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# Part I

## Introduction

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The first part of this book aims to set the context regarding the issue of Organisational Change. In setting this context, there are a number of objectives that we have set out to achieve:

We aim to briefly introduce what we understand by the term ‘organisational change’ and then go on to consider the factors that impel us to change; drivers for change.

We then build on these drivers for change to consider the nature of the relationship between the context within which the organisation finds itself, and the demands that this context places on the organisation.

We then consider how the demands placed on the organisation imply the appropriateness of particular types of change, which, according to the literature enable the organisation to adapt in a manner which is both timely and appropriate.

Last we look at some of the linear models of change that the literature offers us as guidelines for successful change management.

Having briefly contextualised just some of the fundamental issues relating to change, we then present the Paul Strebel (1995) article entitled ‘Choosing the Right Change Path’. In this article Strebel builds on the relationship between the environment and the organisation that we considered earlier, as well as introducing you to ideas like resistance to change which we will build on later. Strebel strives to make clearer the types of relationships that can exist between strong and weak forces for change and strong and weak forces of resistance. Recognising this relationship, he contends, helps you to then select the most appropriate path for change. He concludes by noting that a key factor in the successful management of change is the pulling together of a plan for change which is advised by an understanding of the relationship between the strengths of the forces for change, whether or not the change is proactive or reactive and the strengths of the forces of resistance. Only by doing this, Strebel argues, can organisations take advantage of the environmental conditions and gain competitive advantage.

The last part of this section builds on the issues of environmental influences, types of change and scale of change, to present a paper entitled ‘Organisational Change Management: A Critical Review’. In this paper Todnem By presents a review framed by how change is characterised in the literature he considers:

Change characterised by the rate of occurrence

Change characterised by how it comes about

Change characterised by scale

The usefulness of the Todnem By paper is three fold. First it illustrates the importance of thinking critically about the literature we read. By looking at the arguments in support of and arguments which contradict particular viewpoints, he encourages us to think about the strengths and the limitations of the theories and concepts we study. Second in doing this, he presents a range of accessible literatures which we would encourage students to read to add greater breadth and depth to their learning. Third, Todnem By emphasises the usefulness of the theories, he encourages us to question how the application of a particular theory or concept can really help us to make a difference.

# The Context of Change

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*Deborah Price*

## **Introduction**

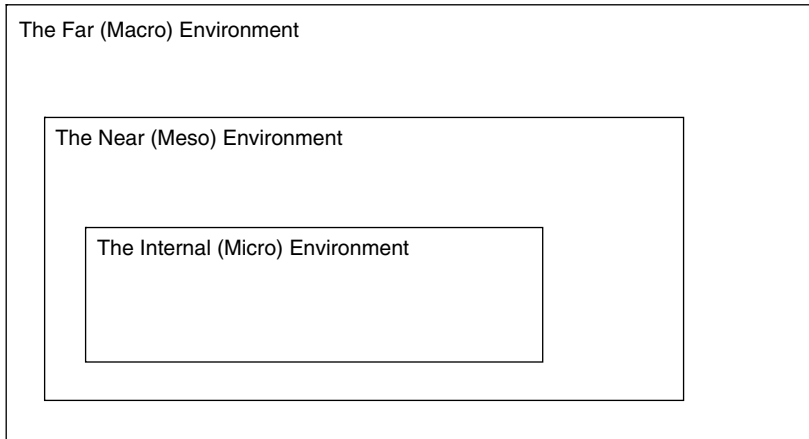
In 1947, Kurt Lewin noted that ‘Group life is never without change’ (1947, p. 13), rather that there are ‘merely differences in the amount and type of change that exist’ (ibid.). The idea that we are all constantly engaged in change to a greater or lesser degree provokes the question ‘why?’ Why is change so all-pervasive? What are the factors that impel us to change? In this first part we will consider the drivers for change; those forces which have the potential to make us alter the ways in which we do things.

Although framed within the context of organisational change, the drivers for change that we will look at also have a considerable impact on both social and personal change.

## **Drivers for Change**

Organisations exist for a purpose. That purpose may be to contribute to the health and welfare of society, to improve the well-being of disadvantaged groups or to maximise the financial returns to the organisation’s shareholders. Regardless of their motives, organisations necessarily function within a multi-faceted external environment, an environment which influences what they should and should not and can and cannot do (Figure 1.1 – The Context of Organisations).

The environment within which organisations exist can be viewed at three levels; at a macro level, the Far Environment comprises the wider world within which the organisation operates. It is important to note that the organisation has little power to control or influence the Far Environment, and as such, changes in the external environment tend to dictate the need for change to the organisation. At a meso level, the Near Environment is one with which the organisation has a much more reciprocal relationship. Organisations



**Figure 1.1** The context of organisations

exchange information and communicate with their Near Environment and are thus much more able to negotiate any necessary change. Last, the micro or Internal Environment. This comprises the internal workings of the organisation. It is predominantly controlled by the management of the organisation albeit factors from the Far Environment have a direct impact on what managers are able to do.

## The Far Environment

The Far Environment is often characterised by the acronym PESTLE<sup>1</sup>, and we will look briefly at each of these factors.

### *P – Political Drivers for Change*

The political environment consists of the governmental ideologies, practices and systems which form the basis for the environment(s)<sup>2</sup> in which the organisation operates. As governments themselves adapt to a rapidly changing world (e.g. wars, political unrest, environmental disasters and changing ecological conditions), so their policies and systems change. It is incumbent on organisations to make the necessary changes to ensure that what they do, and how they do it, doesn't conflict with the political requirements.

### Illustrative Case Study

Imagine that you are the manager of the local maternity hospital. Consider what changes you might need to think about in following circumstances?

*A dramatic increase in the number of babies being delivered to foreign-born mothers has prompted calls for more money to be ploughed into NHS maternity services. According to a report by the BBC, yearly spending on maternity care has soared by more than £200 million since 1998.*

*Figures show that one out of four babies is now born to a mother born overseas, with the number of babies rising by 64,000 since the mid 1990s. This is compared to the figures for British mothers which, conversely, has fallen by 44,000 per year.*

*Liberal Democrat health spokesman Norman Lamb described the situation as 'deeply worrying'. 'It is essential that every expectant mother has access to reliable and safe maternity facilities,' he said.*

*'The government is happy to reap the economic benefits of migrant workers but not willing to provide capacity to cope with the extra pressure which they bring to the NHS. They cannot have it both ways,' he added.*

*Meanwhile, Professor Philip Steer, editor of the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, said: 'The Department of Health has been taken by surprise'.*

*'The demographic change, the sheer numbers, has in some areas increased very substantially without there being any forward planning really to allow for that.'*

(Source: [http://www.kiddicare.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/newsarticle0\\_53304\\_10751\\_-1\\_10001](http://www.kiddicare.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/newsarticle0_53304_10751_-1_10001) downloaded on 28.06.08)

## E – Economic Drivers for Change

The economic drivers for change likewise have both national and international dimensions. The economy within which organizations function has an impact on their workforce, on their suppliers, on their customers and on the value of the money that they have. To compound the impact, national economies exist within a global economic climate. Taxation, interest rates and exchange rates all affect the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives.

### Illustrative Case Study

Consider the impact that the changing economic climate has on those trying to run viable estate agency businesses.

*'Estate agents feeling the pinch': Mira Bar Hillel, Evening Standard 14 April 2008.*

*A third of Britain's estate agents could be forced to close this year as the number of house sales plunge.*

*Predictions made by the biggest network of independent estate agencies, Movewithus, estimate that around 4,000 of the country's 12,000 property businesses will shut by December.*



**Illustrative Case Study Continued**

*The move will be direct result of the credit crunch, which experts predict will cause an estimated 45,000 repossessions, 20,000 job losses in the City of London and a rise in mortgage repayments for around three million households.*

*Robin King, director of Movewithus, said the current climate meant fewer people wanted to buy property, with first time buyers and families being squeezed out of the market altogether.*

*He added that estate agent closures would be 'massive', after sales within his network dropped by between 30 and 50%.*

(Source: [http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/news/article.html?in\\_article\\_id=440367&in\\_page\\_id=2](http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/news/article.html?in_article_id=440367&in_page_id=2) downloaded on 28.06.08)

**S – Socio-Cultural Drivers for Change**

The socio-cultural drivers for change reflect the standards set by society at large. They determine what is right and proper, and in so doing reflect the ways in which people are expected to behave. As societal standards are locally derived, this means that each society creates social conventions appropriate to itself. Organizations operating internationally therefore need to be aware of the cultural differences which exist between the different societies in which they work. Socio-cultural values may initially represent those values held informally by the community, however, where values are very strongly held, these may find their way into codified law, that is, politicians respond to societal pressure to make conformance to the values a legal requirement rather than allow people to decide whether or not they will conform.

**Illustrative Case Study**

Below is an excerpt from an article about Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop. The article indicates not only the way in which Roddick was instrumental in changing socio-cultural values but also the way in which this change in values then became codified in law.

*Michael McCarthy in The Independent argues that Roddick deserves a place in the pantheon of revolutionary thinkers who changed the world.*

*He says that Roddick's originality did not lie just in the achievements she is famous for, in the fields of animal rights, human rights, fair trade and environmental protection. It was in the idea, entirely novel 40 years ago when she started out, of business as a force for social change.*

*She opened the first Body Shop in Brighton in 1976, and began selling ethical cosmetics that were not tested on animals. It was something many people felt strongly about – and they sold like hotcakes. In the end, the rest of the cosmetics industry had to follow, but not without Roddick's tireless campaigning, eventually leading the UK government to ban the animal testing of cosmetics.*



### Illustrative Case Study Continued



*Roddick believed business could change the world. Her goal was to show that capitalism itself, having despoiled the world for two centuries, could in the right hands repair it. She made this happen most of all in the area of fair trade, a concept previously considered inimical to global business practice.*

*As a result of making the Body Shop a pioneer in raising standards for suppliers, she helped to demonstrate that trade was indeed better than aid for the poor people of developing countries. It created sustainable communities, rather than dependency.*

(Source: <http://www.worldbusinesslive.com/article/738022/anita-roddick-business-revolutionary/> downloaded on 28.06.08)

## T – Technological Drivers for Change

Technological drivers for change relate not only to new developments in and new uses of technology, but also to new means of production. Technology is now a substantial part of most people's lives, affecting the ways in which they communicate and socialise as well as the ways in which they work. Advances in technology offer organisations the potential to do things faster, more cheaply and better, but this use of technology often comes with some costs. People need to be trained to use new systems, processes and procedures and the organisation has to consider how soon an even newer, better and smarter technology will come along. The rapid rate of technological advancement means that organisations need to be aware of how new advances can force change upon them.

### Illustrative Case Study

Consider how people may respond to the following example of technologically driven change.

New Zealand students able to use txt language in exams

*From Wikinews, Thursday, November 9, 2006*

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) has announced that a shorter version of English known as txt language will be acceptable in the external end of year exams. Txt language is where words are shortened for easier mobile phone usage, for example, txt is for text, lol is for laugh out loud, brb is for be right back, etc.

Txt language has been approved if the marker can see that the paper 'clearly shows the required understanding', however the NZQA still advises not to use it. Bali Haque, deputy chief executive of NZQA, said: 'Students should aim to make their answers as clear as possible. Markers involved in assessing NCEA (National Certificate of Educational Achievement) exams are trained professionals, experienced in interpreting the variety of writing styles and language uses encountered during the marking process,' Mr Haque is confident that marker will understand txt language.

(Source: [http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/New\\_Zealand\\_students\\_able\\_to\\_use\\_txt\\_language\\_in\\_exams](http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/New_Zealand_students_able_to_use_txt_language_in_exams))

## *L – Legal Drivers for Change*

The legal drivers for change relate to the regulatory systems which control what an organisation is allowed and is not allowed to do. Legal systems determine acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, they also determine the sanctions that people will be subject to if they break the rules. Organisations have little choice but to change what they do in order that they comply with the law, even if making those changes has costs to the organisation.

### **Illustrative Case Study**

Smoking ban 'costs pub takings'

The landlord of a Kent pub is to send a petition to the government to try to get the smoking ban revised, claiming it has cost him 25% of his takings.

John Davis, who runs the Plough Inn, in New Romney, said he knew other pubs who had lost up to 35% in income.

He said he would have preferred to have one of the rooms in his pub changed instead of 'throwing everyone outside'.

The Department of Health said there was significant evidence the legislation had had a positive effect on pubs.

'There is considerable evidence from other countries that have introduced smokefree laws that the impact on business can be positive,' a spokesperson said.

'We will continue to monitor the impact of the smokefree legislation, with a full review due to be completed within three years'.

'We have seen no significant evidence to date that implies that smokefree legislation... will create any long-term economic problems for pubs or the hospitality trade in general.'

(Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/kent/7147786.stm> downloaded on 28.06.08)

## *E – Environmental Drivers for Change*

As the global community strive for more sustainable ways of working and of living, so organisations need to be more aware of the impact of their actions and inactions. Some 'ethical' business practices are mandated by law, others are not. However, even where no legislation exists, companies need to guard against unethical practices, not simply on moral grounds but because the consequences of such behaviour may cause customers to switch to another company, generate bad publicity or deter people from investing in the company. As people increasingly demand sustainable ways of working, so organisations need to adapt to the most ethical and environmentally friendly ways of working.

### Illustrative Case Study

Imagine you are the purchasing manager of a large supermarket chain who does not sell Fairtrade coffee. Having read the article below think about what changes you might need to make to meet this increasing demand?

From 1 June 2008, the Fairtrade minimum price for Arabica coffee will increase to ensure that farmers continue to receive a price which covers the cost of sustainable production.

This price adjustment will benefit more than 250 producer organisations across the developing world – around one million farmers and their families.

*'I represent more than one million family farmers who need Fairtrade pricing to put food on the table and keep their kids in school,' said Raul de Aguila, a Peruvian coffee grower and Cafédirect board member. 'No other label or certification system ensures a fair income for a hard day's work. This increase will have a direct and positive impact on the lives of Fairtrade Certified coffee farmers around the world.'*

The price increase is the result of extensive field research into the real costs of sustainable production to ensure that Fairtrade continues to address the needs of coffee-producing communities. The research was followed by a multi-stakeholder review process involving producers, consumers and industry representatives from more than twenty countries around the world. Penny Newman, CEO of Cafédirect, says, *'It's our mission to create secure, sustainable livelihoods for growers, and this decision is a step in the right direction. Working closely with our grower partners, Cafédirect champions the need to continually assess the Fairtrade pricing structure to ensure its relevant to their needs.'*

Fairtrade is the only certification model that guarantees prices to farmers that meet strict social and environmental sustainability criteria, and the FAIRTRADE Mark has become one of the most recognized consumer labels in the UK. Research by DEFRA this year showed that more than eighty percent of the UK public say they have heard of Fairtrade, and more than half of those people said they made an effort to buy it.

According to Ian Bretman, Deputy Director of the Fairtrade Foundation in the UK and FLO Board member, *'The conscious consumer demands high-quality products that make a difference in the world. The research is clear: consumers are willing to pay more for Fairtrade products because they help lift farmers out of poverty. This moderate price increase in Fairtrade coffee will not undercut the dramatic growth of consumer demand for Fairtrade products; on the contrary, it gives concerned consumers additional evidence that Fairtrade truly delivers on its promise of farmer empowerment.'*

(Source: Adapted from: [http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press\\_office/press\\_releases\\_and\\_statements/archive\\_2007/dec\\_2007/small\\_scale\\_coffee\\_farmers\\_to\\_benefit\\_from\\_international\\_increase\\_in\\_fairtrade\\_price.aspx](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press_office/press_releases_and_statements/archive_2007/dec_2007/small_scale_coffee_farmers_to_benefit_from_international_increase_in_fairtrade_price.aspx) downloaded on 28.06.08)

## The Near Environment

The Near environment comprises a mixture of stakeholder groups. Stakeholders are people who have a vested interest in the activities of the organisation, for example,

Suppliers  
Customers

Competitors  
Collaborators  
Partners  
Potential stakeholders

Depending on the nature of their relationship with the organisation, stakeholders will be more or less able to drive change. In considering their relationship with the organisation, three categories of stakeholders are considered.

### *Dependent Stakeholders*

These are groups whose are reliant on their relationship with the organisation. This may be because the organisation stocks a rare product, because they offer particular therapies or treatments or because their role is important to the welfare of others (e.g. police, fire service or the armed forces).

### *Co-Dependent Stakeholders*

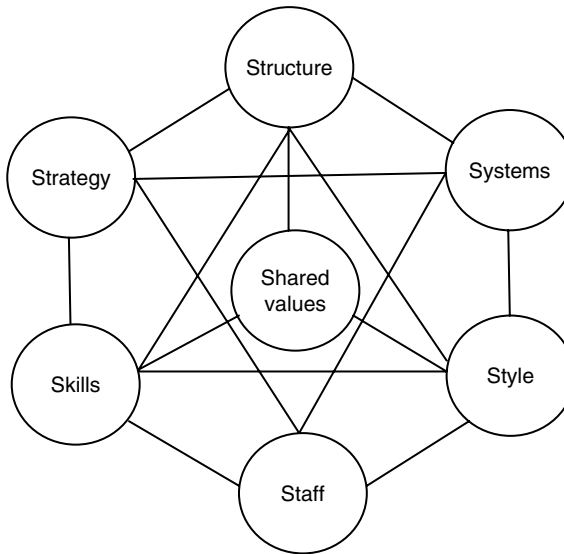
These are groups who have a reciprocal relationship with the organisation. It is in the interest of both parties that the organisation is as successful as possible in what it does. For example, customers might depend on a product but the organisation depends on their buying this. Collaborators work together to optimise service delivery in the most efficient and effective ways possible. And shareholders invest in a company in order that they can get a return on that investment.

### *Independent Stakeholders*

These are groups who are not reliant on what the organisation does on a daily basis, but may wish to react to stop the organisation from behaving in a particular way. For example, local residents or environmental groups may object to organisational plans to convert fields into a car park. Even though they are not directly a part of the organisation, they may still be powerful enough to prevent you from taking a particular course of action or to get the authorities to mandate that you take a particular course of action.

### *The Internal Environment*

The Internal Environment comprises the relationship between staff, managers, the organisation's structure and culture and the processes and the systems.



**Figure 1.2** McKinsey seven S model

Drivers for change emanating from the Internal Environment are often those related to people wanting to improve the things that they do, develop new and better ways of working or solve problems with current practice. The Internal Environment is the point at which organisational change takes place; however, it is important to recognise the interconnectedness of each of the elements of this environment. This is usefully illustrated by the McKinsey Seven S Model. (See Figure 1.2)

The McKinsey Seven S Model draws attention to the idea that a change in any one part of the Internal Environment will have a greater or lesser effect on another part of the Internal Environment. As such those planning and leading change need to be aware of the consequences of their plans.

## Types of Change

The impact that the external environment has in driving change within an organisation is not limited to the different environmental sectors. It is also affected by the rate of change taking place. David (2001) calls this environmental stability. The speed and magnitude of change taking place in the external environment places particular demands on organisations both in terms of their ability to respond to the changes and in terms of the type of change needed to meet those demands.

Many authors have considered the relationship between the degree of stability or turbulence in the external environment, and the structure of the organisation. Burns and Stalker (1961) noted that where the external environment was characterised by stability and predictability, then a centralised and bureaucratic structure was perfectly acceptable. There are unlikely to be any rapid changes in the environment which would require the organisation to respond quickly. Contrarily, where the external environment was deemed uncertain or unpredictable, then organisations with flatter organisational structures were deemed more appropriate. Their lack of centralised decision-making and tall structure meant that they were able to adapt quickly to the changing circumstances.

Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) argued that where environmental uncertainty existed, then there was a need to divide large organisations into smaller and more responsive sub-units. These sub-units could then adapt quickly to sudden and dramatic environmental changes. Alternatively, where the external environment was relatively stable, then it was appropriate to retain a single large organisational structure.

The second relationship that emerges between the external environment and an organisation is the relationship between the degree of dynamism in the external environment and the type of change that this demands. Senior and Fleming (2006) summarise this relationship in a tabular form (Table 1.1 – Environmental Conditions and Types of Change).

**Table 1.1** Environmental conditions and types of change

Environmental forces	Types of change		
	Dunphy and Stace (1993) <sup>a</sup>	Grundy (1993)	Burnes (2004)
Predictable	Fine-tuning	Smooth incremental	Incremental
Forecastable by extrapolation	Incremental adjustment		
Predictable threats and opportunities	Modular transformation	Bumpy incremental	
Partially predictable opportunities	Corporate transformation		Punctuated equilibrium
Unpredictable surprises		Discontinuous	Continuous transformation

*Note:* <sup>a</sup>We will not be discussing the Dunphy and Stace (1993) paper here as you will be reading this in full later on in your studies.

*Source:* Adapted from Senior and Fleming, 2006, p. 284.

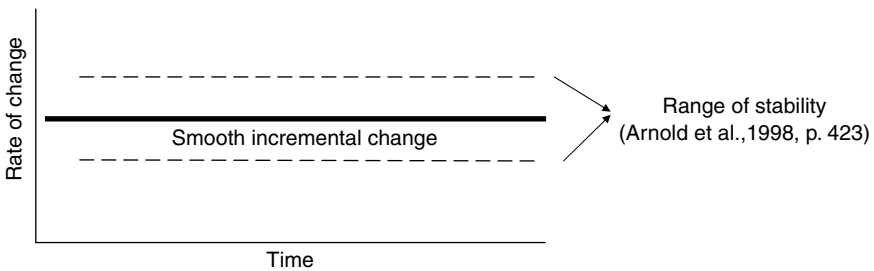
## Smooth Incremental Change (Grundy, 1993)

According to the Table 1.1, smooth incremental change (Figure 1.3) is suited to stable external environments. It is change that evolves slowly and follows a clear path for change through which those directing the change involve all of those people affected by the change. People are supported, coached and trained so that they can contribute to the process of change and feel comfortable with the outcome.

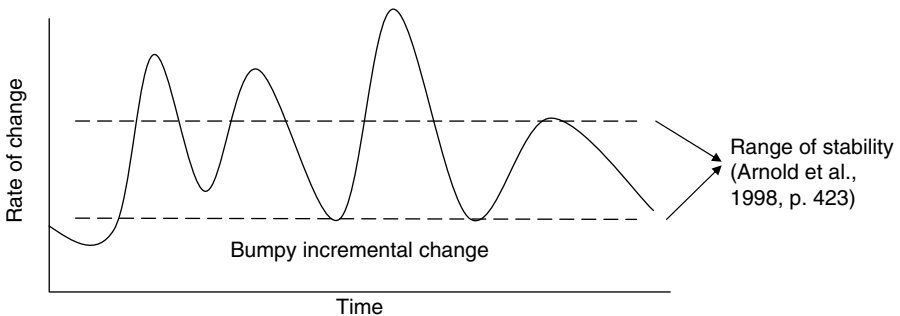
Because the changes are relatively minor, people are able to cope with them. People remain within what Arnold et al. call the 'range of stability' (1998, p. 423); that is, those involved in the change are comfortable in that they are able to deal psychologically, emotionally and physically with the demands made on them by the process of change. The tempo of change remains the same. People begin one change with a clear sense of what the objectives for change are, they work logically through the implementation process until the objectives are achieved and, once that change is completed the next change process begins.

## Bumpy Incremental Change

Bumpy Incremental change (Figure 1.4 – Bumpy Incremental Change) is appropriate where there is some degree of predictability in the external environmental



**Figure 1.3** Smooth incremental change



**Figure 1.4** Bumpy incremental change

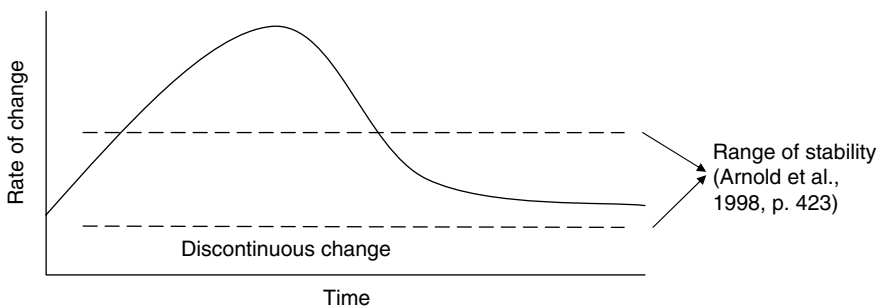
conditions – but not sufficient predictability to be absolutely sure about the frequency, duration or the magnitude of the changes which might happen. As such, change within the organisation is periodic and is of sufficient magnitude to disrupt the status quo.

Bumpy incremental change involves a degree of discomfort for people. It takes them out of their ‘range of stability’ (ibid.). It does this because in order to achieve the goals of change the old ways in which worked are challenged and there is insufficient time to adopt the same supportive coaching and mentoring approach that is often used in smooth incremental change.

## Discontinuous Change (Grundy, 1993)

Discontinuous change (Figure 1.5 – Discontinuous Change) is a dramatic and radical change in the ways in which things are done. Such dramatic change is necessitated by either a crisis or by an opportunity. A crisis may have arisen in the external environment, a sudden shift in conditions which has affected not only your own organisation, but all other organisations that work in the same context as you. Alternatively, the crisis may have arisen because of the actions of your competitors, as such it is only your organisation which is affected. Last, the crisis may have arisen as a result of bad management on the part of your company. In any of these situations, the key issue is that the crisis is of sufficient magnitude that it poses a serious threat to the viability of the organisation.

Contrarily, it may be that the organisation is not facing a crisis, rather it has spotted potential in the market. Rather than discontinuous change being purely reactive, that is, people responding to a crisis, here people are aware of an opportunity, one which needs to be taken advantage of immediately. Again the issue is speed, it is necessary to act quickly to make sure that your organisation takes advantage of that opportunity before anybody else does.



**Figure 1.5** Discontinuous change

Discontinuous change challenges the status quo by disrupting the usual ways of doing things. It takes people out of their ‘range of stability’ (ibid.). The need for speed implies that people are ‘instructed’ as to what they need to do, rather than being consulted. By doing this, those managing a process of discontinuous change aim to bring about short-term compliance. Time is vital and the organisation needs to act quickly; managers can work on gaining people’s longer term commitment to the change once the crisis is over.

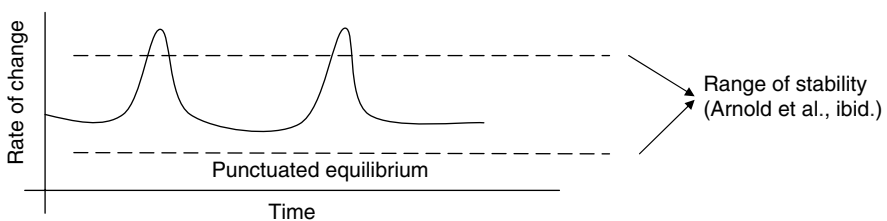
Burnes (2004) contributes two additional types of change.<sup>3</sup>

## Punctuated Equilibrium

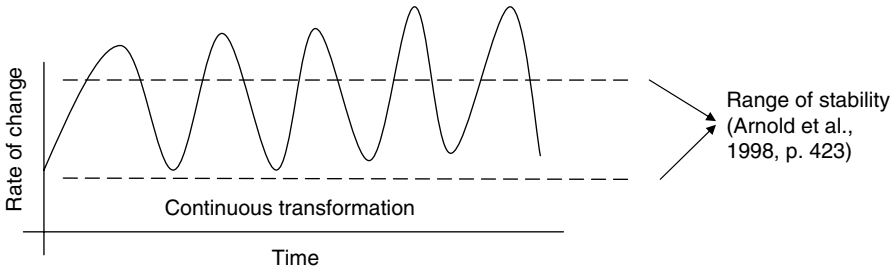
Punctuated equilibrium (Figure 1.6 – Punctuated Equilibrium) is a type of change characterised by sudden bursts of activity. It is based on the understanding that whilst incremental change forms a good base for ensuring that the organisation conforms to the demands placed on it by the external environment, those demands are not always evolutionary. There are times when the external environment itself is shaken by radical change, and when that happens, organisations too need to change radically. As such people can remain with their ‘range of stability’ (Arnold et al., 1998, p. 423) during the periods of incremental change, but are then taken out of this range at the moments of dramatic, radical change.

## Continuous Transformation

The last type of change that Burnes (2004) mentions is that of continuous transformation (Figure 1.7 – Continuous Transformation). In noting that the environmental context of the twenty-first century is characterised by dramatic change, then the slow plodding notion of simply trying to keep pace with changes in the external environment (by incremental change or punctuated equilibrium models) is not sufficient. Rather organisations need to proactively reinvent themselves if they are going to survive.



**Figure 1.6** Punctuated equilibrium



**Figure 1.7** Continuous transformation

The nature of this change is dramatic. It challenges old ways of thinking as well as old ways of working. Such change takes people outside of their range of stability.

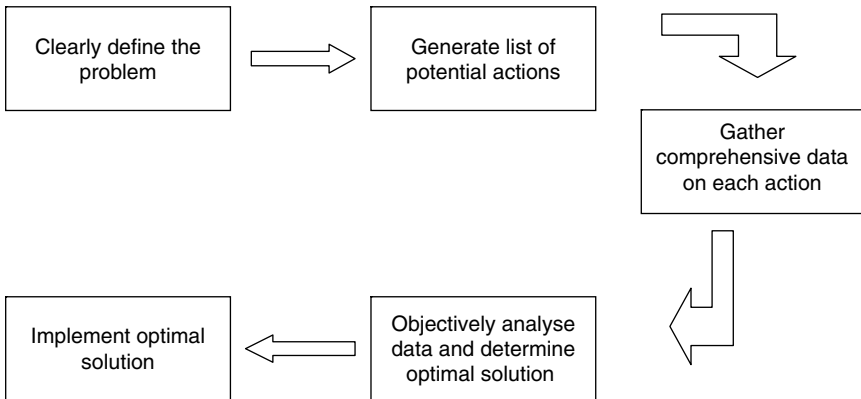
## Conclusion

So far we have recognised that organisations in the twenty-first century act and interact with a range of different environments ranging from the Far Environment, through the Near Environment and into the Internal Environment. Each one of these environments is multi-faceted and each facet of each environment may place different and indeed competing demands on the organisation. We will now go on to consider how the organisation deals with those demands, that is what models of change can we use to guide the transition between where we are now and where we ultimately want to be?

## Linear Models of Change

Linear models of change are frameworks which provide logical and sequential prescriptions for the processes of change. Such models map out the processes of change from the first recognition of the need (or desirability) for change through to the practicalities of implementation. They advocate a series of managerially driven activities, each of which feeds in to the next stage in the process.

This logical approach to change is premised on the rational model of decision-making. A model which advocates that problems within an organisation can be clearly defined, potential solutions generated and evaluated and a clear and unambiguous strategy for resolution devised. The five stage model (Figure 1.8 – The Rational Decision-Making Model) starts with the clear definition of the problem. The more specific the definition is, the more

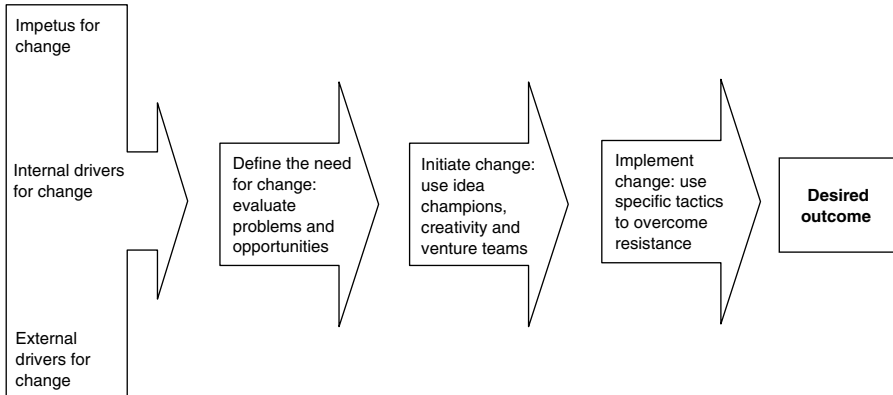


**Figure 1.8** The rational decision-making model

focused and therefore appropriate the solution will be. Next, having defined the problem, a list of potential courses of action is generated. Then, for each item on the list, a comprehensive set of data is gathered to advise the evaluation process. Next is the evaluation process. Based purely on the objective data gathered, a decision is made as to the ideal solution. Last, that solution is implemented.

The rational decision-making model has been criticised for its simplicity; it fails to account for the complexity of organisations. Perhaps the most famous critique came from Herbert Simon, who advocated that rather than follow a totally rational model of decision-making, managers *satisfice*. That is they make the best decision possible whilst acknowledging the limitations of decision that they have made. Underpinning the notion of *satisficing* is the idea that ‘most human decision-making, whether individual or organisational, is concerned with the discovery and selection of *satisfactory* alternatives; only in exceptional cases is it concerned with the discovery of optimal alternatives’ (Simon, cited in Pugh and Hickson, 1996, p. 134. *Italics added*).

Basing linear models of change on the rational model of decision-making therefore has implications for the outcome of change. One has to question whether in managing a change process we are seeking an optimal outcome or one which is simply *satisfactory*. Despite the linear models of change being open to similar criticisms as the rational model of decision-making, linear models are useful. They provide a consistent structure through which people can plan and execute change. They reduce the risk that some key part of the change process might be missed, and they are easily understood. Daft (2006) describes a four stage linear model of change. (Figure 1.9 – Four Stage Model of Change.)



**Figure 1.9** Four stage model of change

*Source:* Adapted from Daft, 2006, p. 394.

## Impetus for Change

The impetus for change is the force which drives for change. What Daft notes, is that this force can come from two sources, internal drivers for change and external drivers for change. Consideration of both is important. The drivers for change determine not only the need for change but the speed with which that change needs to be brought about.

Whilst we tend to consider internal and external drivers for change as distinct entities, it is worth noting that they are often inexorably linked.

To Illustrate

When changes in the economic environment result in interest rate rises, the costs for an organisation also rise. In order to deal with those increased costs, the organisation may decide to change working practices in order to improve efficiency. The impetus to change is driven by a need to adapt to changes in the external market. However, changes in the rate of interest rate also increase the cost of living for people working in the company. As a result, they may demand higher wage increases.

When considering the drivers for change, it is also worth noting that the external and internal factors which create the need for change seldom arrive as single events or issues. The increase in interest rates alluded to earlier is one single event which may occur at the same time as new legislation is brought in, or new governmental targets are launched or a new humanitarian aid crisis arises. Drivers for change often present a complex picture from which people in organisations have to pick their priorities.

## Stage 1 – Define the Need for Change

Daft (ibid.) advocates that regardless of the drivers for change, people within organisations are not prepared to change unless they perceive that there is a crisis. That is, that change is the least damaging option for them. However, few organisations lurch from one crisis to another, and it would be generally thought unwise for organisations to simply wait for the next crisis to come along before introducing change. Rather than focus on a crisis, change needs to be managed as an ongoing process in which the need for change is communicated through identifying a performance gap. A performance gap is the difference between what we are doing and what we should be doing. Addressing the performance gap can be a means to resolving a problem (reactive) which already exists, or can be the opportunity (proactive) to develop, elaborate or improve what we are currently doing. Either way the performance gap is used as a means of demonstrating to people the difference between where the organisation is now and where the organisation needs or would like to be.

By recognising the performance gap, people are able to define what changes need to take place, whether these are changes in practice, changes in structure or change in culture.

## Stage 2 – Initiate Change

This is the stage at which the plans for change are devised. It is the stage in which people search for solutions which meet the needs for change surfaced previously. Daft notes two approaches here. In the first those directing the change adapt solutions that either they have used previously or that they have seen used elsewhere. Alternatively they create new and innovative solutions themselves. The approach taken will to a large extent be governed by the need for change and the type of change needed. Where the change required is familiar, or similar to previous changes, then the solutions may be adapted from previous ways of managing change. However, where the drivers for change are complex and ambiguous, then the ways of managing that change may need to be new and innovative.

## Stage 3 – Implement Change

Daft advocates that implementing change is a process of overcoming resistance. That people will naturally resist change, and therefore need to be effectively persuaded of the benefits of change. Failure to persuade people to participate in the change means that their resistance may undermine the organisation's ability to achieve its desired goals. A range of strategies are suggested from communicating

with people and advising them of the benefits of change at one end through to the use of power to instruct people to participate in the change.

Daft's linear model of change offers a very generic framework within which one can think about change within organisations. Senior and Fleming (2006) present a much more detailed breakdown of the processes involved in planned change.

The Senior and Fleming model (Figure 1.10) divides the process of managing change into three distinct stages: Description, Options and Implementation.

## Stage 1 – Descriptive Phase

In the descriptive phase, the intention is to narrow the focus on the specific requirements of the change. By describing the problem and then seeking

Phases	Stages	Actions appropriate for each stage
Description	1. Situation Summary	Recognise the need for change either to solve a problem or take advantage of an opportunity; Test out others' views on the need for change; Using appropriate diagnostic techniques, confirm the presence of hard complexity and a difficulty rather than a mess.
	2. Identify objectives and constraints	Set up objectives for systems of interest; Identify constraints on the achievement of the objectives.
	3. Identify performance measures	Decide how the achievement of the objectives can be measured.
Options	4. Generate options	Develop ideas for change into clear options for achievement of the objectives; Consider a range of possibilities.
	5. Edit options and detail selected options	Describe the most promising options in some detail; Decide, for each option, what is involved and how it will work.
	6. Evaluate options against measures	Evaluate the performance of the chosen options against the performance criteria identified in stage 3.
Implementation	7. Develop implementation strategies	Select preferred option(s) and plan how to implement.
	8. Carry out the planned changes	Involve all concerned; Allocate responsibilities; Monitor progress.

**Figure 1.10** Senior and Fleming model

Source: Senior and Fleming, 2006, p. 313.

the view of others, people are able to surface a range of perspectives on the issue which can then be tested using diagnostic techniques. By creating a very specific focus, we are much more able to produce clear objectives and set a clear pathway towards achieving those objectives. The use of diagnostic tools is a way of checking the assumptions we make in the descriptions of change. Such tools and techniques provide a structured set of dimensions, metrics or lenses through which we can view the situation.

The application of such tools and techniques refines the focus further, allowing for specific intentions to be translated in to practical objectives.

In producing the specific objectives, those planning the change need to be aware of the ways in which the circumstances of change influence what they can and cannot do.

Objectives then are devised in line with the demands (Stewart, 1982) made on people, that is, what is the change specifically meant to achieve? The constraints impose limitations on how the group or individual could go about achieving their objectives. As such constraints may include limited time, limited resources, not have the necessary technical skills or being unable to get all the people involved to agree. These demands and constraints then frame the choices those planning the change are able to make.

Once the objectives have been decided, the description stage advocates that clear performance measures be devised. It is important at this stage that those planning the change have a clear idea of what it is they are going to measure and how they are going to measure it.

## Stage 2 – The Options Stage

The options stage is the stage in which the plans for change are devised. Based on the analyses and the objectives devised in the description stage, people now draw together some ideas about what needs to be done to bring about the desired changes.

The evaluation of options is the point at which those managing the change identify the actions most likely to achieve the objectives of the change.

Once the options have been evaluated, the processes of change are refined and implemented.

## Stage 3 – The Implementation Stage

The option(s) chosen will in many ways indicate the actions that need to be taken; however, this stage is about formalising those actions into clear implementation plans. The plans need to say what is going to be done, how, when and by whom. Time limits need to include the scheduling of the review processes as well as the actual implementation plan. The plan notes how those

managing the change will communicate that change, how they will support and guide people through the change and how they will enable people to acquire the new skills, new knowledge or new ways of working necessary for the change to be successful.

## Conclusion

Linear models of change provide those managing change with a clear process through which they plan and monitor change. The models incorporate time sequenced activities which guide those implementing change through from the investigation of the need for change to the outcomes. However, this simplicity can be problematic.

## Summary

In this chapter, we have tried to take you quickly through some of the key issues related to organisational change. As we move forward through the course we will be exploring the practicality of some of the things you have learned. We will be asking you to think about the ways in which this learning influences your practice, and getting you to explore the consequences of trying to apply some of these theories and concepts. By encouraging you to engage with a range of academic papers and articles we want you to consolidate your learning; to engage critically with the literature and by use of reasoning and reflection help you to make a difference.

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### Notes

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1. Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural, Technological, Legal, Environmental.
2. As more and more organisations operate globally, so they need to adapt to working in a range of different political contexts.
3. His notion of incremental change maps on to Grundy's notion of smooth incremental change.

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