

This is a common assumption and pitfall that should be avoided.

Tip:

Unfortunately, some people will genuinely be harmed by change, particularly those who benefit strongly from the status quo. Others may take a long time to recognize the benefits that change brings. You need to foresee and manage these situations.

Time and communication are the two keys to success for the changes to occur. People need time to understand the changes and they also need to feel highly connected to the organization throughout the transition period. When you are managing change, this can require a great deal of time and effort and hands-on management is usually the best approach.

Refreeze

When the changes are taking shape and people have embraced the new ways of working, the organization is ready to refreeze. The outward signs of the refreeze are a stable organization chart, consistent job descriptions, and so on. The refreeze stage also needs to help people and the organization internalize or institutionalize the changes. This means making sure that the changes are used all the time; and that they are incorporated into everyday business. With a new sense of stability, employees feel confident and comfortable with the new ways of working.

The rationale for creating a new sense of stability in our every changing world is often questioned. Even though change is a constant in many organizations, this refreezing stage is still important. Without it, employees get caught in a transition trap where they aren't sure how things should be done, so nothing ever gets done to full capacity. In the absence of a new frozen state, it is very difficult to tackle the next change initiative effectively. How do you go about convincing people that something needs changing if you haven't allowed the most recent changes to sink in? Change will be perceived as change for change's sake, and the motivation required to implement new changes simply won't be there.

As part of the Refreezing process, make sure that you celebrate the success of the change – this helps people to find closure, thanks them for enduring a painful time, and helps them believe that future change will be successful.

Practical Steps for Using the Framework:

Unfreeze

1. Determine what needs to change.

- Survey the organization to understand the current state.
- Understand why change has to take place.

2. Ensure there is strong support from upper management.

- Use **Stakeholder Analysis** and **Stakeholder Management** to identify and win the support of key people within the organization.
- Frame the issue as one of organization-wide importance.

3. Create the need for change.

- Create a compelling message as to why change has to occur.
- Use your vision and strategy as supporting evidence.
- Communicate the vision in terms of the change required.
- Emphasize the "why".

4. Manage and understand the doubts and concerns.

- Remain open to employee concerns and address in terms of the need to change.

Change

1. Communicate often.

- Do so throughout the planning and implementation of the changes.
- Describe the benefits.
- Explain exactly the how the changes will effect everyone.
- Prepare everyone for what is coming.

2. Dispel rumors.

- Answer questions openly and honestly.
- Deal with problems immediately.
- Relate the need for change back to operational necessities.

3. Empower action.

- Provide lots of opportunity for employee involvement.
- Have line managers provide day-to-day direction.

4. Involve people in the process.