Positive Strategies
for Managing Change

Final Report

Tri-County Literacy Network
READ
Supporting Literacy Programs

Positive Strategies for Managing Change

(Final Report)

Prepared for:

Tri-County Literacy Network
Chatham, Ontario

Prepared by:

MiS
communications

Key Project Information

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Summary

This report represents the completion of the Positive Strategies for Managing Change project.

The Positive Strategies for Managing Change project was first conceived in 1999, following a survey of all programs within the Tri-County Literacy Network region. The purpose of the survey was to have administrators, practitioners and tutors identify "their priorities for field development."

The overall goal of the project was to "help practitioners to adapt to organizational and policy change while promoting a positive work environment and ultimately more effective literacy services." Stemming from this goal, the following six key objectives were developed:

1. To effectively gather and distribute information to all project participants on best practices that will assist practitioners in implementing Program Reform.

2. To provide training that will enhance the practitioner's ability to adapt to change in the workplace in general and specifically LBS within the context of Program Reform.

3. To assist practitioners to develop an action plan and move forward with required changes in a manner that is focused and positive.

4. To provide an opportunity for participants to meet other practitioners who have found ways to implement required changes in an effective manner and to learn from each other.

5. To ensure that the content of all training and resources takes a positive approach.

6. To develop a model that can be utilized by other regional networks.

The report has been organized according to the following five sections:

1. **Methodology** — including the research and project design
2. **Results and Discussion** — including the results of the pre-workshop survey, best practices research, literature review, workshop evaluations and workshop follow-up survey
3. **Conclusions and Recommendations** — including recommendations for Tri-County Literacy Network and other networks wanting to replicate this project
4. **Consultant's Postscript: Observations and Reflections** — including an employee-centric model for managing change
5. **Appendices** — including research and evaluation instruments and the workshop resource materials

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Introduction

Rationale for the project

The Positive Strategies for Managing Change project was first conceived in 1999, following a survey of all programs within the Tri-County Literacy Network region. The purpose of the survey was to have administrators, practitioners and tutors identify "their priorities for field development."

The results of the survey indicated that members wanted to learn more about developing strategies for implementing and managing change. At the time, the TCLN staff and Board of Directors theorized that this request stemmed from the reforms introduced to Literacy and Basic Skills. As the then Executive Director for TCLN wrote in the funding proposal, "While these changes are positive, it has required considerable adjustment by practitioners in the field."

Following the survey, preliminary research was completed by TCLN staff to identify resources currently in place to address managing change in the literacy environment. Although the results of the research were limited, one study completed in British Columbia by Wanda Arneson (1999) did lend strength to this project. As part of her report, Arneson recommended that "Executive Directors, tutor co-ordinators and instructors receive educational support on setting and defining work boundaries in order to avoid burnout and to maintain balanced, healthy lives."

Project goals

The overall goal of the project was to "help practitioners to adapt to organizational and policy change while promoting a positive work environment and ultimately more effective literacy services."

Stemming from this goal, six key objectives were developed:

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4. To provide an opportunity for participants to meet other practitioners who have found ways to implement required changes in an effective manner and to learn from each other.
5. To ensure that the content of all training and resources takes a positive approach.
6. To develop a model that can be utilized by other regional networks.

Project deliverables

As part of the consultant's responsibility for ensuring that the project goal and objectives were met, ten project deliverables were identified.

1. Survey (regional and provincial)
2. Documentation of literature review
3. Survey summary
4. Best practices and resource package to distribute at conference
5. Presenter's presentation and record of participants' issues, solutions and completed action plan worksheet
6. Evaluations of the conference
7. Summary of the conference evaluations
8. Follow-up survey
9. Follow-up survey summary
10. Final report, including a documentation of the process

Outline of report

We have organized the remainder of this final report into the following five sections:

1. Methodology
2. Results and Discussion
3. Conclusions and Recommendations
4. Consultant's Postscript: Observations and Reflections
5. Appendices

Methodology

To meet project objectives, the reference committee and MiS designed a simple five-stage methodology.

1. In the first phase, MiS was to survey the membership to better understand their specific issues and stressors associated with change within their organizations.

2. The second phase was based on further research outside of the TCLN area to identify best practices and resources currently being used by literacy practitioners and administrators throughout the province. Additional research was to be completed through a review of relevant literature on managing change.

3. The third phase was designed to focus on developing a printed resource that would incorporate practical recommendations and suggestions for meeting and addressing change in the workplace, with a section devoted specifically to changes associated with Program Reform.

4. The fourth phase was to be devoted to organizing the one-day workshop at the Country View Golf Course and the preparation for that.

5. The fifth and final phase was to centre around evaluating the success of the project, especially the resource and the workshop.

Action plan

(For a chronological breakdown of the action plan, see Appendix A.)

Survey

The first survey sent out to practitioners and administrators within TCLN had three main objectives:

1. First, we wanted to better understand the changes — both literacy and general workplace — that literacy practitioners within the Tri-County area were facing.

2. Second, we wanted to identify different best practices and resources that literacy practitioners had used or were using at the time to help them manage change in the workplace.

And finally, we wanted to use the opportunity to ask practitioners and administrators what they thought should be incorporated into the workshop on managing change and when it should take place.

The instrument was comprised of 11 questions, arranged into three categories. In the first question, respondents were asked to rank different possible Program Reform stressors, using a modified Likert scale of one to five.

In the second question, they were asked to rank the level of stress associated with general workplace changes, using the same scale.

In the third and fourth questions, respondents were asked to identify anticipated Program Reform or general workplace changes, and the anticipated effects of each one.

In the second section, respondents were asked to identify, describe and rank any best practices or resources that their organizations had used to help address Program Reform or general workplace changes.

In the third and final section, they were asked to rank how valuable they thought four workshop topics would be for them. These topics were borrowed from one of the facilitator's workshop outlines. Also in this section, they were asked to identify other topics that they thought would be valuable in the Positive Strategies for Managing Change workshop. And finally, they were asked to indicate which day of the week would be best for allowing them to participate in a workshop.

At the conclusion of the survey, participants were asked if they would be interested in participating in a follow-up telephone interview. If they responded positively, they were asked for their name, position and telephone number. The surveys were sent out electronically using individual member e-mail addresses. They were also sent out in paper versions, with the option of either faxing or mailing the completed survey back to us. To help with the response rate, we included a $1.00 gift certificate for Tim Hortons with each mailed survey.

Provincial Best Practices [1]
While the TCLN member survey was being prepared and distributed, we contacted all literacy network and sector representatives in Ontario asking them to identify best practices and resources in the field. This process of contact was managed through two general e-mail requests and several follow-up e-mails and phone calls.

Once the results of the TCLN member surveys were analyzed, we developed a telephone interview question set that was designed to specifically uncover information on best practices and resources that addressed the main concerns identified through the survey returns. Our goal was to interview at least one representative from each of the three sectors (community, school board and college). We were also hoping for a fairly diverse geographic representation.

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[1] *For the purposes of this project, we defined a best practice or resource as a systematic approach to managing change that could be replicated elsewhere. (Examples of resources might include the use of web sites, videos, workshop materials or books. Examples of best practices might include staff retreats, time management or stress management strategies tailored for an organization.)*

Using the results of the network and sector requests for assistance, we conducted four telephone interviews with LBS agency representatives. The interviews were designed to uncover the following information:

- Recent changes within the organization and the effects of these changes on the organization and staff.

- Best practices and resources used by the organization to help manage the changes, including the areas of change they address, why they are useful, how successful they have been and where more information could be obtained.

- Would agencies be receptive to individuals contacting them in order to learn more about what their organization had implemented to manage change.

Literature review

The methodology for the literature review was designed to function at three levels. First, we wanted to identify what if any resources or best practices were currently being used in the literacy field that would help practitioners and administrators address Program Reform in Ontario. The hope was that resources that had already been applied and evaluated would be incorporated into this project, thereby eliminating the need to "reinvent the wheel." Sources to be consulted included AlphaPlus and the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) website.

The second level of probing was to be more generic. Depending on the results from the first level of searching, a broader search base would follow, but with a focus on not-for-profit organizations. Resources to consult included the Charity Village website, other Internet search engines and library holdings.

The third level of searching was to be very general and identify research and resources that addressed both "managing change" and "managing stress." A similar methodology to the second level of searching was to be used, but in this case, we would not limit the queries to not-for-profit organizations.

It should be noted that this particular literature review was designed to focus primarily on materials that were more practical and less theoretical in nature, with the hope that other resources and materials could be incorporated into the workshop resources.

Development of resource

Using the information from the literature review, the survey returns and the best practices and resources interviews, and the materials supplied by Pam Patterson, the workshop facilitator, we compiled workshop binders for each participant. The binder was designed to complement the workshop and to offer additional resources that participants could use on their own.

Workshop

Initially, the workshop was designed to be a two-day intervention, but because of member feedback, it was shortened to one day.

We met with Pam approximately one month prior to the workshop to discuss the agenda, materials, venue and desired outcomes. The workshop itself was held on November 16, 2001, at the Country View Golf Course in Chatham.

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to complete a two-part evaluation form. In the first part, they were asked to provide comments on the overall value and effectiveness of the workshop, and in the second section, they were asked to rate the different exercises and materials for each module.

Workshop follow-up

At the beginning of January 2002, we distributed a post-intervention questionnaire to the workshop participants. The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to identify whether participants had incorporated one or more of the stress and change management tools/resources that were presented during the workshop. Additionally, they were asked whether they had completed and implemented an action plan, which was one of the exercises facilitated during the workshop. They were also asked to project any future exercises and/or resources from the workshop they anticipated introducing within their organization.

The questionnaire was distributed electronically to those participants with an e-mail address. For the remainder, we mailed paper versions of the questionnaire with the option of faxing the survey back to us.

Results

In this section, we discuss the results from the following elements of the project:

1. The member survey
2. The best practices research
3. The review of literature
4. The workshop evaluation
5. The workshop follow-up survey

Survey

Of the 46 surveys distributed, a total of 22 were completed and returned, representing a 48% response rate. Most were faxed to us; however, we also had six respondents complete the electronic survey. Additionally, six surveys were completed and then mailed to us.

Section I — Identifying workplace changes

Question 1.

In the first question, we asked respondents to rate the level of stress they have experienced as a result of both LBS reforms and non-LBS changes. In relation to the level of stress experienced in addressing LBS reforms, respondents reported the following:

- *Demonstrations* — 75% reported the stress to be either strong or very strong
- *Conflicting demands* — 75% reported the stress to be either strong or very strong
- *Learning Outcomes* — 65% reported the stress associated to be either strong or very strong
- *Monitoring learner progress* — 60% reported the stress to be either strong or very strong
- *Coordinating volunteer tutor programs* — 55% reported that they could not evaluate it at this time (likely because many were not involved in this volunteer-based programs)
- *Goal development and goal setting with learners* — 55% reported the stress to be either strong or very strong
- *Common assessment* — 55% reported the stress to be either strong or very strong
- *Introduction of IMS* — 45% reported the stress to be either strong or very strong
- Other LBS-related stressors reported include: time management; lack of models/ demonstrations/training plans provided by MTCU; lack of resources.

Question 2.

In the second question, we asked respondents to rate the level of stress associated with other, non-LBS workplace changes. The two most significant areas of concern that respondents reported were individual workload (60% reported it to be either strong or very strong) and staff morale, where 30% reported it to be very strong.

Question 3.

In question 3, we asked respondents to identify LBS changes that they anticipate over the next 12 months. Virtually all identified both mandatory literacy testing and the Workplace Literacy Initiative. Some of the reported anticipated effects are presented below.

Anticipated Program Reform changes	Anticipated effects
Mandatory Literacy Testing	- Influx of learners — do we have money and space to accommodate. - Not enough volunteers to meet the needs of learners - Greater number of students who do not want to be here - More involvement in testing and assessment
Workplace Literacy Initiative	- Denial of our real purpose of preparing people for on-campus high school - Change of demonstrations to workplace themes, even though most of our students have academic goals - Additional administration duties; liaison, promotion with employers - No personnel to visit employers - Employers not receptive

Several others reported the following anticipated LBS reform changes:

- *New methods of education*
- *More use of demonstrations*
- *Program revamping*

Question 4.

In question 4, we asked respondents to identify other, non-LBS changes that they anticipated. Some of the responses included:

- Changes in leadership
- Decrease in hours
- Staff changes

- Moving
- Increase number of landed immigrants
- Increase in the number of students
- More paperwork

Section II — Managing change — Best Practices and resources

Questions 5 and 6.

In questions 5 and 6, we asked respondents to tell us about the resources they have been using to cope with changes. Thirteen or 65% said they had introduced some type of best practice or resource. Some of the best practices/resources listed included:

- *Staff workshops and meetings*
- *Summer student hired through HRDC grant*
- *Outreach ad hoc committee*
- *MUDWorks Workshop*
- *Web sites*
- *MTCU resources*
- *Learning Disabilities Quick Screen*
- *Faculty Mentor Program*

Questions 7 and 8.

In questions 7 and 8, we asked respondents to indicate if they knew of any best practices and/or resources that their organization planned to introduce to manage general workplace change. Ten or 48% said yes. Some of the best practices/resources listed included:

- Orientation of new instructors to offset large turnover
- MUDWorks Workshop
- Managing Change Workshop
- More board involvement

Section III - Positive Strategies for Managing Change Workshop

Question 9.

In question 9, we asked respondents to indicate how valuable they thought four different topics would be for the prospective workshop. The four topics were:

1. Ways to relieve stress
2. Personal strategies to accept change
3. Strategies to challenge change
4. How to deal with ongoing and rapid change

Of the four topics, the last three appeared to be the most important, with almost equal numbers reporting that the topics would be either valuable (approximately 25%), very valuable (25 - 35%) or a must (25 - 35%).

Question 10.

In question 10, we asked them to indicate other topics they would like to see covered. Several of the responses included:

- *Prioritizing*
- *Quick places to calf for support*
- *Time management*
- *Where to get resources for level descriptions for assessments*

Question 11.

Finally, we asked people when they would prefer to have the workshop. Overwhelmingly, they reported that Friday would be the best day (70%).

Best Practices

Following the request for assistance that was sent to network and sector representatives, we were able to follow up with three telephone interviews. Additionally, we conducted one interview with a TCLN member, who had expressed an interest in a follow-up interview on the survey.

Of the 20 representatives contacted, we heard back from only two: Simcoe County Literacy Network and QUILL Learning Network. We had anticipated a better response to the request for assistance; however, we have identified four possible explanations for the low response rate:

- Timing of the requests
- Lack of understanding of our needs
- Lack of knowledge of what programs might be using/doing at the community level in this regard
- Death of programs using tools/resources to address organizational change

However, from the four interviews, we did obtain representation from the community-based, school board and college programs, including:

Program Sector	Organization Best Practice
Community-based	- Barrie Literacy Council - Saugeen Shores Adult Learning Centre
School board	• St. Clair Catholic District School Board
College	• Georgian College

Of the four programs, only the Barrie Literacy Council had a resource that they were using. The other programs had developed their own best practices at the organizational level. None of the organizations had adopted or adapted resources or best practices from other programs.

The following is an overview of the results from each interview.

Best Practice #1

Name: John Hudson
Organization: George College
Position/Role: Instructor at LBS program of Midland campus

Recent history

John reported that there had been significant changes at the Midland campus as a result of the LBS reform. He indicated that there was more paperwork than there used to be and that teachers have had to become more than just teachers. John also reported that the office had moved to a smaller space.

Best Practices and resources

John described the introduction of the LBS Steering Committee, which is made up of between eight and ten people. The committee meets every two months, and all Georgian College LBS instructors are invited to attend. The goals of the Steering Committee are:

- To facilitate communication among LBS delivery sites.
- To share workload and to avoid duplication of effort.
- To share information and knowledge regarding implementation of LBS Program Reform.

John indicated that the best practice has been for Georgian College LBS instructors but that it could be transferable to other sectors.

John reported that the Steering Committee has been useful to practitioners and administrators because it allows them to brainstorm ideas at a college — not just campus — level.

Based on a success scale of 1 to 5, John rated it a 3.5. He also thought that the Committee could be improved in the following three ways:

1. There needs to be more time — or people with more time — to incorporate some of the ideas.

2. Once the steering committee gains more acceptance, then more of the ideas generated may be incorporated by instructors at different campuses.

3. There is also a need for additional funds to implement some of the ideas.

John reported a second best practice that the College had implemented in 1999/2000. Although there was not an official title for it, John referred to it as two roving consultants. Two LBS teachers within the College were seconded to travel to the different sites and help other practitioners better understand how to implement training plans. The managers would arrange one-to-one sessions with staff based on request (therefore it was voluntary).

John reported that, on a scale of 1 to 5, this initiative was only a 2 (fair). He said that some campuses were not really interested, and many people did not buy into the idea.

John provided three recommendations for improving the practice, if it were to run again or be replicated:

1. The process could be better organized than it was. The steering committee would be a good base for making sure it's organized and for helping to increase buy-in.

2. The individuals acting as the consultants need clear direction about what it is they hope to achieve with the other teachers.

3. At that time, people were quite disillusioned and overwhelmed with the whole Reform process, so there would need to be buy-in to the whole process of Reform before something like this could work effectively.

Best Practice #2

Name: Kathy Hoof
Organization: St. Clair Catholic District School Board
Position/Role: Facilitator and instructor with developmentally challenged

Recent history

Kathy reported that since the introduction of Program Reform, the number of students had dropped from 108 to 55. She indicated that most classes had been structured around "lifestyle" management/issues, and there had been no entrance requirements. However, with the introduction of minimum level requirements, many of the students did not meet Level 1 Criteria; therefore, there wasn't a place for them.

Kathy also reported that there has been a lot more paperwork as a result of LBS Program Reform and that staff are not paid for the increased workload (e.g., not paid for completing progress reports). This has contributed to the stress levels of the staff.

Finally, Kathy indicated that there have also been quite a few staff changes, which has negatively affected the level of communication within the organization.

Best Practices and resources

Kathy reported that the school board was now offering two programs in partnership with Community Living Association. The school board works with volunteers from Community Living to help instruct adults. Kathy indicated that, because many of the learners do not meet the minimum Level 1 requirements, volunteer literacy tutors are no longer available.

In the first program, volunteer tutors from Community Living Association help instruct pre-Level 1 adults in established Level 1 classes. In the second program, the pre-Level 1 class operates at the same time as the Level 1 class, but in a different classroom.

Kathy indicated that this best practice is specifically targeted at pre-Level 1 adults with developmental challenges who might not otherwise obtain learning opportunities. She said the program represents a strong working relationship between the school board and the Community Living Association.

Kathy reported that, on a scale of 1 to 5, the combined classes program was a 4 (good) and the separate classes program was a 5 (excellent).

Best Practice #3

Name: Maria Bertrand
Organization: Saugeen Shores Adult Learning Centre
Position/Role: Program lead for two programs: Saugeen Shores and Walkerton Adult Centre

Recent history

Maria reported that the LBS Program Reform changes have been positive because MTCU's direction is much clearer. Additionally, she reported that the changes have made it easier to work with external programs, especially Ontario Works, and that more partnerships have been developed as a result.

Maria reported that the Walkerton water crisis has affected the programs in Walkerton significantly because they could not meet the required contact hours during the time of the crisis. Additionally, five LBS sites have merged under the Owen Sound Public Library umbrella, resulting in administrative changes.

Best Practices and resources

Maria reported that Saugeen Shores Adult Learning Centre, Ontario Works and Job Connect have worked together to develop and deliver a five-week program called FOCUS Groups (FOCUS stands for Finding, Organizing, Challenging and Understanding Self).

The program is divided into 30 modules covering a variety of training priorities, including:

- Emotions, change and stress
- Time management and organization
- Goals, planning and motivation
- Effective communication and conflict management
- Nutrition

Maria indicated that the FOCUS Groups provide a venue for consistent contact hours (up to 900 hours) while adhering to the MTCU requirements.

Maria ranked the success of the program as a 4 (good).

Best Practice #4

Name: Marilyn Davies
Organization: Barrie Literacy Council
Position/Role: Assessor

Recent history

Marilyn reported that the LBS Program Reforms have resulted in a lot more work for staff, but without extra pay. Marilyn estimated that staff log an additional five hours per week just to get their work done. For example, she said that staff are expected to attend LSP meetings and do volunteer work with the Network.

Marilyn said that to cope with the changes, the Barrie Literacy Council hired her to address the many changes associated with Reform, including assessment, monitoring of students' progress and incorporating learning plans.

Marilyn said the Barrie Literacy Council staff, have also experienced stress associated with insufficient space and the waiting list for students (because there are not enough volunteers).

Best Practices and resources

Marilyn reported that the Barrie Literacy Council had developed a resource entitled, Goal Directed Assessment: Demonstrations and Samples.

The resource is designed to be a tool for initial, ongoing and exit assessments. It focuses primarily on Reading and Writing, Levels 1 to 3, and there are plans to further develop the resource to cover numeracy as well.

Marilyn reported that the resource provides more direction for the tutor and assessor and reduces their workload because there is a pool of exercises and samples to choose from.

Marilyn ranked the success of the resource as a 5 (excellent).

Literature review

Introduction

The first level of research into literacy-related resources and studies did not yield complementary resources or examples of best practices, nor did we find research studies examining the *link* between program reforms in literacy and the effects of these changes on practitioners and/or administrators. Perhaps the most relevant resource was Jane Barber's **Assessing Up, Designing Down**, completed for the Ontario Literacy Coalition. Included in this resource is a section entitled "Managing Change in LBS Program Planning and Delivery."

Two other documents that we examined were Community Literacy of Ontario's **Skills for the Future** (2000) and **The Economic Value of Volunteers in Community Literacy Agencies in Ontario** (1998). Both resources give insight into some of the impacts of provincial changes at the program level.

Additionally, Wanda Arneson's study, **Working Lives of Adult Literacy Practitioners** (1999) examines some of the sources of stress for managers, coordinators and instructors in literacy programs in British Columbia. One of Arneson's key findings is that both executive directors, tutor coordinators and instructors in the province reported work overload to be a significant issue. Arneson argues that the work overload for executive directors could be traced back to ambiguous job descriptions and role boundaries. Similarly, lack of clearly defined roles resulted in instructors "assuming too many roles which were inherently incompatible."

Our second level of research revealed a larger body of studies and resources. However, most of these presented methods for managing change and stress from a manager's perspective. Similarly, many of the resources investigated change from a growth or evolutionary perspective but did not examine the impact of external change pressures on the organization and staff.

One complementary resource for this project was Carol McKenzie's participant booklet entitled **Mastering Change** (2000), which was part of a workshop she facilitated for Literacy Link South Central. Although the booklet itself did not address specific issues within literacy, McKenzie does cover a number of relevant topics, presumably tailored to meet the needs of Literacy Link South Central. The workshop topics included:

- The impact of change
- Acting and reacting to change
- Challenges and opportunities (associated with change)
- Methods and tools for responding to change
- Developing an action plan

At the third level of research, the number of resources was seemingly infinite. For example, a search of the expression "organizational change" on one Internet search engine yielded 149,000 hits, including the Journal of Organizational Change Management web site. Clearly, it was not within the scope of this project to adequately investigate the different change and stress management resources at the most generic levels.

With assistance from the reference committee, the focus of the remainder of the literature review changed to a narrower examination of two main areas:

1. The impact of external change pressures on the organization
2. The impact of change from the individual's perspective

Impact of external change pressures

According to several sources (Martin, 2001; Scott and Jaffe, 1995; Seita and Waechter, 1991), the pace of change has been steadily increasing over the past several decades. The impacts of globalization, corporate restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, and technology have contributed to the sense of constant change. In their 'how to' book for managing change, Scott and Jaffe (1995) argue "Today there are no longer any rest periods; change is continuous and enormous."

Martin (2001) has argued that forces eliciting change within an organization can be classified as either internal or external sources of change. Several of the external change pressures he highlights include:

- **Market demand** — a decline (or increase) in demand for products or services

- **Market supply** — the availability of companies/organizations to meet the demand

- **Economy** — changes to the local, domestic or international economic climate

- **Demographics** — the number, age, background of people within the community

- **Society** — changes in public perception and interests

- **Technology** — advances affecting the way we work and live

- **Political environment** - changes in government or as a result of government influence

- **Knowledge** - changes in the amount and type of information available

Using H.L. Leavitt's research as a base, Martin identifies four key organizational variables that can be affected by external or internal change pressures.

1. People
2. Programs
3. Structure
4. Technology

Martin (2001) contends that a change to one of these variables can also result in an impact to one or more of the other variables as the organization tries to address the changes. Additionally, using a change matrix, he argues that change can be experienced in one of four different ways, depending on the impact of the change and the level of planning the organization uses to address the change.

	Unplanned	Planned
Fracturing	**Crisis** - unexpected and serious change to the organization (e.g., a chance occurrence such as the destruction of a building by a storm or earthquake)	**Strategic** - major changes that are planned in advance (e.g., restructuring the organization in light of proposed government changes)
Adaptive	**Surprise** - changes that are unplanned and minor in impact (e.g., a minor supplier of materials goes out of business)	**Incremental** - minor changes that are anticipated (e.g., adjusting a workspace to accommodate new computer equipment)

Scale of impact (vertical axis)

Degree of Planning (horizontal axis)

Impact of change on the individual

As Martin (2001) indicates, it is not surprising that most people resent changes at work because it "invariably means having to take on more work, stress or even losing one's job, hardly positive reward for accepting change."

Scott and Jaffe (1995) argue that even positive changes can elicit feelings of stress because the individual is going through the process of leaving the familiar environment and entering one that is unfamiliar. Bridges (1988) contends that people go through a three-stage process when they experience significant change.

The Ending - as the word suggests, is the end of the familiar. In this stage, individuals identify what they have done and what they will no longer be doing when they reach the new Beginning.

The Transition - between the old and the new, many individuals feel lost because the new way of working is not yet entrenched and yet the old way of working has been deemed obsolete.

The (new) Beginning - should provide the sense of direction that has been missing.

For many, the first two stages of change involve feelings of loss. Several types of loss include:

- **Security**, including job security and knowing what will happen to the organization
- **Territory**, including areas of influence as well as physical space
- **Relationships**, including those relationships with co-workers and customers (Scott and Jaffe, 1995).

These feelings of loss have led many change management experts to draw upon the work of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (1969). Kubler-Ross argued that when we grieve, we undergo a five-stage process:

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

Scott and Jaffe (1995) have illustrated a modified form of this model, developed by HeartWork, Inc. and Flora/Ellkind Associates that considers four stages of transition through change, using a 2X2 matrix. The four stages are:

1. Denial
2. Resistance
3. Exploration
4. Commitment

Depending on the individual's personality and the magnitude of that individual's perceived loss, reaching the exploration and commitment stages can be difficult for both the individual and the organization in which he or she works. A review of the literature reveals many different resources for helping an organization, its managers and staff through the process of change. I n their practical guide, Scott and Jaffe (1995) present eight guidelines for an organization to consider when preparing for corporate change:

1. Have a good reason for making the change and understand why the change is necessary.
2. Involve people in the change planning process, especially those most likely to resist.
3. Ensure that a respected leader heads the process of change.
4. Create transition management teams that will plan, coordinate and evaluate the change efforts.
5.   Provide appropriate training that allows people to express their concerns as well as learn new skills.
6. Employ outside consultants who bring in key information, experience and different perspectives.
7. Create and use symbols of change that help celebrate and reflect the organizational changes.
8. Acknowledge and reward the accomplishments and the sacrifices people have made.

Additionally I all of the sources consulted argue that a successful change management process necessitates an effective communication plan. Stuart Klein highlights several communication principles that should be incorporated into the change management communication strategy:

- Use more than one media for communicating key messages
- Repeat messages to aid message retention
- Use face-to-face communication as much as possible to ensure maximum message retention
- Make the messages personally relevant to the receivers and avoid abstract or general information
- Use opinion leaders to help change attitudes and opinions

Managing stress

Like the managing change topic, there is no shortage of information on stress management. With a myriad of self-help publications, medical articles, Internet sites (over 330,000 through one search engine) and agency publications (including the International Stress Management Association) to choose from, narrowing the search was the challenge.

Relying on the direction of the reference committee, we focused on practical resources that could be adapted or incorporated into a resource for TCLN members. The most relevant resource for our purposes was a booklet produced by Brant, Haldimand-Noforlk Heart Health, entitled, Steps to Healthy Stress. The simple-to-read, 10-page resource is based on the following six-step process for managing stress:

1. Recognizing what stress is through a brief introduction to internal and external sources of stress

2. Identifying individual stress levels using a *life stress questionnaire* and a *symptoms of stress* chart
3. Identifying which stressors are controllable/uncontrollable and important/unimportant using a 2X2 matrix
4. Understanding how to cope with stress
5. Developing an individual action plan to help cope with stress
6. Identifying other sources of information and support for managing stress

Additionally, the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation produced a booklet called *Coping with Stress.* Included in the resource is a simple Stress Index[2] that helps individuals identify their current levels of stress using 25 yes or no questions and a simple scoring system.

Workshop

Less than one week prior to the workshop, fewer than ten people were pre-registered. After several exploratory phone calls by the Executive Director, pre-registration numbers increased to 20.

Workshop expectations

At the beginning of the workshop, Pam asked participants to identify what they expected to get out of the day's session. The following is a list of those expectations:

- New resources
- Coping mechanisms for stress
- Learn to relax and accept changes
- Focus on important changes
- How to manage rapid change (with lack of training)
- Experience of change as positive (learn more)
- Learn how to make changes
- How to keep sense of humour under pressure
- Manage stress in your own life
- Deal with aggravations of change
- How to accept change (roll with it)
- How to avoid being pulled in different directions
- How to get time for ME
- How to get over resistance to change

What works and what doesn't

One of the key findings or observations from the workshop was the participants' response to Pam's question, "What works and what doesn't work when implementing organizational change?" The table below highlights the group's responses:

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[2] *The Stress Index is also available on the Internet on various web sites, including:* *http://www.cmha.ca/english/info_centre/stresstest.htm*

Works	Doesn't work
▪ Realistic time frame ▪ Taking small steps ▪ Preparation ▪ Training ▪ Looking at BIG picture ▪ Full disclosure ▪ Consultation ▪ Shared values ▪ 'Buy in' opportunities	▪ Forced change ▪ Too fast ▪ Confusion ▪ Mixed messages ▪ Lack of communication ▪ Lack of information

Workshop evaluation

Of the 14 people who completed the workshop evaluation forms, 7 (50%) reported that it was useful and 7 (50%) reported that it was very useful. This positive evaluation suggests that participants were satisfied with the experience.

Participants were also asked to identify three things they liked most about the workshop, and many reported they found the presentation and the presenter to be very good and knowledgeable. They also reported liking the facility, the opportunity to reflect on their own change priorities and the opportunity to share experiences and resources with their colleagues.

When asked to identify three areas that could be improved, participants reported the following:

- *Move through morning agenda more quickly*
- *More time spent on stress relief and coping*
- *Spend more time on Best Practices - within other organizations*
- *More time on practical resources*
- *Room was good but there was some noise at lunchtime and after that it was a bit distracting*
- *More time to cover topics*
- *Have Ministry people here - open forum*
- *Handouts of some of Pam's notes*
- *More time to explore specific issues raised*
- *More hands-on activities*
- *Multi-media presentations*

Based on the feedback provided in the Module Evaluation Form, it appears that participants thought the *What Makes Managing Change Difficult*, *Understanding How You Deal with Change* and *How to Deal with Stress* sections the most useful for meeting their needs and expectations.

Module 1 - What makes managing change difficult

Of the 13 respondents, 9 reported the workshop **exercises** to be either very good or excellent. Three reported the exercises to be good and one reported them to be fair. Seven of 12 reported the **materials** to be very good or excellent and 5 reported them to be good. No one rated the materials as either fair or poor.

Module 2 - Understanding how you deal with change

Of the 13 respondents to this question, 7 reported the **exercises** to be very good, and 1 reported them to be excellent. Three reported them to be good and 2 reported them to be fair. Similarly, 7 of 12 reported the **materials** to very good, 2 reported them to be excellent, 2 reported them to be good and 1 reported them to be fair.

Module 5 - How to deal with stress

Of the 12 respondents, 8 reported the **exercises** to be either very good or excellent, 3 reported them to be good, and 1 reported them to be fair. Seven of 10 respondents reported the **materials** to be either very good or excellent. Additionally, one person commented that it was "too bad we didn't have more time to review the materials provided."

It appears from the evaluation forms that the Best Practices section was the weakest part of the workshop. Three participants reported the exercises to be very good, 3 said they were good, and 3 said they were fair. One said that they were poor. Similar evaluations were provided for the materials. Interestingly, this was the only section in which someone reported either the materials or the exercises to be poor.

Participants were also asked to identify other workshop topics they would like TCLN to host. The following is a list of their responses from the evaluation forms:

- *Practical 'how to' of computer and online material for those of us who are intimidated by using the computer*
- *Conflict resolution*
- *Dealing with difficult people*
- *Personal empowerment*
- *Demonstrations*
- *Assessments*
- *An oral presentation on the New to Adult Literacy in Ontario — What Literacy Staff Need to Know [3] for the new educator and/or refresher for the experienced educator with a discussion of the role of instructor and responsibilities*
- *Self improvement — time management*
- *Work skills training — resources*
- *Empowering learners — how to step back*

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[3] *This resource, in the form of a binder, was written by Ann Semple for Literacy Link South Central (2001).*

- *Goal setting for students*
- *IMS tips*
- *Resource sharing — exchange of info*

These recommendations are consistent with those reported during the workshop. The top five future learning priorities identified were (in descending order):

1. Assessments
2. How to deal with difficult people/motivate people
3. Demonstrations
4. Resources
5. Time management

Workshop follow-up survey

A total of four surveys were returned: two electronically and two by fax, representing a 28.6% response rate.

Section I - Impact on stress level

In the first section, participants were asked to identify to what degree they had incorporated the breathing and meditation exercises introduced at the workshop. Of the four, three reported that they had partially introduced the breathing exercises and one reported that she/he had already been doing them (prior to the workshop). One reported that she/he had partially introduced the meditation exercises, two reported that they had not at all, and one reported that she/he had already been doing them.

When asked to rank how successful each exercise was in reducing stress, three reported a 3 out of 5 (satisfactory) and one reported a 5 (excellent). For the meditation exercises, one reported a 3, and one reported a 5.

Section II - Workshop action plan

In the next section of the survey, two respondents indicated that they had completed a Personal Change Plan either during or after the workshop. Of the two who reported completing the Personal Change Plan, both said that they had implemented one or more of the actions.

The following chart highlights the two participants' responses to the question of how successful the actions have been in helping them reduce their levels of stress.

Personal Change Plan Action	1	2	3	4	5	6
Make time for personal relaxation				X		
Realize/accept that I can't always accomplish everything		X				
Try not to be too critical		X				
Meet with support staff to discuss areas of responsibility						To be done
Complete templates of forms to be used for record keeping				X		
Sort through resources available			X			More to do

Section III - Future actions

In the first question of the next section, two people indicated that they planned to introduce other exercises or resources obtained during the workshop for managing change. One reported no such plans, and one did not complete this question.

The following question asked them to indicate which ones they would implement and how they thought the exercises would benefit them and/or the organization. The table below highlights the responses of the two individuals who planned to use other resources or exercises.

Other exercises or resources that I anticipate using	Anticipated effects
Try more relaxation techniques and exercise	- Increased productivity - Better health - More positive approach to stress
Using/reviewing the 5 steps to successful management	- Will foster more cooperation among staff when change is necessary - Improve morale, involvement and support
More physical exercise and walks	Lower blood sugar as well as stress

In the final question, participants were asked to identify other impacts that the workshop has had on their professional or personal lives. Three people completed this section, and the following is a list of their responses:

Respondent A:
- *It was good to take a day out to gain perspective on what is required of me in my job*
- *Gave me time to reflect on how best to organize myself for accountability and efficiency*

Respondent B:
- *Package has been shared by chairperson with senior management*
- *Chair has used the chart re: what to do and not do in bringing about change during our staff meetings*

Respondent C:
- *Making a decision*

Conclusions and Recommendations

We have developed a number of conclusions based on the research, the workshop and the overall project.

1. The project methodology developed for the project, including the number and scope of deliverables and the timelines, was reasonable and realistic. Prior to the consultant beginning, significant planning had already been completed, which helped to insure the project's success.

Research

2. Our second conclusion stems from the initial project survey distributed to TCLN members in August of 2001. From the 23 completed surveys (representing 50% of the membership), it is clear that LBS Program Reforms have evoked feelings of stress, especially in the areas of demonstrations and the conflicting demands that arise from the new expectations. The list of expectations provided by participants at the beginning of the workshop support this conclusion.

    Moreover, there is considerable stress associated with the anticipated mandatory literacy testing for Ontario Works claimants and the workplace literacy initiative. However, several practitioners and administrators at the workshop reported that the demonstrations session facilitated by Jane Barber in October 2001 was helpful in addressing their concerns.

    One of the key stressors identified in the surveys — and supported by the Best Practices interviews — was the overwhelming amount of paperwork associated with LBS Reform.

    These results suggest that changes associated with LBS Program Reform continue to be stressful for a significant percentage of practitioners and administrators within the Tri-County Literacy Network.

3. Our third conclusion is based on the results from the literature review. Our research revealed a vast array of resources pertaining to change management and stress management at the general level. However, we found no other research studies investigating literacy reform and its impact on administrators and practitioners. This was consistent with our request to the literacy field for information about best practices/resources. Indeed, it appears that because of the recency of the LBS reforms, this area has not received much attention.

    Not surprisingly, there is also a dearth in resources and best practices that specifically address the issue of external change factors and their influence on LBS organizations.

Workshop

Our next set of conclusions addresses the success of the Positive Strategies for Managing Change workshop.

4. Although attempts were made to tailor the workshop to accommodate TCLN member requests (including hosting it on a Friday, restricting it to one day, addressing topics they ranked as important) and advertising the session well in advance, the number of registrants was significantly lower than initially expected. Possible explanations for this include:

   - Generally, TCLN members do not perceive managing change and managing stress to be work-specific, and are therefore not learning priorities for them. This conclusion is supported by the exercise completed during the workshop where participants identified important future learning priorities. Two of the three most popular requests were for Assessments and Demonstrations.
   - TCLN members felt unable to attend due to loss of time from their programs, unexpected family or work conflicts or other demands.
   - The low attendance is, in itself, a symptom of TCLN members' attempts to cope with the changes. If, as they reported, they are feeling overwhelmed by the workload, then it is quite conceivable that they found it too difficult to fit the workshop into their schedule, despite their initial interest in the topics.

5. Overall, participants indicated that the workshop was successful. Pam's facilitation style and her information on stress and change management techniques were well received. However, it is clear that the afternoon section on best practices and resources could have been better organized and that more time was required to properly address and discuss the different resources.

6. Although it is difficult to generalize how well participants have transferred the learning from the workshop to their professional and personal lives, the four survey returns from participants suggest that the stress management exercises that Pam introduced were perceived to be of value. Additionally, two of the four participants indicated that the workshop had allowed them to "reflect" and were planning to introduce additional actions to help them deal with the changes associated with LBS Reform.

7. It is apparent from the participants' comments in the workshop that they feel there has not been adequate communication during the process of change within their organizations. Comments like "there has been too much confusion," "lack of communication," "mixed messages" and "lack of information" suggest that some TCLN members have felt isolated. It is clear from the literature review that a consultative, two-way communication process that addresses individual needs through regular and repeated messaging contributes significantly to the success of a change initiative.

Recommendations for TCLN

To help TCLN plan and prepare for similar workshops in the future, we recommend the following:

1. Research further and develop best practices and resources for members that address the impact of LBS Reform on practitioners and administrators. It is clear from the research that there are few resources available at the time of writing this report. However, the results from the original project survey and the discussions during the workshop suggest that a significant number of TCLN members are experiencing difficulty adapting to the LBS reforms and will benefit from resources that specifically address the challenges associated with demonstrations and conflicting demands.

2. Review the additional workshop topics identified by participants in the Positive Strategies for Managing Change workshop and address them in future workshops.

3. Facilitate a group interview with members who did not attend the workshop and try to identify the barriers to their participation.

4. Depending on the outcomes of the group interview, consider incorporating elements of change management and stress management into other workshops that participants perceive to be of greater relevance to their jobs.

5. Further to this last recommendation, advertise it in a way that is consistent with what members have identified as their key areas of stress. For example, instead of labeling the workshop *Positive Strategies for Managing Change*, entitle it *Positive Strategies for Managing Demonstrations and Conflicting Demands*.

6. Review and further develop (if necessary) the communication strategy that will help TCLN members understand the rationale and expected outcomes for LBS Reform and build into that strategy a system of regular, two-way consultation.

7. Identify the organizations and individuals that are experiencing the most difficulty with change and solicit the assistance of an external change agent and/or respected opinion leader that could work directly with those organizations.

8. For similar projects, use telephone interviews after the workshop (or similar intervention) to measure the transference of learning.

9. Share the results of the project with TCLN members in a newsletter or bulletin format.

10. Share the results of this project with the literacy field through AlphaCom.

Recommendations for other networks wanting to replicate project

1. If networks want to establish a measure of how stressful changes associated with LBS Program Reform have been for members, we suggest they have their members rate the degree of stress associated with different areas of reform. For example, we asked members to rate how stressful demonstrations and assessments have been. In another year's time, it would be worthwhile to include mandatory literacy testing and workplace initiatives. This would also help to generate a better overall understanding of the impact of Program Reform on the literacy field throughout Ontario.

2. If a similar workshop is to be coordinated, allow sufficiently more time for the section on best practices. Even though practitioners may not want to devote more than one day to such a workshop, the evaluation results indicated that most participants wanted more time for hands-on practice and discussion. Therefore, we would recommend allowing a day and one-half for the session.

3. Because of the recency associated with LBS Program Reform, new best practices that address managing change in literacy will likely be developed. Therefore, an updated scan of the literacy field (and related fields) should be completed to identify the newest resources and best practices.

4. Ensure that participant comments and concerns are properly captured and validated with them. This can be done by sharing survey, interview and focus group results, workshop comments and other, more informal, feedback. This will help achieve buy-in and provide confirmation that members are an integral part of the change process.

5. We also recommend that a similar project be consultative from beginning to end. By keeping members informed and by soliciting their input into the project, the chances of the project being successful will increase, while modeling a healthy organizational change process.

6. Depending on the timing of the workshop, other networks may want to allow even more time than we did between the workshop and the follow-up survey. The Christmas break may have been too disruptive and perhaps did not allow sufficient time for people to confidently evaluate the transfer of learning from the workshop to their professional and personal lives.

7. We encourage other networks to share resources with their members that will allow managers and staff to easily identify characteristics of a change-responsive organization. Pam Patterson's "What Works and What Doesn't" list in the Appendix is one example.

Consultant's Postscript: Observations and Reflections

Introduction

As part of this project, I have been invited to present my ideas and observations on the Positive Strategies for Managing Change project and on change in general. These ideas, while not totally separate from what makes up the other sections of this report, are different. Consultants, as a rule, are not asked to "go off record." Typically, consultants are brought into an organization to help solve a problem, whether the problem is facilitating a workshop, troubleshooting a computer networking interruption or stuffing envelopes and licking stamps.

Therefore, being given the freedom to express my views in this kind of forum is both rewarding and a bit intimidating. It is rewarding because it allows me to take off my more objective (and arguably less interesting) report-writing hat and put on a less restrictive (and arguably more interesting) observation-writing hat.

At the same time, however, it is intimidating because in so doing I am writing about an area in which I have not recently completed a post-doctoral fellowship. Indeed, my observations and comments, and the model that follows, merely represent my take on organizational change and its impact on the individual.

I vindicate (and placate) myself with the argument that I have experienced many different personal and work-related changes, within organizations as well as within my own small consulting company. What's worse, I seem to have a penchant for change, one that has bode me well in some situations and which has landed me in small- to medium-sized quagmires (small piece of advice: don't buy a house, start a family and start a business in the same year).

Moreover, as a consultant who works almost exclusively with the not-for-profit sector, I have had the opportunity to observe the effects of change on numerous public and not-for- profit organizations. And as is the case with any report, by proclaiming my limitations, I am therefore qualified to present my ideas.

In preparing this section of the report, I realized that my comments and the accompanying model are based on a number of assumptions that I have made and which should be highlighted:

1. First, as stated above, my views are based from the perspective of an individual experiencing change within an organization. The majority of the literature that I consulted for this particular project address change from the management perspective, i.e., how to manage people who are experiencing change.

2. Further, this model assumes that the changes are being initiated outside the organization and are not the same as evolutionary, organizational growth changes.

3. A third assumption I make is that each individual will have a different reaction to the change, depending on a host of personal factors, including:

   - Her/his health
   - Other personal stressors
   - Other pre-existing work stressors
   - Her/his personality type and predisposition to change

4. Fourth, I assume that the individual in this model is capable of applying critical thinking skills (and is willing to do so) to the process of change that she/he is experiencing.

A few observations

With limitations and assumptions now out of the way, let me proceed with a few comments on the nature of change, followed by my observations of not-for-profit organizations and this particular project. I want to then conclude with a model of change management from the perspective of the individual. This model, as you will see, is based on the literature review, and my experiences as a consultant, and as a fan and a victim of change.

The nature of change

It's difficult to imagine that anyone would contest that the rate of change in our society has steadily increased over the past 50 years. Obvious manifestations of these changes can be found in many aspects of our daily lives, including:

- **Technology** — the Internet, television, digital everything, cell phones, computers

- **Information** — whereas information used to be scarce, now we appear to have too much (according to several sources the amount of information in the world is doubling every six months; in the 1980s, production of *junk* mail in the United States grew 13 times faster than the American population)

- **Transportation** — consider that 400 years ago, Magellan needed two years to sail around the world; today a satellite can orbit the globe in one hour.

The cumulative effect of these accelerated environmental factors — and especially information overload — is anxiety, poor decision-making, reduced attention span and reduced information retention.

In my ten years of experience working with the public and not-for-profit sectors, the impact of external change factors has been significant. Changes in government funding, program delivery models, accountability expectations and use of technology have left many employees feeling overwhelmed.

The field of literacy in Ontario has certainly not been excluded from these external change factors. Since 1997, Literacy and Basic Skills programs have

been undergoing significant changes as the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities moves towards full implementation of the Recognition of Adult Learning Strategy (RALS). Over the past five years, the emphasis has been on establishing and refining learning outcomes and learner assessments.

The results from the Positive Strategies for Managing Change project suggest that a significant percentage of administrators and practitioners within the Tri-County Literacy Network are, or have been, experiencing stress due, in varying degrees, to the program reform changes. Having had the pleasure of working with many people in the literacy field in Ontario, I have heard many champion and defend the need for changes. I have heard many others argue that there isn't a need to make changes or that these changes are merely re-inventing the wheel but painting it a different colour. I have heard yet others report that it is more the rate at which the changes are being introduced that is stressful.

As an independent consultant working with numerous organizations in the process of change, a fundamental question for me has always been, "Why do different people respond differently to change?"

In an effort to answer that question, I have developed these thoughts (so far):

Humans are emotional beings
At the individual level, a significant change will elicit an emotional response that will yield the *fight, flight* or *fright* reactions. What appears to happen at this stage for many (myself included) is one of two things:

1. The level of examination of the impact of the change at both the personal and organizational levels stops here, and the decision about whether the change is a good one and how it should be managed is based on an emotional response.

2. A second possibility is that we mask our emotional reactions — and the decisions that ensue — in a pseudo-critical thinking shroud. As an example, a number of years ago, I was teaching business communications at a community college. The curriculum for the communications program was set to be overhauled. My initial reaction to the proposed changes was negative, and I now realize that it was negative for three reasons:

    1. Part of my reaction was *emotional* — I didn't like the proposed curriculum.
    2. Part of it was *defensive* - I suspected that it would negatively affect my position.
    3. Part of it was because some of my *colleagues* did not like it either.

    As instructors, we were asked to comment on what we thought of the changes. I, like others, detailed why I didn't think it was a good idea, even

going so far as to collect information that would support my argument. However, what I did not do was closely examine the proposal, including the rationale, the implementation strategy, etc. Therefore, I used available information to support my negative reaction and bolster my resistance, but I didn't critically examine the issue from the other side.

As the research indicates, when we are overwhelmed with other stressors, critically examining the potential impact of any change becomes more difficult. Additionally, some people will be more comfortable with a change for a variety of personal reasons, including:

- Previous experiences with change
- Perceived threat to status, influence or power
- Perceived benefits
- Change threshold

Based on my observations, I believe that additional stressors, previous experience and personality type will often dictate why, how and when an individual responds to a change.

But we can think too!

Fortunately, we have the ability to go beyond our emotional responses to a proposed change; we can critically evaluate its impact and ask a series of employee-centric as well as organization-centric questions, including:

- How will this change impact me?
- Do I need to know more about the proposed change(s)?
- Will this change ultimately benefit the organization?
- What are the different ways that the change(s) can be introduced?
- What are the risks associated with implementing the change(s)?

Resistance isn't always futile

Many of the resources that I consulted for this project focused on helping people *get over* their resistance to a change. One source suggests that people will resist for a variety of reasons including threatened security, a fear of failure and an unwillingness to let go of the status quo.

However, I also believe that people sometimes resist because they have critically evaluated the situation and have determined that the proposed change(s) will not benefit the organization. In these cases, resistance is perhaps in their own self-interest, but also in the interest of the organization.

Consider the following possible scenario:

> A new computer system is introduced to help health-care professionals throughout the province complete and submit patient reports. It appears that this system will save time, demonstrate accountability and provide more accurate and consistent reporting. It is piloted in two urban centres and is well received by health-care professionals in those two centres.
>
> A decision is made to fully integrate the system throughout the province. However, when one rural-based organization tries to incorporate the system, they find it takes them more time because of poor Internet connections. Moreover, because they do not have a high speed Internet connection, their telephone lines are tied up for an hour at a time. As a result, patients cannot get through and the staff cannot make out-going calls.

Is resistance in this situation a positive or negative response?

If an individual within an organization chooses to resist the changes because she/he believes they will negatively affect her/him or the organization, what then? Ideally, of course, there should be a line of communication that encourages the individual to express his or her concerns and contribute to the change process. Within many organizations that I have worked with, this element of the change process has not been there, whether it has been because the changes have happened too quickly, because the management has not known how to incorporate this into the process or because employees have avoided it.

Stress - it's unavoidable

My last observation is this: significant changes — even the best ones — will result in increased levels of stress among staff. By its very nature, a change will necessitate increased workload, risk, learning and uncertainty, even if only on a short-term basis. Under these circumstances, how can stress levels not increase?

A final thought

In putting these thoughts to paper — or keyboard — I have struggled to capture what I believe are my most relevant thoughts and ideas for this particular project. Indeed, I have only scratched the surface of the factors that cause each of us to react to changes.

On the following pages, I have tried to elucidate and complement my thoughts with a visual representation of an employee-centric model for managing change.

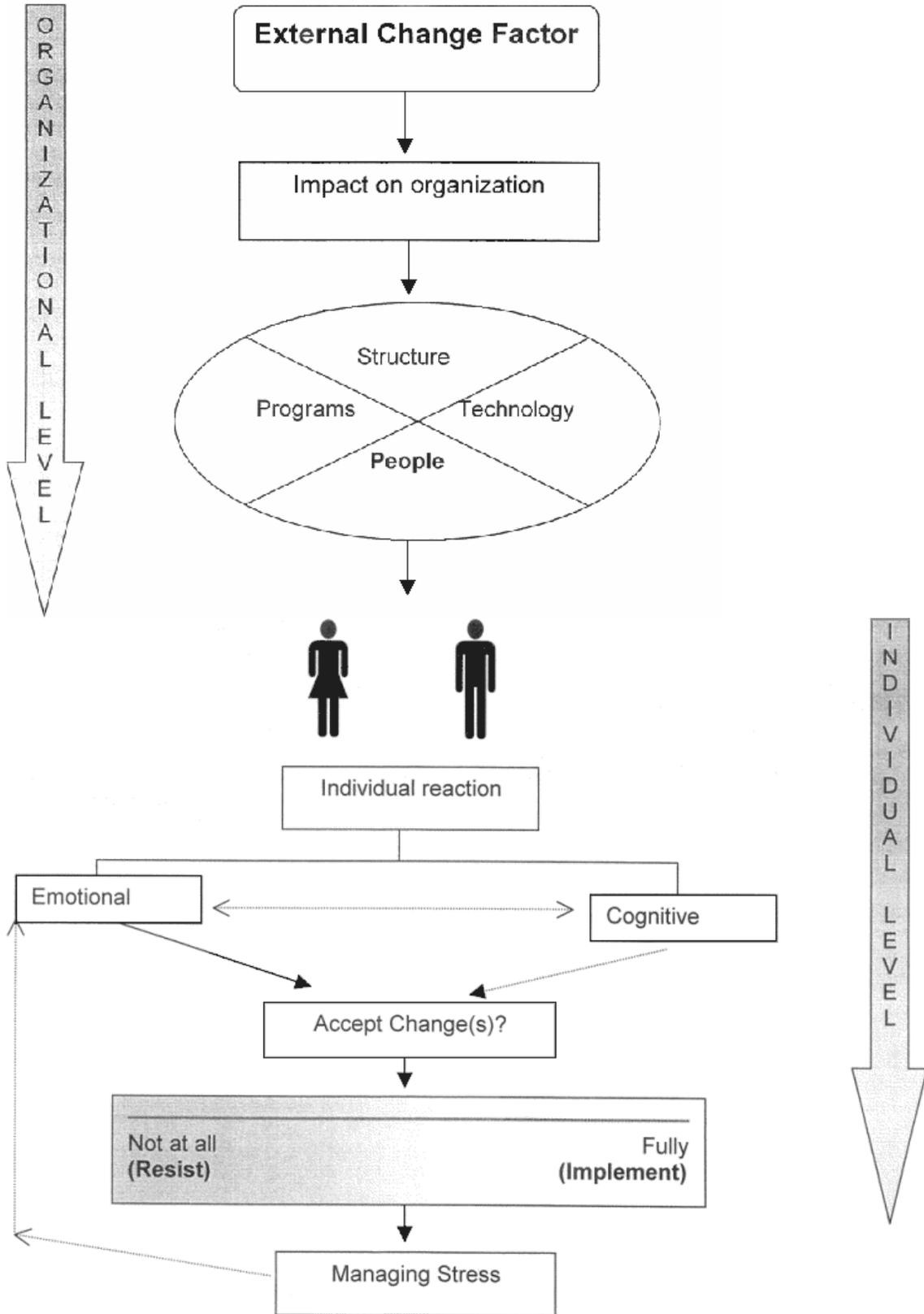## *Positive Strategies for Managing Change - an employee-centric model*

This ten-question model and the diagram on the following page are designed to help employees identify, address and manage how they will respond to organizational changes. It is based on the research completed for this project, the resources assembled in the Participant booklet for Positive Strategies for Managing Change workshop (see Appendix) and the consultant's experiences and observations.

Question	Example	What can I do?
ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL		
1. What are the external change factors affecting our organization?	☐ Political ☐ Economic ☐ Natural ☐ Technological	Clarify what the external change factors are.
2. What will they impact in our organization?	☐ Technology ☐ Structure ☐ Programs ☐ People	Find out what areas of the organization will be affected by the change. Remember, changes to one area of an organization can affect the others.
3. How serious are these changes likely to be?	☐ Surprise ☐ Incremental ☐ Crisis ☐ Strategic	Use Martin's (2001) 2X2 matrix to help identify the level of severity and degree of planning required.
4. What can be done at the organizational level?	☐ What works well and what doesn't work well?	Review Pam's Elements that Affect our Response to Change list and Scott and Jaffe's (1995) guidelines for or organizational change.
5. How well do I deal with change?	☐ Am I receptive to change?	Use a personal change-readiness survey such as that found on the ReadersFirst web site[4].
6. Are there other stressors in my life that could affect my ability to cope with change?	☐ Marriage ☐ Divorce ☐ Financial stress ☐ Birth ☐ Death	Use a personal stress index, such as the one included in Appendix D of this report, to help identify other stressors and their potential impact on your ability to cope with changes.

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[4] *http://www.scripps.com/virtuals/readersfirst/change.html*

7. How do I feel about this change?	☐ Am I ready to accept this change? ☐ Am I likely to resist this change?	Use the Transition Grid found in Scott and Jaffe (1995) or on the Internet[5] to identify your current stage of transition in the change process
8. How can I make a critical evaluation of whether this is a good change for me and the organization?	☐ Do I fully understand the rationale and process for this change? ☐ What assumptions am I making? ☐ Does this change match with the strategic direction of the organization? ☐ What are the risks associated with accepting or not accepting the changes?	Consult critical thinking resources, including Edward deBono's Six Thinking Hats, to identify if you accept or resist change(s). Conduct a (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) SWOT analysis to assess both internal and external factors affecting the organization.
9. Will I accept the change(s)?	☐ Accept fully? ☐ Not accept at all? ☐ Personal action plan?	If you are not going to accept the change(s), how will you resist in a way that is constructive for both you and the organization? See Pam's Personal Action Plan in the Appendix.
10. How will I manage stress?	☐ Exercise ☐ Relaxation techniques ☐ Escapes ☐ Celebrate successes	Identify what is important and controllable using the 2X2 Controllability: Importance matrix in Appendix D. Also identify stress coping mechanisms that will work for you.

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[5] *see for example* http://www.learning-navigators.com/events/learning_to_change/systems.htm

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O                                       ┌─────────────────────────────┐
R                                       │   External Change Factor    │
G                                       └─────────────────────────────┘
A                                                     │
N                                                     ▼
I                                       ┌─────────────────────────────┐
Z                                       │    Impact on organization   │
A                                       └─────────────────────────────┘
T                                                     │
I                                                     ▼
O                                            Structure
N                                      Programs       Technology
A                                               People
L
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Appendices

Appendix A — Chronology of project tasks

TASK	DETAILS	DATE COMPLETED
July		
Project planning meeting	▪ Robb attended the initial project planning meeting with Walt and Andrea in Chatham to narrow the project goals, roles and responsibilities and action plan	July 3
Develop drafts of survey	▪ Three drafts of the practitioner and administrator survey were completed, submitted to the reference committee for review and then subsequently revised	July 25
Mail out to practitioners and administrators	▪ The final version was mailed out to practitioners and administrators according to the list given to MiS by TCLN ▪ Additionally, the six-page survey was accompanied with a $1 gift certificate to Tim Horton's, to try to further encourage participation	July 26
Develop on-line version of survey	▪ The on-line version was sent to Lori to ensure that it translated successfully electronically and was then sent out to practitioners and administrators as a follow-up to the print version	July 31
Contact network representatives	▪ Network and sector representatives throughout the province were contacted by e-mail and were asked to identify possible best cases for managing change	July 24
Workshop preparation	▪ MiS also began investigating possible locations and dates for the one-day workshop that is to be held in November ▪ A list of conference facilities was obtained from the Chatham-Kent Economic Development office and was used to make initial inquiries	July 31

TASK	DETAILS	DATE COMPLETED
Literature review	▪ Several on-line and print sources were consulted on the topic of change management ▪ Pam Patterson was also contacted, and she indicated that she would fax a list of resources that she thought might be worth reviewing, given the nature of the project ▪ Most information related to organizational change management and not from the perspective of the individual	July 31
Survey analysis and summary	▪ Using results from 21 surveys, the data was collated and entered into tables on an Excel spreadsheet ▪ Simple nominal and percentage calculations were conducted and verified ▪ A summary of the findings was generated for the reference committee meeting on August 27 in Chatham	August 27
Identify possible dates and locations	▪ Using preliminary results from the survey returns, a tentative date of Friday, November 16, 2001, was selected for the workshop ▪ Follow-up with several of the possible locations was made to ensure availability for that date ▪ Based on discussions in the August 27 reference committee meeting, the choice of locations was narrowed to three, and Country View Golf Club was finally selected as the location	September 1
Provincial Best Practices	▪ Network and sector representatives were contacted for the second time ▪ 6-10 possible sites were identified ▪ Telephone interview instrument was designed ▪ Telephone interviews were scheduled ▪ 3 telephone interviews were completed by the end of month	September 28

TASK	DETAILS	DATE COMPLETED
October		
Provincial Best Practices	▪ Completed best practices research ▪ Compiled results from phone interviews ▪ Submitted results to Reference Committee members	October 12
Workshop	▪ Advertised workshop through e-mail notices, mail-out flyer, article in TCLN newsletter ▪ Met with workshop facilitator and Project Manager to confirm workshop agenda and goals ▪ Established, announced and coordinated pre-registration process	October 15
Resource design	▪ Developed outline for workshop resource using information from meeting with facilitator and Project Manager ▪ Submitted outline to Project Manager and Reference Committee for feedback ▪ Designed initial drafts of workshop resource using feedback from Reference Committee	October 31
Workshop	▪ Continued coordination of pre-registration process ▪ With the help of Andrea Dickinson, TCLN Executive Director, further promoted the workshop to TCLN members ▪ Finalized arrangements with Country View Golf Course ▪ Oversaw activities over the course of the workshop ▪ Distributed and collected workshop evaluation forms ▪ Compiled results from evaluation forms and forwarded them to TCLN office	November 26
Workshop resource	▪ Finalized resource using input from reference committee members ▪ Wrote and/or edited all materials ▪ Published resource materials using internal desk-top resources ▪ Arranged printing and production of 24 participant resources (in binder format) ▪ Distributed resources to participants at workshop registration	November 16

December		
Design follow-up survey	▪ Designed first two drafts of survey ▪ Submitted second draft of survey to reference committee for feedback	December 14
Final Report	▪ Developed preliminary outline for final report ▪ Submitted outline to reference committee for feedback	December 10
January		
Complete follow-up survey	▪ Finalized survey using feedback from reference committee members ▪ Distributed survey to workshop participants ▪ Collected returned surveys ▪ Analyzed the data ▪ Reported the findings	January 30
Final Report	▪ Wrote first draft of final report ▪ Delivered final report to reference committee members ▪ Met with reference committee members to obtain feedback ▪ Began second draft of final report	January 31

Appendix B — Member survey

Tri-County Literacy Network
Positive Strategies for Managing Change Survey

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this five-minute survey. The purpose of the survey is threefold:

1. We want to better understand the changes — both literacy and general workplace — that literacy practitioners within the Tri-County area are facing.

2. We also want to identify different best practices and resources that literacy practitioners have used or are using to help them manage change in the workplace so that we can facilitate a sharing of this information among practitioners and administrators throughout our region.

3. And finally, we want to get your suggestions about what should be incorporated into a one-day workshop on managing change and when it should take place.

What is Change?

For the purposes of this project, we are examining change from two perspectives. The first centres on the LBS reforms that have taken agencies from a curriculum-based model to a learner-focused and goal-oriented model. The second is more generic and is concerned with the realities of a rapidly changing and increasingly complex work world.

Instructions

*Note: You have two possible methods for completing this survey. You may complete the paper version and then fax it back to us, **or** you may complete the online version and e-mail it back to us.*

The questions have been divided into three main sections. The first section asks you to identify some of the major changes that you have recently experienced or that you anticipate over the next 12 months. The second section asks you to identify and rate some of the best practices and resources that you are aware of and have used. The final section is designed to get your input about what you would like to see in a one-day workshop on positive strategies for managing change for literacy practitioners in the Tri-County region.

1. Please complete each of the following questions to the best of your ability.
2. Once you have answered the questions, please fax your survey back to MiS Communications at the toll-free number provided at the end of the survey.

or

Complete the survey on-line and e-mail your responses to us.

3. It is important that we have your completed survey returned by August 3, 2001.

4. If you have any questions about the surveyor about the project, please contact Robb MacDonald, the project coordinator, toll-free at 1-877-488-8828.

Section I - Identifying Workplace Changes

1. Over the past few years, reforms introduced by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities have affected the way some agencies operate. Using the rating scale provided, please indicate how stressful it has been for you to introduce the LBS reforms.

Levels of Stress
1 = none   4 = strong
2 = mild   5 = very strong
3 = moderate   6 = cannot evaluate at this time

PROGRAM REFORMS	1	2	3	4	5	6
Learning outcomes						
Demonstration						
Coordinating volunteer tutor programs						
Goal development and goal setting with learners						
Monitoring learner progress						
Common assessment						
Introduction of the information management system						
Technology (e.g., Computer Assisted Learning Software, on-line learning, Internet access, etc.)						
Creating and managing individual training plans						
Attracting new learners						
Developing learning activities appropriate for different learner needs (e.g., cultural backgrounds, learning disabilities)						
Conflicting demands (e.g., documentation vs. instruction)						
Other (please specify)						
Other (please specify)						

2. Over the past several years, some organizations have also reported that other, non-LBS related changes that have affected their operations. Using the rating scale provided, please indicate how difficult it has been for your organization to adjust to the changes listed below.

Levels of Stress
1 = none	4 = strong
2 = mild	5 = very strong
3 = moderate	6 = cannot evaluate at this time

WORKPLACE CHANGES	1	2	3	4	5	6
Individual workload						
Staff turnover						
Relocation						
Decrease in funding						
Different client base						
Technology						
Staff morale issues						
Other (please specify)						

3. Please identify any changes that you anticipate over the next 12 months as a result of program reform (e.g., workplace literacy strategy, mandatory literacy testing). How will these changes affect you and/or your organization?

Anticipated Program Reform changes	Anticipated effects

4. Please identify other changes to your workplace that you anticipate over the next 12 months. How will these changes affect your organization?

Section II - Managing Change - Best Practices & Resources

In this section, we want to learn more about best practices and/or resources you have used to help you and/or your organization manage the changes within your workplace. (Examples of resources might include the use of web sites, videos, workshop materials or books. Examples of best practices might include staff retreats, time management or stress management strategies tailored for your organization.)

5. During the past 12 months, have you or your organization incorporated any best practices and/or resources into your workplace to help manage LBS Reform or general workplace changes?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No (if no, please skip ahead to Question 7)

6. If you answered yes to Question 5, please identify which ones and use the scale to indicate how successful they were/are:

   Levels of Stress
   1 = poor   4 = good
   2 = fair   5 = excellent
   3 = average   6 = cannot evaluate at this time

BEST PRACTICE / RESOURCE	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. Within the next 12 months, do you or your organization plan to incorporate any best practices and/or resources into your workplace to manage change more effectively?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No (if no, please skip ahead to Question 9)

8. If you answered yes, please use the space below to indicate which one(s)

Section III - Positive Strategies for Managing Change Workshop

In November of 2001, Tri-County Literacy Network will be hosting a one-day workshop called Positive Strategies for Managing Change. The first half of the workshop will be devoted to helping participants develop personal strategies for managing change, and the second half of the workshop will address organizational strategies for managing change. We need your feedback to ensure that the workshop accurately reflects the needs of literacy practitioners and administrators throughout our region.

9. The following is a list of topics that we have tentatively planned to include in a workshop for literacy practitioners. Given your experiences, please indicate how valuable you think they would be in the workshop:

Levels of Stress
1 = not at all valuable	4 = very valuable
2 = somewhat valuable	5 = a must!
3 = valuable	6 = not sure

TOPIC	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ways to relieve stress						
Personal strategies to accept change						
Strategies to challenge change						
How to deal with ongoing and rapid change						

10. Please indicate what other topics you would like to see in the workshop that are not listed above:

11. Using a checkmark below the appropriate day, please indicate what day of the week would suit your schedule best for a one-day workshop.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up telephone interview to help us further understand the needs of literacy practitioners around the issue of managing change? If so, please provide your name and work telephone number below:

Name:	**Tel: ( )**
Position:	

That's it! Thank you for feedback.
Now simply fax this to MiS Communications toll-free at 1-888-526-6610
or
e-mail your completed electronic questionnaire to us at
robb@miscommunitv.ca

by August 3rd

Appendix C — Provincial Best Practices question set

Positive Strategies for Managing Change
Best Practices

Introduction

My name is Robb MacDonald. I am an independent consultant working with Tri-County Literacy Network on a project called "Positive Strategies for Managing Change."

As part of this project, TCLN is investigating different best practices and resources in Ontario that literacy practitioners have used or are using to help them manage change in the workplace so that we can facilitate a sharing of this information among practitioners and administrators throughout the TCLN region.

Your name has been provided by⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ .

The interview will take between 30 and 45 minutes and will focus on the following:

1. *The recent changes within your organization — why and what they have been like for you and your organization.*
2. *What measures your organization has used to manage these changes.*
3. *How successful these measures have been.*
4. *What recommendations you would make to others.*

If you do not want to answer any specific question or if you wish to withdraw from the interview for any reason, please just say so, and I will conclude the interview at your request and the results will not be used. I will not be tape-recording this interview; however, I will be taking notes. Is this okay with you?

Finally, for some questions I will be repeating back your answers to you, just to ensure that what I have recorded accurately reflects what you want recorded.

Background Information

What is Change?

For the purposes of this project, we are examining change from two perspectives. The first centres around the LBS reforms that have taken agencies from a curriculum-based model to a learner-focused and goal-oriented model. The second is more generic and is concerned with the realities of a rapidly changing and increasingly complex work world.

What is a Best Practice or Resource?

For the purposes of this project, a best practice or resource is a systematic approach to managing change that could be replicated elsewhere. (Examples of

resources might include the use of web sites, videos, workshop materials or books. Examples of best practices might include staff retreats, time management or stress management strategies tailored for your organization.)

Section 1 — Interviewee information

Name:	Tel: ( )
Organization:	
Position/Role:	

Section 2 — Recent History

In this section, I want to learn about the changes that have occurred within your organization.

1. Over the past two years, what types of changes has your organization experienced?

> Program Reform

> Non-LBS related Changes:

2. What have been the effects of these changes on the organization?

Section 3 — Best Practices and Resources

In this section, I want to learn more about how your organization has managed the changes you described, especially from a staff-centred perspective.

3. Please list and describe the resources and/or best practices that your organization has used to manage changes.

	Best Practice/Resource
Name/general description?	
LBS or non-LBS?	
What areas does it address? (demonstrations, conflicting demands, morale, individual workload)	
What sectors is it most appropriate for? (e.g., college, community-based, school board or Laubach)	
What levels is it most appropriate for? (i.e., Levels 1 through 5 of the Learning Outcomes Matrix)	
Why is it useful?	
Using a scale of 1 to 5,	**Levels of Success** 1 = poor 4 = good 2 = fair 5 = excellent 3 = average 6 = cannot evaluate at this time
How can we find out more about it? (website, publisher, etc.)	
Other comments	

Best Practices	
Name/general description?	
LBS or non-LBS?	
What areas does it address? (demonstrations, conflicting demands, morale, individual workload)	
What sectors is it most appropriate for?	
What levels is it most appropriate for?	
Why is it useful?	
Using a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate how successful it has been.	**Levels of Success** 1 = poor 4 = good 2 = fair 5 = excellent 3 = average 6 = cannot evaluate at this time
How can we find out more about it? (website, publisher, etc.)	
Other comments or suggestions about positive coping mechanisms that you would like to add?	

Would you be willing to be listed as a contact person in the event that someone is interested in the approach you are using?

        Yes   No

Name:	
Position:	
Organization:	
Tel: ( )	
Fax: ( )	
Address:	
E-mail:	

Appendix D — Workshop resource

Tri-County Literacy Network gracefully acknowledges Pam Patterson and the Ontario Literacy Coalition, who have each given TCLN permission to reproduce segments of their respective materials from the workshop resource the purposes of this final report. Further reproduction of these materials without the respective permission of the Tri-County Literacy Network, Pam Patterson and the Ontario Literacy Coalition may constitute copyright infringements.

Positive Strategies for Managing Change

READ — Tri-County Literacy Network — Supporting Literacy Programs
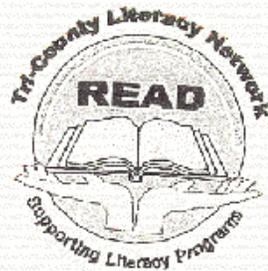
Friday,
November
16, 2001

Country
View Golf
Course

Supported by
National
Literacy
Secretariat

This booklet belongs to:

Positive Strategies for Managing Change

November 16, 2001

Country View Golf Course

Hosted and prepared by:

Tri-County Literacy Network
120 Wellington St. West, Federal Building - P.O. Box 404
Chatham, ON   N7M 5K5

Facilitated by:

Pam Patterson, M.A.

POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CHANGE

TRI-COUNTY LITERACY NETWORK

November 16, 2001

AGENDA

1. INTRODUCTION
2. OBJECTIVES OF THE DAY
3. WHAT MAKES MANAGING CHANGE DIFFICULT?
4. UNDERSTANDING HOW <u>YOU</u> DEAL WITH CHANGE
5. HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS (COPING MECHANISMS)

LUNCH

6. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS
7. HOW TO EXPLAIN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
8. REVIEWING BEST PRACTICES
    - What isn't working
    - What could be done differently
9. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN
10. FUTURE TRAINING NEEDS AND PRIORITIZING
11. SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Tri-County Literacy Network's Positive Strategies for Managing Change Workshop!

In this one-day session, you and Pam Patterson will be exploring personal strategies to managing change, with practical suggestions for managing stress and for dealing with ongoing and rapid change. In the afternoon, you will focus on managing change from an organizational standpoint. Included in the afternoon discussions will be a review of several best practices and/or resources used by other LBS programs in Ontario.

Pam is an expert in mediation and conflict resolution, with over 20 years of experience in training and consulting. She has a Master's degree in Sociology and has been appointed Master Trainer with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Some of her previous clients include the Canadian Mental Health Association, the United Way, the United Church of Canada and the Ministry of Health.

The origins of this workshop go back to a Network consultation survey in 1999 that asked members to identify their top field development priorities. Participants in that consultation reported that what they wanted most were strategies to help them manage changes associated with Program Reform and change associated with an increasingly complex work world in general.

It was through this consultation that TCLN submitted a proposal to the National Literacy Secretariat seeking support to develop and host the Positive Strategies to Managing Change.

Participant Workbook

The workbook has been arranged into four sections:

1. In the first section of the workbook you will find resources to accompany Pam's facilitation.

2. In the second section, we have included brief descriptions of four best practices that have been reported to us through telephone interviews.

3. In the third section, we have included additional resource material on stress management and organizational change.

4. And finally, we have included two workshop and resource evaluation forms. We ask that you spend at least ten minutes completing these before you leave today so that we can continue to provide valuable sessions and materials to TCLN members.

Have a fun day!

POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CHANGE

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Elements that Affect our Response to Change

A. <u>What Doesn't Work</u>

- Change without prior consultation
- Change for the sake of change
- Forced change
- Change that doesn't make sense
- Change that doesn't acknowledge existing individual responsibilities
- Change that is crisis-oriented

When change doesn't work well it results in:

- Perceived loss of power
- Lack of stability
- Resistance
- Denial
- Shock
- Anger
- Sense of vulnerability
- Disruption
- Chaos

B. <u>What Works Well</u>

- When system prepares for change
- When individuals have contributed to the process
- When individuals have access to information related to change
- When two-way communication channels are open
- When individuals become committed to, and involved in change

When change works well it results in:

- Reduced stress
- Change is welcomed
- A sense of mutual respect
- A sense of being valued
- A feeling of being taken seriously
- A sense of control

C. <u>Even when change is well planned, difficulties can arise due to personal beliefs</u>

These negative beliefs speak to change, automatically creating:

- Confusion
- Fear of the unknown
- Loss of control
- Fear of risk-taking
- Fear of taking chances
- Fear of failure
- Loss of comfort / routine

The lack of <u>power</u> and <u>control</u> in the face of change <u>frightens</u> people.

PRACTICING PERSONAL CHANGE

In preparation for your Personal Change Plan, record the areas that you are going to concentrate on:

■

■

■

■

Your selection should be based on the following criteria:

- Change is being demanded in this area by an internal or external catalyst
- Change will be a matter of adopting new ways, not variations, in habit patterns
- The change can be implemented fairly quickly (within a week or two)

Use the *Personal Change Plan* handout to plan your changes with your colleague. This plan will also be the basis for reviewing your changes when you next meet.

PERSONAL CHANGE PLAN			
AREA FOR CHANGE: _____	How do you feel about it?	In what ways, will your personal resistance surface?	Where and how do you foresee resistance from others?
What specific actions can you take to make changes?			

CHARACTERISTICS
OF A
CHANGE-RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

- ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- ABILITY TO HANDLE AMBIGUITY

- BEING INNOVATIVE

- TAKING RISKS

- TEAM ETHOS

- FLEXIBLE BUT ROBUST SYSTEMS

- ABILITY TO HANDLE CONFLICT

ACTION PLAN

CHARACTERISTIC: _____

| **Personal Action** **to make change come about?** | |
| **What can be done in the organization** **To make change come about?** | |

TIPS FOR MANAGING CHANGE

Implications for carrying out change:

Managers should recognize the following:

- The need to be clear about why you are changing
- The need to be clear about what you are changing
- The need to be clear about how you are going to change
- The need to visualize change and to have a picture of how it can be
- The need for support in change
- The need to build commitment

Facing change can be made easier if:

- You communicate with others
- You create a change plan
- You build up a network of people who are changing
- You publicize the results of change once you are sure it is working, so as to encourage yourself and others

SIX STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL CHANGE MANAGEMENT

1. Describe why change is needed and the specific changes that are required.

2. Ask for reactions.

3. Clear up any misunderstandings or questions, and acknowledge any objections.

4. Ask for ideas on how to make the change go as smoothly as possible.

5. Ask for support and commitment for the change.

6. Follow through by monitoring the plan and reinforcing progress.

MAKING CHANGE IN ORGANIZATIONS

Research has been done on factors that affect the implementation of change. Results identify several key items that can act as predictors of eventual success or failure.

The factors can be used as a checklist to assess where the trouble spots might be in programs or projects that never get off the drawing board, or that fail to get implemented.

NEED FOR THE CHANGE

Is there a real need for change? If there is, how many people recognize that what is being proposed is better than what they have now? People will support something that meets an important need. If they don't see the relevance of the proposed change, its significance or its benefits, then they will likely withhold their support, or they will resist.

HOW THE CHANGE IS ADOPTED

Is the process used to adopt change a fair one? Do a majority of the key actors in the organization support it, and were enough people involved in the decision-making? Sometimes new initiatives are pushed through without enough discussion, or with only a few people present. If enough of the important players are involved and the decision-making process is allowed thorough discussion, then problems about how the initiative was adopted will be minimal. However, if things moved too quickly or the initiative lacked real support, then the necessary commitment to implement will not be there.

THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE CHANGE ITSELF

People are more likely to implement a new program or change if:

- It is simple to understand
- It is seen to be better than what currently exists
- It fits with the organization's ways of going about its business
- It can be tried out first on a limited basis before being implemented across the whole organization

Conversely, resistance will be encountered when a proposed change:

- Is complex
- Is not perceived to be any better than the status quo
- Differs from how the organization normally operates
- Has to be adopted without first being tested out on a limited basis

SCHEDULING AND TIMING

Is there enough time to do this properly? Is the timing right, hitting people when they are most receptive?

Too often organizations are too ambitious, trying to do too much in too little time. People will more likely support a change that has just the right amount of urgency, without the panic that can leave them frustrated and upset.

TRAINING

Do the people who are expected to implement the change have the skills to do it? Is training or one-to-one assistance available for those who need it? Organizations that provide training for their people are more likely to have enough skilled people around to implement change. A well-planned change will usually include a way of providing the necessary skills to those who are expected to make the change happen.

LEADERSHIP

Does the leadership of the organization actively support the proposed change? Does the leadership demonstrate by their actions that the proposed change is important? If the formal and informal leaders of an organization support a change and actively lobby for its implementation, then the change will more likely occur. If they don't show support or merely pay lip service to it, then the change will have trouble being implemented.

INFORMAL RELATIONSHIPS

Is there a climate of openness and respect in the organization? If people enjoy each other's company and get along well together, then problems or resistance to new initiatives can be worked through without serious divisiveness. If relationships between people are strained, however, their new initiatives can spark mistrust and resistance.

OVERLOAD

Is there too much on the plate? Is the organization trying to do too much with its limited resources? Overloading can cause a breakdown of effort and motivation. If staff feel too much is being heaped on them, then things get left undone or are done poorly. Organizations that can balance their activities, and make sensible decisions about what they can and can't accomplish, will more likely be able to implement those initiatives they select.

COOPERATION

Is there harmony or animosity between staff units? Is the system seen as an adversary or an ally? Where cooperation exists, then new initiatives are more easily discussed, amended and adopted. Where cooperation does not exist, then new initiatives often become the scapegoat for acrimonious dealings.

TRACK RECORD

Does the organization have a good track record at implementing new ideas? Does the organization have a positive self-image, or a negative one? Success breeds success. Staff that have built up a healthy track record of achievements will probably see themselves more positively, and will have an easier time bringing about more change. Staff that have stumbled and fallen before, are less likely to stick their necks out implementing new products. They will probably play it safer.

Sometimes implementing a change isn't in the cards despite the best planning. It just may not be meant to be. Organizations that develop contingency plans are more likely to be able to adapt when the rules of the game are changed halfway through.

HELPING WITH CHANGE

Mary Baetz

Anytime we face change in our life, we are confronted with the need to endure a transition from what was, to what is, and all transitions provoke a defense response in people. Even positive changes require us to give up something with which we are familiar.

To manage the feelings that emerge during transitions we need the opportunity to mourn the passing of the old way so that we can be free to accept the new. For transitions that are predictable, we as a society have developed some methods to do this. For example, we have 'stag night' for moving from bachelorhood to married life, baby showers to prepare for the move to parenthood, and wakes to celebrate those who have died, and to prepare those who are left for a new life. The recurrent theme in all of these is the focus on celebrating the good of what was, giving us a chance to say goodbye to a part of our lives that will never be again. These rituals allow us to 'let go' so that we can move on.

Changes we didn't expect or choose to make (such as moves to an unmarried state through divorce, or changes in employment status or type) have fewer or no rituals attached. So we go through the transition with little opportunity to 'let go' of our past. Thus, we may find ourselves of two minds about the change — unable to accept the good parts of the change just because it is different, and wishing for a past that can't be recaptured. We find ourselves harbouring anger and feeling unusually tired and withdrawn. We may resist even reasonable requests and sometimes view our own behaviours with dismay.

When a major change confronts a group, there is the possibility that they will reinforce each other's feelings. This happens when a group faces transitions resulting from shifts in strategic direction or in leadership, from mergers with groups that previously were seen as competitors, or during a large-scale introduction of technology. Failure to make sure the group has the opportunity to mourn the loss will leave many members unable to move forward at the speed that is desired.

Feelings experienced during transition are similar to, though less intense than, those felt when facing death. We have come to accept the reality of the five stages of coming to terms with death — stages first identified by Kubler-Ross. The stages were portrayed in the movie "All That Jazz" and describes the movement through our pain:

1. Denial and Isolation — the **no, not me** phase
2. Anger — the **why me** phase
3. Bargaining — the **OK, but let me have one wish first** phase
4. Depression — the **mourning for what was and will be gone** phase
5. Acceptance — the **achieving of inner and outer peace** phase

We know that similar feelings are experienced during times of major organizational or personal change. The stages and some of the typical symptoms are outlined below:

1. Shock and Denial — refusal to accept that the change is final; refusal to accept that we have to act in new ways. "If I ignore it, it will go away". We often see that in people who have been given notice that their jobs will disappear — right up to the very end they may make no move to prepare for the day of reckoning.

2. Anger — having acknowledged that a change is demanded, the natural response is to fight it, to preserve the existing. We challenge to see if we can alter the decision in any way and to see if we can have influence. The actions signify the attempt to regain control of one's own life.

3. Bargaining — attempting to negotiate a less painful outcome. "If I agree to use your system, you won't make me report to a new person, will you?"

4. Depression — when it appears there is no way to avoid or bargain with change, feelings of fatigue and actions that indicate an "I don't care anymore" attitude. This can be very serious during a major organizational change as many people may become ill.

5. Acceptance — the recognition of the new order of things and the 'buy-in'. "OK, you guys, that's how it is; now, how can I win in this situation?" This represents acceptance of the new status quo and the ability to move forward.

As managers, we are both the initiators of change and the recipients of change brought on from outside or above. Thus, we go through these stages ourselves during times of change and we experience the symptoms as our people go through them as well. We need to see that anger is useful and the 'premature acceptance' may, in fact, be a sign of being stuck in the depression stage. Just when we think we are winning, in fact we are losing our people!

To help people accept change, we should encourage ways to celebrate the past (that is, to help them let go). We must keep the lines of communication open — we need to know where each of our staff is in the process of moving through the stages and provide the right responses at the right time. For example, when a person is in the Anger stage, and is testing his or her ability to influence the new system, help the person find a way to influence something meaningful. This way they see that they can achieve some control and can function within the rules of the new game. Meeting anger with management inflexibility will convince the

people that they cannot function in the new system and will cause them to channel their energy into seeking a new game entirely.

We always seem to meet each management challenge with the urging "communicate more, make sure everyone has the facts". But in this case, the old advice is still legitimate. Find out what people are thinking; how they are interpreting the decisions and actions of management. Talk to them. You'll be amazed to discover how differently people can interpret your actions. Your action to "relieve the staff person of administrative trivia and help them get back to the job they love" could have been interpreted by the person as a reduction in status and responsibility and further evidence of your harmful intentions.

As people, whether managers or staff, we have certain responsibilities as well. First, get to know what is going on in your body — be aware of how you are feeling and how much stress you are under. Take action to manage the stress of change. Now is not the time to give up jogging. Don't add to your stress by introducing other change — wait a while before giving up smoking or buying a new house. Get to know what is going on in the new situation — keep requesting information. Seek out people who seem to be further along, and find out what information has helped them come to grips with the new.

The pace of change is increasing. We might as well learn how to cope and how to help those around us manage transitions. We can do it better if we recognize the reality of how we feel about what is happening and accept there is a reason to manage change.

POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CHANGE

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Best Practices

As part of the process for identifying positive organizational coping strategies, we have asked other LBS programs what methods and resources they have used to cope with Literacy Reform changes.

The following are four sample best practices that may be of interest to you.

BEST PRACTICE #1

Who sponsors it?	Georgian College LBS Program
What is it called?	LBS Steering Committee
What do they do?	The committee is made up of between eight and ten practitioners and administrators. Everybody from all the sites is invited to attend the meetings which happen every two months. The meetings are held in Barrie and last approximately four to five hours. The goals of the steering committee are: • To facilitate communication among LBS delivery sites. • To share workload an-d to avoid duplication of effort. • To share information and knowledge regarding implementation of LBS Program Reform.
Why is it useful?	It helps practitioners and administrators brainstorm ideas. The committee has gone beyond using it being a venting session. They use the time to effectively brainstorm ideas and determine what has to be done next.

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BEST PRACTICE #2

Who sponsors it?	St. Clair Catholic District School Board
What is it called?	No specific name
What do they do?	The school board offers two programs in partnership with Community Living Association using volunteers from Community Living to help instruct adults. Because many of the learners do not meet the minimum Level 1 requirements, traditional volunteer tutors cannot be used. To overcome this obstacle, the school board and CLA have created two models. In the first, the Pre-Level classes are held in the same building and at the same time as the Level 1 classes. This enables the CLA volunteers working with the Pre-Level learners to easily access the literacy instructors. In the second model, the Pre-Level learners and Level 1 learners are in the class at the same time.
Why is it useful?	It is designed to specifically address the learning needs of developmentally challenged learners who might not otherwise have the learning opportunities because they do not qualify for LBS level 1 instruction. It also represents a good working relationship between the School Board and Community Living Association.

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BEST PRACTICE #3

Who sponsors it?	Saugeen Literacy
What is it called?	*FOCUS Groups* (**F**inding, **O**rganizing, **C**hallenging, and **U**nderstanding **S**elf)
What do they do?	Through the focus groups, the Adult Learning staff work with Ontario Works (OW) and Job Connect staff to develop and deliver five-week training programs for hard-to-serve OW clients.
	In the first pilot session, 12 adult learners were enrolled in the program. Two instructors work with between eight and 12 people, most within Levels 1 to 3.
	The program is divided into 30 modules covering training priorities such as:
	• Emotions, change and stress • Time management and organization • Self-identification, self-marketing, skills awareness and self-esteem • Appearance, presentation and personal hygiene • Money, budgeting, accessing debt counselling • Goals, planning and motivation • Knowledge of and utilization of community supports • Effective communication and conflict management • Nutrition • Personal and group issues that arise before, during and after the training workshops
Why is it useful?	• *FOCUS Groups* provides a venue for consistent contact hours — after five weeks, it can provide up to 900 hours, while being well within MTCU mandate. • It means that the organizations are more visible, locally and within the province. • It provides full-time employment for 2 people. • It also forces all organizations to scrutinize what resources they have and what they need.

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BEST PRACTICE #4

Who sponsors it?	Barrie Literacy Council
What is it called?	Goal Directed Assessment: Demonstrations and Samples
What do they do?	The resource is designed to be a tool for initial assessments, for ongoing assessments and exit assessments. It focuses particularly on Reading and Writing, Levels 1 to 3. Included in the resource are the following: • Skills checklists for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and numeracy. These checklists are based on the Learning Outcomes Matrix produced by MTCU and the Level Descriptions produce by OLC. • Summary charts to show the progression of reading and writing skills through the Levels • Sample materials and activities for the Levels. • Assessment tools presented in demonstration format.
Why is it useful?	• It provides more direction for the tutor and the assessor and, ultimately, for the student. • It also reduces stress of the tutor and the assessor because there is a pool of exercises and samples to choose from.

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POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CHANGE

MANAGING STRESS

What is Stress?

Although there are many different definitions of stress, a simple one is presented below:

> *Stress is our body's physical, mental and chemical reactions to circumstances that frighten, excite, confuse, endanger or irritate us.*

Timm and Peterson further define it as a state of mental or emotional imbalance caused by perceived difference between a person's capabilities and what is expected of that person. In short, it is our body's way of adapting to change or pressures. It is also unavoidable and part of our daily lives.

When you think of stress, what do you think of? Does your definition of stress involve both good stress — called *eustress* — and bad stress - called *duress*?

Eustress often inspires us to meet a challenge with energy and enthusiasm. It is through these positive experiences that we grow. However, when stress becomes too much, the effect is a negative one. Instead of taking control of a situation, it appears the situation has taken control of us.

Stress can come from both internal and external pressures as shown in the diagram below. (Use the two blank arrows to add your own categories.)
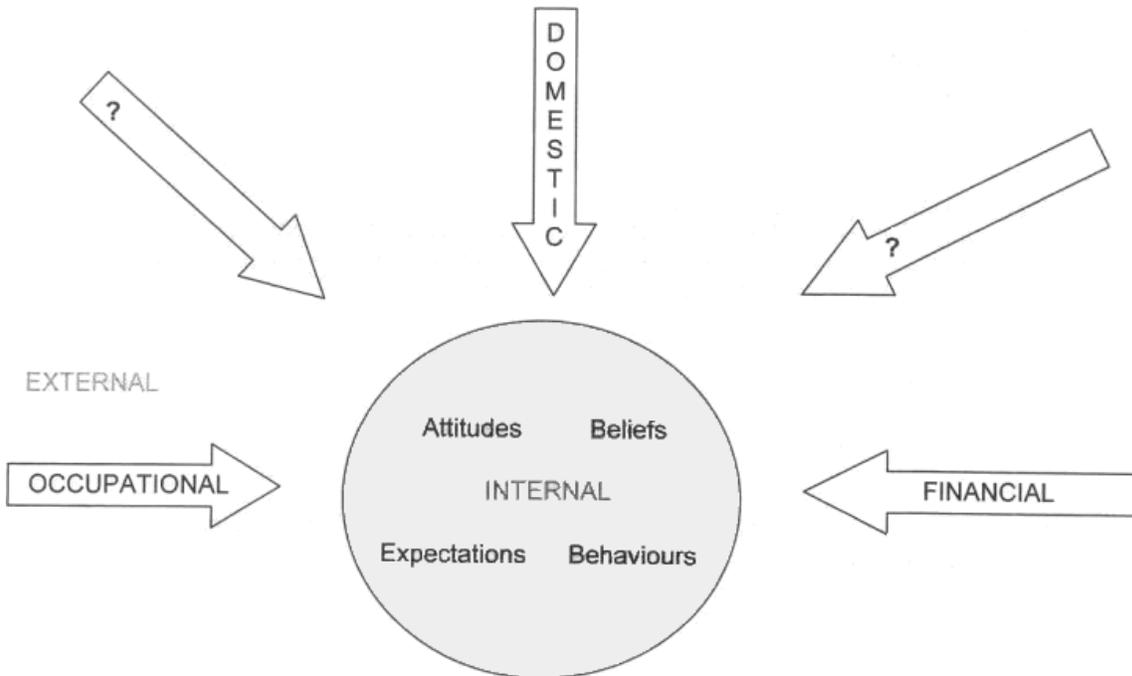
Signs and Symptoms of Stress

Because stress is part of our everyday existence, we would expect to experience symptoms of stress in our daily lives, but with only limited impact. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, our bodies undergo a three-stage stress response in reaction to stressful events.

Stage 1 — Mobilizing Energy

In this first stage, your body reacts to a stressor by adopting the fight or flight posture. Some of the symptoms in this stage include:

- Increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Rapid breathing
- Sweating
- Butterflies in your stomach

Stage 2 — Consuming Energy Stores

If the event or stressor continues, your body will react by releasing stored sugars and fats from its resources. Some of the typical symptoms include:

- Feeling pressured
- Anxiety
- Memory loss
- Increased onset of acute illnesses (colds, flu)
- Temporary irritability
- Upset stomach
- Headaches
- Muscle tension
- Temporary changes in sleeping or eating habits

Stage 3 — Draining Energy Stores

If the source of stress continues, the effects can be much more serious. In this stage, the body cannot produce sufficient energy resources to combat the stress. Below are several complications associated with uncontrolled stress:

- Ulcers
- Allergies
- High blood pressure
- Heart attacks
- Stroke

Additionally, depression and occupational burnout are two complications that can result from unmediated stress.

Everyone has a different stress threshold and perception of what is stressful. Consider the case of two different people experiencing the same changes at work. For one, the changes are welcome, but, for the other, the changes are not perceived as positive and are therefore more stressful.

Although each person will manifest stress in different ways, experts generally agree that there are typical physical, mental, emotional and relational symptoms of stress. Using the table below, check off those symptoms which apply to you and try to determine whether they are stress-related.

✓ Physical	✓ Mental	✓ Emotional	✓ Relational
_ Appetite change _ Headaches _ Tension _ Fatigue _ Trouble sleeping _ Weight change _ Frequent colds/flu _ Muscle aches _ Digestive upset _ Pounding heart _ Accident prone _ Teeth grinding _ Rash _ Foot tapping _ Finger drumming _ Increased alcohol, drug or tobacco use	_ Forgetfulness _ Dull senses _ Poor concentration _ Low productivity _ Negative attitude _ Confusion _ Lethargy _ Overly active mind _ No new ideas _ Boredom _ Procrastination	_ Anxiety _ Frustration _ The "blues" _ Mood swings _ Bad temper _ Nightmares _ Crying spells _ Grumpy _ Depression _ Nervous laugh _ Easily discouraged _ Little laughter	_ Isolation _ Intolerance _ Loneliness _ Lashing out _ Withdrawing _ Lower libido _ Nagging _ Distrust _ Lack of intimacy _ Family problems

How did you do? According to Heart Health, if you have checked off more than several of these symptoms, and they are stress-related, it may be time to develop your own stress management action plan.

Causes of Stress

From the list below, check off which life events you have experienced during the past 12 months. Check the point value for each of the events you have checked. Under the My Score column, record the score. (For example, if you got married in the last 12 months, you would record 50 points in the My Score column.) At the end, add up your total score and refer to the legend below to check your stress level.

Life Event	That's me (✔)	Point Value	My Score
Death of spouse		100	
Loss of religious faith		100	
Divorce		75	
Marriage separation		65	
Jail term		65	
Loss of reputation		60	
Death of a close family member (not spouse)		60	
Loss of self-confidence		60	
Personal injury or illness		50	
Marriage		50	
Fired at work		50	
Marital reconciliation		50	
Retirement		45	
Change in health of family member		45	
Pregnancy		40	
Sexual difficulties		40	
Gain a new family member		40	
Business readjustment		40	
Change in residence		40	
Change in financial state		35	
Death of a close friend		35	
Change to different line of work		35	
Increase in number of arguments with spouse		35	
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan		30	
Taking over major financial responsibility		30	
Change in responsibilities at work		30	

Son or daughter leaving home		30	
Trouble with in-laws		30	
Outstanding personal achievement		30	
Change in living conditions		25	
Trouble with the boss		25	
Change in church activities		20	
Change in work hours or conditions		20	
Change in sleeping habits		20	
Change in social activities		15	
Vacation		15	
Christmas		15	
Minor violations of the law		15	
Other		15	

1 — 150	151 — 199	200 — 299	300 plus
No significant problem	Mild crisis	Moderate crisis	Major crisis

These scores do not necessarily indicate that you will experience a crisis. With appropriate coping strategies, even high levels of stress can be managed.

This includes seeking help when needed

Coping with stress

Clearly, symptoms of stress that do not abate need to be addressed. The next question is how? If you identified one or more stressors on the previous page, it's time to plan a strategy to eliminate or accept them.

For each source of stress, ask yourself the following two key questions.

1. *How important is this issue to me?*
2. *How much control do I have over the issue?*

Using the matrix on the next page, place each of your stressors in one of the following four quadrants.

1. **Uncontrollable-Unimportant** — Whatever you identify in this quadrant is neither important nor controllable. Therefore, you should not be spending much time or energy worrying about these issues.

2. **Controllable-Unimportant** — Issues or stressors that fall into this category should not receive too much time and energy because you have identified that they are not important. However, because they are controllable, you can effect some kind of change.

3. **Uncontrollable-Important** — These stressors are often the most frustrating because they appear not to be controllable. The first thing to do is ask yourself "Am I sure that I have no control over this issue?" If one or more remain uncontrollable, you will need to spend some time identifying strategies for coping with the stress.

4. **Controllable-Important** — These issues are the ones that should demand the most of your time and energy. Because they are controllable, acceptance is not necessarily the method of coping. For these you will want to develop your action plan.

UNCONTROLLABLE-IMPORTANT	CONTROLLABLE-IMPORTANT
UNCONTROLLABLE-IMPORTANT	CONTROLLABLE-IMPORTANT

IMPORTANCE

CONTROLLABILITY