had made to his family. The resistance to change in this example was not about the change, but the impact that change had on the employee's personal situation.

Too often managers do not solicit from employees their specific objections to the change in order to identify obstacles. Often these barriers can be removed without adversely impacting the change.

Make a personal appeal

Some managers can create a desire to change by making a personal appeal and leveraging their relationship with employees. A personal appeal works best with honest, open relationships where there is a high degree of trust and respect. A personal appeal from a supervisor may sound like:

I believe in this change.

It is important to me.

I would like your support.

You would be helping me by making this change work.

With this approach, the implied message is often that the supervisor will take care of or look out for the employee during the transition. Exercise caution when using this approach; make sure that you can follow through with this implied commitment.

Negotiate

In very special cases, such as acquisitions or mergers, resistance can be managed through a process of negotiation. In these circumstances the organization has decided that a particular person is essential for the transition and is willing to bargain

with money or advancement to acquire his or her support. This could include increasing their compensation, offering a promotion to a position they desire or creating a bonus program so they are directly rewarded for the successful completion of the change. In some cases the person may be rewarded for staying with the company just through the transition, and then they receive a severance package that has been negotiated up front.

Provide simple, clear choices and consequences

Building desire is ultimately about choice. Managers can facilitate this process by being clear about the choices employees have during change. It is necessary to communicate in simple and clear terms what the choices and consequences are for each employee.

By providing simple and clear choices along with the consequences of those choices, managers can put the ownership and control back into the hands of employees. Desire to participate and support a change is an employee's decision that managers can enable by clearly stating the options.

Hold employees accountable

A business manager must be able to hold employees accountable for their performance as it relates to a change in the business – especially when resistance to a change is having a direct impact on the business and on other employees. Managers must be trained and empowered to use whatever means the organization has available to hold employees accountable for their actions and work performance in support of the change. Managers should understand the corrective action process and how they need to work with HR to resolve persistent performance issues.

Convert the strongest dissenters

Managers can also manage resistance on a group level by targeting a strong and vocal dissenter. A strong dissenter can become your strongest advocate. A strong dissenter can be as vocal in their support as they were in their resistance. For example, nearly 2000 years ago on the road to Damascus, Paul, one of the strongest persecutors of early Christians, became one of the most enduring and powerful evangelists for the early Christian church. You most likely know someone in your group or department who is the loudest complainer or the person who is always first to point out what is wrong. These individuals dominate the conversations at lunch or on breaks. When one-on-one time is invested with such individuals to address their resistance to change, these outspoken employees can become open advocates for the change, and their opinions can positively influence many other employees.

Managers and supervisors play a key role in building desire with employees. They are the center point for those critical conversations about a change. They remove barriers and manage resistance. Last, but certainly not least, managers and supervisors demonstrate commitment to the change through their own behavior. Their actions provide a visible model that can build strong support for the change.

Tactic 3 – *Assess risks and anticipate resistance*

A well-rounded change management approach includes a process for assessing risks and mitigating those risks to reduce resistance to the change. Most change management methods include readiness assessments to assist with this process. These assessment tools help identify potential problem areas before encountering resistance. By addressing these risks or gaps ahead of time, resistance in some cases can be avoided. This notion of proactively taking steps to prevent or lessen resistance to change is inherent in good change management approaches and directly impacts employees' desire to support a change. Two types of assessments are useful to determine risks and identify gaps:

- Change assessments
- Organizational readiness assessments

Change assessments evaluate the nature of the change from the perspective of the organization, and specifically from the perspective of different groups. Good change assessments evaluate the following elements:

- Scope of change (workgroup, department, division, enterprise)
- Number of impacted employees (identified for each impacted group)
- Variation in groups that are impacted (are all groups impacted the same or will groups experience the change differently?)
- Type of change (simple change, complex change)
- Degree of process, technology and job role change
- Degree of organization restructuring and changes to staffing levels
- Impact on employee compensation
- Time frame for the change (a few days, many years)
- Alignment of the change with the overall business vision and direction

The purpose of a change assessment is to develop an overall view of the size and scope of the change. This assessment evaluates the impact on different groups. By comparing the future state of the change with the current state, you can see the overall gap or transition that is required for different areas in the organization. When combined with an organizational readiness assessment, you can begin to identify potential areas of resistance and unique challenges for the organization.

Organizational readiness assessments are used to evaluate the overall readiness of the organization to change. Some organizations are change-resistant while others are change-ready. Good organizational assessments include:

- Impact of past changes (do employees perceive past changes as positive or negative?)
- Change capacity (are very few changes underway, or is everything changing?)
- Success of past changes (were past changes successful and well-managed, or did many projects fail and were changes poorly managed?)
- Shared vision and direction for the organization (is there a widely shared and unified vision, or are there many different directions and shifting priorities?)
- Resources and funding availability (are adequate resources and funds available, or are resources and funds limited?)
- Organization's culture and responsiveness to change (is the culture open and receptive to new ideas and change, or closed and resistant?)
- Organizational reinforcement (are employees rewarded for risk-taking and embracing change, or rewarded for consistency and stability?)

The combination of change assessments and readiness assessments allows you to evaluate the overall impact this change will have on the organization. This type of analysis can bring

to the surface unique challenges for a specific group and will allow the project team to identify potential areas of resistance. For example, a change assessment may suggest a significant impact on the sales group, while the organizational readiness assessment indicates a culture and history in the sales division that is rigid and change-resistant. Special tactics will need to be developed to address the potential resistance in this area. In terms of creating *desire*, these change and organization assessments are proactive planning tools to identify and mitigate resistance early in the process.

Tactic 4 - *Engage employees in the change process*

The more you can engage employees in the change process, the greater their desire will be to support and participate in the change. For some types of changes, it is effective for managers to let go of the *how* and simply communicate *what* needs to change (focus on outcomes). It is not always necessary to tell employees exactly how to accomplish the change, but rather share the business objectives and let them determine how best to make that happen. This process transfers ownership of the solution to employees.

Employee involvement and ownership naturally build desire to support the change. Employees who are involved at the beginning are much more likely to be allies at the end. Participation creates passion and commitment to success.

As you consider the many different groups that will be impacted by the change, who are the movers and shakers in those groups? Who do people look to for the latest information? Who are the opinion leaders? Engaging these individuals will have a substantial impact on the overall success of the change.

There are several roles that employees can play in the change process. They may be invited to participate on the design team. In this capacity they are instrumental in developing the final solution. They may be invited to participate on the change management team. In this role they will serve as a spokesperson for their area and can help design change management strategies for their group. They may be part of trials or pilots of the new design, allowing the project team to solicit early feedback and input for improvement. Engaging employees in the change process is a very powerful way to build support.

Tactic 5 – *Align incentive programs*

If incentive programs are in place, they must be realigned to support the desired behavior. In the workplace, for example, salespeople may be compensated for meeting specific goals or objectives. If these goals or objectives are not aligned with the change, then the incentive to continue old behaviors remains in place. Recall that one of the factors influencing *desire* is "what's in it for me." If people determine that the change has a negative consequence for them because of the existing incentive programs, then their desire to change will be lower than if the old incentive programs were either removed completely or redesigned to support the change.

A change often requires updates to performance management systems as well. Even when financial compensation is not directly tied to the performance metrics, the behaviors of employees are strongly driven by how they are measured. If the measurement system is not aligned with the change, then employees may resist implementing changes that hinder their ability to meet their performance objectives.

Frequently asked questions related to desire

If employees support a change today, can you expect that they will always support the change?

Employees may respond positively to the general idea of change, especially if they see evidence that change is necessary in an organization. Later, they may resist that same change depending on how the change impacts them personally. Some employees may vacillate between support and opposition as they learn

more about the nature of the change and "what's in it for me."

Is resistance to change normal and to be expected?

You may have heard the statement, "Resistance to change is normal." In general I believe this statement to be true. However, you have to be careful not to extend this statement to say, "People are resistant to change." As a collective group, we have shown ourselves to be quite adaptable over time. To understand why resistance from an individual reflects normal human behavior, you need to consider three different circumstances that a person may encounter. The first circumstance is one in which a person is comfortable with the current state. They have found success and happiness with the way things are today. They may have worked hard over a long period of time to create this circumstance. The second circumstance is one in which a person is opposed to the current state. They may be experiencing failure or oppression. They most likely see the current state as a contributor to their unhappiness and would be a strong proponent for change. The third circumstance is one of indifference or neutrality. A person in this circumstance may have little invested in the current state or may be new to a situation. In this case, this person is a bystander and observer of the events unfolding around them. If you find yourself in the first circumstance, then resistance to change would be expected and would be a natural reaction to change. However, if you are in the second circumstance, you may be the change advocate. How we react to change is largely rooted in our current circumstances.

Can incentives be used to create desire?

The answer depends on the individual. The notion that you can use a reward or penalty to influence desire is somewhat narrow in scope in that many factors influence a person's choices, not just the hope for gain or the fear of loss. Not all individuals can be motivated by financial incentives. For example, in situations where a person perceives a conflict between their values and the values of the organization, they typically would not respond to financial incentives. It is more effective to understand what is important to that individual through effective coaching, and then to build desire around those things that are meaningful to that person.

Who is the best person to manage resistance from a mid-level manager?

Resistance from mid-level managers is cited as the most common area for resistance to change. Often mid-level managers have the most to lose, as they see their power or control erode in many types of change. Consider their position for a moment. They do not make strategic decisions nor do they perform the direct, day-to-day operational tasks. They typically manage people and budgets. Their span of control is directly tied to those they manage and the associated finances to run those operations. When changes are introduced that shift people or money, then some mid-level managers will gain control while others will lose. Some may see change as a reflection on their success, while others perceive change as a statement of failure. Many of these changes will impact careers. As a result, resistance from some mid-level managers is very common. Given the political nature of this level of management, only their direct supervisor or a senior manager in the chain of command can manage their resistance to change. In some cases, the primary sponsor may be in the role to assist with this process.

How do you teach change management to managers who are resistant to the change itself?

Some project teams that are implementing change find it difficult to train managers and supervisors in change management

when they are in the middle of a major change initiative. This quandary is understandable. Why would a manager who is resistant to a change want to learn how to manage that change effectively with their employees? The solution to this problem is to separate the task into two parts. First, manage the change with the managers and supervisors. They must have awareness of the need for change and a desire to participate in the change. Second, teach them how to manage change with their employees. Anytime you put training or *knowledge* ahead of *awareness* and *desire* you will be disappointed with the results; conversely, whenever *awareness* and *desire* are present, an individual naturally seeks the *knowledge* of how to succeed.

Summary

Multiple tactics can be used to create *desire* to support and participate in a change. Sponsorship by executive leaders is instrumental in this process. Executive sponsors influence desire by:

- Participating actively and visibly through the entire change process
- Building coalitions of sponsorship with key business managers
- Communicating directly to employees and by creating energy and hope around the future state

Managers and supervisors influence desire by helping employees make sense of the change. They are instrumental in communicating "what's in it for me" and talking through the change with each employee. They are the translators. They help employees understand the change as it relates to their personal situation and what is important to them as individuals. Managers and supervisors are the front line when it comes to managing persistent and threatening resistance. They must have the tools to act appropriately with employees who refuse to support the change.

Readiness assessments help the change management team identify potential problem areas and devise special tactics that will proactively avoid resistance before problems arise. This process also helps change management teams understand the political climate and magnitude of the task at hand.

Employee engagement in the change process allows employees to participate in the design, development, testing and implementation of the final solution. Nothing builds desire faster than direct participation and ownership for the change.

Incentive programs and performance management systems must be aligned with and supportive of the change. Behavior is strongly influenced by how people are measured and rewarded.

The most successful change initiatives focus their efforts on the proactive steps that sponsors and managers can take to create energy and engagement around the change. Resistance is managed not as the primary activity, but as one component in a larger strategy to create desire.