

Bridge's *Transitions Framework*

- William Bridges is an expert in personal and organizational change.
- His **Transition Framework** distinguishes between **change** as a shift in the environment and **Transition** as the internal process people go as they come to terms with that change.
- Individuals and organizations that pay attention to this difference are more likely to enact change that is both **effective and lasting**.

Transitions Framework - Brief



William Bridges

- **Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change**
Doubleday Books, 1988
- **The Way of Transition: Embracing Life's Most Difficult Moments**
Perseus Publishing, 2001.

Transitions Framework - Brief

Change



We've all gone through changes in our lives. We switch schools, move to a new place, start a new friendship, end a relationship. These are all changes.



Change is Situational and EXTERNAL to us.

Something stops. Something starts.



Examples of Change

- Birth of a child
- New job or loss of job
- Relocation to new house or community
- Illness, Trauma
- Retirement
- Natural disaster
- Death of a friend, relative, or pet

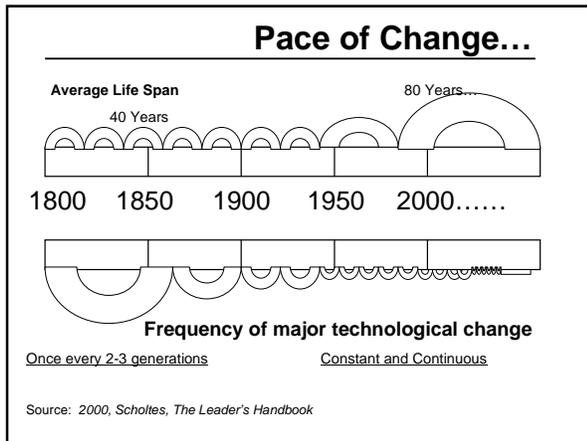
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Change is quick.



It happens in a moment...on a day. You can mark a change on a calendar.





Transition is different...



It's what happens inside of us as we adapt to the change. It is triggered by the change.

Transition is the **INTERNAL**, emotional or psychological process of coming to terms with the effects of change.



We All View Change Differently

- Depending on our point of view and past life experiences, Change can be *positive, neutral, or negative*

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Change

Events
Situational
Outcome – focused
Relatively quick

Transition

Experience
Psychological
Process based
Gradual and slow

Going through this journey isn't easy.

A big part of transition is dealing with the emotions that you feel after a change happens.



Confusion



Anger



Sadness

Transitions can be painful and hard and take a LONG time to get through...

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross *On Death and Dying*

The stages Kubler-Ross identified are:

- Denial (this isn't *happening* to me!)
- Anger (why is this happening to *me*?)
- Bargaining (I promise I'll be a better person *if...*)
- Depression (I don't *care* anymore)
- Acceptance (*I'm ready* for whatever comes)

Many people believe that these stages of grief are also experienced by others when they have lost a loved one.

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Transitions Happen In Three Clearly Defined Stages

- **Endings**--the stage in which "the way things were" becomes no longer possible.
- **Neutral Zone (In-Between-Time)**--the chaotic, but dynamic stage that occurs after the ending, but before a new beginning has emerged.
- **New Beginning**--the stage where a new way of doing things, a new identity or a new opportunity for growth and progress emerges.

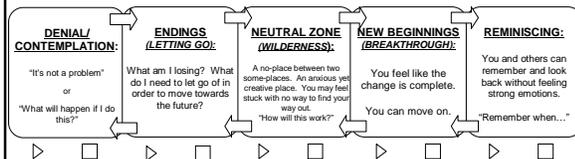
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William Bridges Three Stages of Transition

- Endings**
 - Loss
 - Letting go
 - Getting closure
 - Saying good-bye
- Neutral Zone**
 - In-Between Time
 - Wilderness
 - Chaos/Anxiety
 - Creativity
 - Conflict
- New Beginnings**
 - Being "with it"
 - The new chapter
 - Renewal

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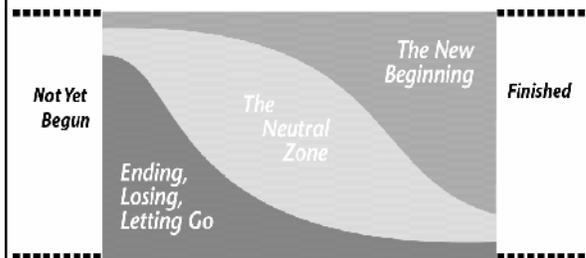
EXPANDED TRANSITION FRAMEWORK Five-Stages



*Adapted from William Bridges and Associates' *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*

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Another Way to See the Five Stages of Transition



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Pay Attention to Endings

- If we do not give proper attention to our endings, they often appear as symptoms in some other part of our life. Minimizing, denying, avoiding or ignoring endings is not an effective or healthy strategy for managing change.

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Common Emotions During Endings

- Surprise
- Shock
- Denial
- Numbness
- Anger
- Stress
- Resentment
- Sadness
- Fear
- Worry
- Confusion
- Low Energy
- Agitation
- Loss
- Relief

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Marathon Effect

- Everyone moves through transition at differing speeds
- Our emotional experience of the “race” does not match up with others, which can lead to scapegoating, blaming, and misunderstanding

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Neutral Zone

The Neutral Zone is that time when the old way is gone, but the new way doesn't feel right either. Nothing seems to make sense. It can feel confusing and lonely.



Since everything feels like it's up for grabs, this can also be a time to try new things – new hobbies, sports, relationships, behaviors. This is a time to explore.

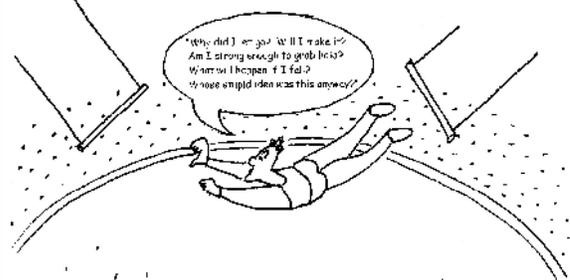
Common Emotions During the Neutral Zone

- Confusion
- Chaos
- Blaming
- Nostalgia
- Anger
- Worry
- Resentment
- Loss
- Depression
- Fear
- Physical Symptoms—illness
- Conflict
- Anxiety

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The Neutral Zone

The anxiety of the in-between time



Resistance

It's the **transition**, not the change that people often resist.

- Loss of their identity and their world
- Disorientation of the in-between-time
- Risk of failing in a new beginning

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New Beginning



After doing the tough work of letting go of some of the old way and going through the confusing/creative time of the Neutral Zone, the new way starts to feel right. You've made a New Beginning.

You feel comfortable in your skin and things start to make sense again...until you go through your next Transition.

Common Emotions/Signs During New Beginnings

- Acceptance
- Ease
- Inner Peace
- Integration of Old & New
- Smiles and Laughter
- Team Spirit
- Renewed Energy
- Understanding
- Low Stress

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Change Management

starts with the outcome

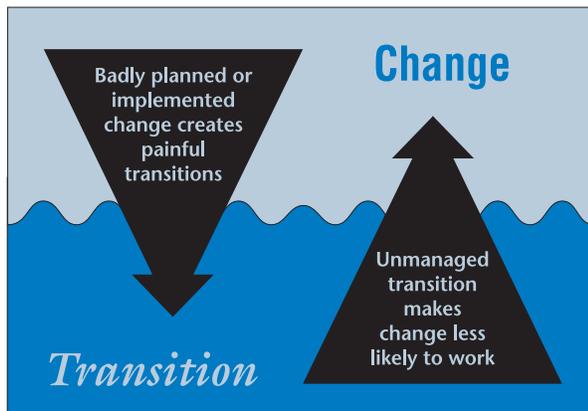


Transition Management

starts with wherever people are



Transitions Framework - Brief



Transitions Framework - Brief

Successful Change Requires:

- **A Defined Change** that stakeholders share for a desired future.
- **An Operational Plan** that dictates the mechanical steps to get there.
- AND
- **A Transition Plan** to help the people affected come to terms with the change

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Acknowledgement

- People recover faster when everything is out on the table, even when it is difficult to discuss. Unacknowledged loss FESTERS and refuses to heal.
- Leaders are often scared to call attention to obvious losses for fear of making things worse. Such leaders do NOT understand and accept grieving as natural and necessary.

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Sell the Problem

- Have you built the case for change? It is important to sell the problem before you try to sell the solution.
- Don't make people feel bad about their participation/loyalty to the old way of doing things.
- Sell the problem but DO NOT denigrate the past.
- Illustrate the consequences of doing nothing.

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Provide Information

- People who are losing something CRAVE information. You can't give them too much!
- During Transition, people don't assimilate information well so they need to hear it again and again and again.
- Use different channels and styles. Vary the medium and use the 6X rule:
 - After 3-4 times people pay attention
 - After 6 times people take it seriously
 - Until it is heard coming directly from the mouth of the president/boss, it is not taken seriously.

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Soften or Replace Losses

- How can we soften the changes' impact on people and protect their interests?
- How can we help clients/staff replace, redefine, or reinvent a loss?
- Be sensitive to the small issues. Sometimes people miss the small aspects of what was lost more than the larger important aspects.

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Ceremonies & Symbolic Events

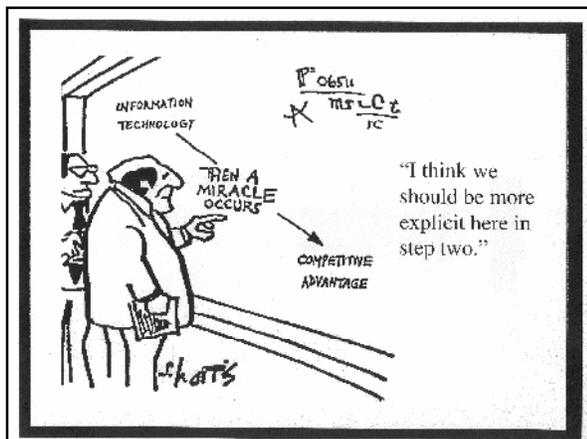
- In our personal lives, we gain closure on chapters in our lives through rituals like: bar/bat mitzvah's or confirmation, funerals and wakes, burning old love letters, reading over old diaries or viewing family photo albums
- In organizational life, what similar symbolic actions can we take to mark the "ending"?

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Psychological In-Between-Time

- Neutral Zone is "nowhere between two someplaces"
- It isn't the old way anymore, but it isn't the new way yet either
- Old procedures and systems and the old expectations and priorities are no longer valid, but the new ones haven't taken shape yet

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Seven Principles of Transition Management

1. You have to end before you begin.
2. Between the ending and the beginning, there is a hiatus.
3. That hiatus can be creative.
3. Transition is developmental.
5. Transition is also a source of renewal.
6. People, groups, and communities go through transition at different speeds.
7. Communities may run a "transition deficit."

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