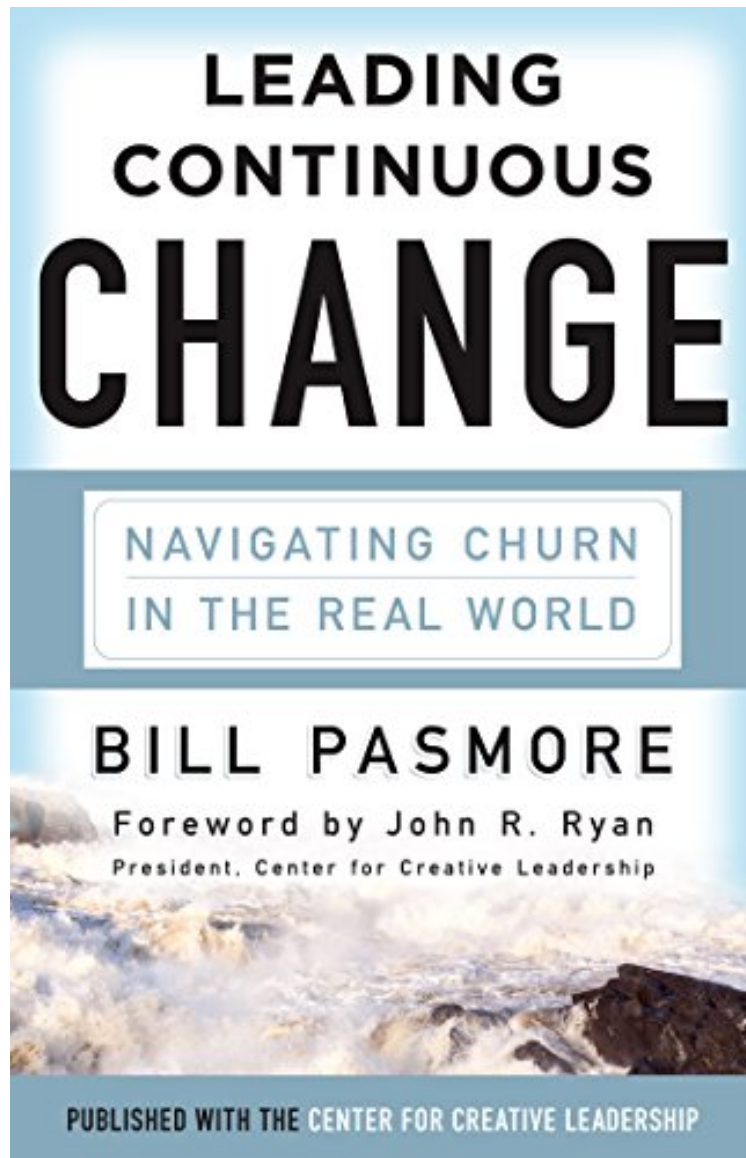


[Download] Leading Continuous Change: Navigating Churn in the Real World

Leading Continuous Change: Navigating Churn in the Real World

Bill Pasmore

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Most change efforts fail because most change methods are built to deal with single challenges in a nice, neat, linear way. But leaders know that today, pressures for change don't come at you one at a time; they come all at once. It's like riding a roller coaster: sudden drops, jarring turns, anxious climbs into the unknown. Drawing on his years of experience at the Center for Creative Leadership and Columbia University, Bill Pasmore offers a four-part model and four mindsets that allow leaders to deal with multiple changes simultaneously without drowning in the churn. The first step, Pasmore says, is to Discover which external pressures for change are the most necessary to address. The key here is to think fewer; step away from the buffet of possibilities and pinpoint the highest-impact options. Then you need to Decide how many change efforts your organization can handle. Here the mindset is to think scarcer; you have only so many people and so many resources, so how do you best use them? Once you've figured that out, it's time to Dom; and here you want to think faster. Streamline processes and engage in rapid prototyping so you can learn quickly and cost-effectively. The last step is to Discern what worked and what didn't, so think smarter; develop metrics, identify trends, and make sure learnings are disseminated throughout the organization. For each stage of the process, Pasmore offers detailed advice, practical tools, and real-world examples. This book is a comprehensive guide to navigating change the way it happens now.

Idquo;Organizational change tends to fall apart under the weight of its own grandiose goals, chaotic initiatives, and crushing complexity. There is true wisdom; drawn from Bill Pasmore's forty years of research and personal experience; in the underlying simplicity of his message: lquo;Think fewer. Think scarcer. Think faster. Think smarter.'rdquo;mdash;Mark Nadler, Principal and cofounder, Nadler Advisory ServicesIdquo;Reasons abound for why so many organization change efforts fail, but one of the most important is that leaders soon discover that getting the change process right is very difficult. Bill Pasmore provides helpful measurements and case examples that can raise the percentage rate for success well beyond where we remain today, at a dismal 30 percent.rdqquo;mdash;W. Warner Burke, Edward Lee Thorndike Professor of Psychology and Education, Teachers College, Columbia UniversityIdquo;In this outstanding and very readable book, Bill Pasmore shows why conventional approaches to leading change don't work and provides new insights and practical guidelines for leading systemic change.rdqquo;mdash;Michael Beer, Professor Emeritus, Harvard Business School; cofounder and Chairman, Center for Higher Ambition Leadership; and cofounder and Director, TruePointIdquo;The high failure rate for organizational change efforts tells me that the so-called experts really don't know how to manage change. But Bill Pasmore does, and here he provides what leaders in every sector at every level desperately need: a trove of practical advice, a tested playbook, and the inspiring assurance that complexity truly can bring out the best in us.rdqquo; mdash;Vice Admiral Cutler Dawson, USN (Ret.), President and CEO, Navy Federal Credit UnionIdquo;Bill Pasmore has again leveraged his significant experience in working with real-world organizations facing complex challenges. He provides a clear and compelling framework to guide leaders who are responsible for successfully executing change in today's environment.rdqquo;nbsp;mdash;Vance Tang, Director, Comfort Systems USA and American Woodmark, and former President and CEO, KONE Inc.About the AuthorBill Pasmore is a senior vice president and global organizational practice leader for the Center for Creative Leadership, which annually provides executive education to more than 20,000 individuals and 2,000 organizations, including more than 80 of the Fortune 100 companies. He is also a professor of practice of organization and leadership at Columbia University and was formerly a partner with Oliver Wyman Delta Consulting, part of the MMC Corporation. He is a consultant to CEOs of global Fortune 1000 firms on change, leadership, senior teams, and organization design and is a frequent speaker at corporate events and conferences.Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.ForewordWHEN I WAS IN MY EARLY TWENTIES , the US Navy taught me how to fly airplanes. It took considerable study and work, as well as great coaches. Under their direction it was not long before my fellow rookie pilots and I were mastering takeoffs, landings, formation flying, and all the complex steps in between. Then they presented the next challenge: landing on aircraft carriers.If you have never tried to do this, I'll tell you what an aircraft carrier looks like from 20,000 feet: pretty darn small. After a couple weeks of intense practice and feedback from our coaches, the moment of truth arrived: it was time to actually land on an aircraft carrier. That meant there was no room for error. Your only option was to bring the plane down exactly right.Certainly, we trained hard for that moment. But in all honesty, no amount of practice on a runway can prepare you for landing on an aircraft carrier at sea. You have to account for shifting winds and the fact that the ship is rocking in the water, not to mention the tiny landing strip you're targeting. If you are planning to pull this off, you need to adapt and react; very, very quickly.As I meet with the leaders of the many businesses, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and educational institutions that the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) is privileged to serve around the world, it strikes me that they are trying to do something quite similar to; and ultimately far more difficult than; landing on an aircraft carrier. They are trying to guide their organizations through an era of complexity and change that is unfolding at unprecedented speed, and

finding the right place to land takes all the vision, skill, and courage they can muster. Like US Navy pilots soaring high above the ocean, they have no room for error. These executives need to get it exactly right. Their employees, clients, and communities are counting on that. Yet all too often, disaster strikes. Research shows that 50 to 70 percent of organizational change initiatives fail, wasting untold sums of talent, money, productivity, and opportunity. That is the story of the doomed DaimlerChrysler and AOL-Time Warner mergers and the disintegration of Polaroid. Even companies with very impressive track records, like Procter Gamble and Walmart, have had to exit some countries where their usual recipe for success did not work. Over the years in executive leadership roles with the US Navy, the State University of New York, and the Center for Creative Leadership, I have attempted to lead through the kinds of complexity that Bill Pasmore writes about in this book, and his guidance is right on the mark. Change initiatives fail, fundamentally, because leaders lack sufficient focus and a comprehensive plan. And that's usually because we are too consumed with the crisis of the day to take the necessary time to pause and reflect on the broader, deeper factors that will really determine longer-term results. As we say at CCL, leaders need to slow down to speed up. And as with US Navy pilots, they need a great coach who can show them how to do that. Bill is that coach, and in this book he generously distills the remarkable wisdom he has gained over 40 years of researching, teaching, and consulting on change. For the better part of a decade, Bill has been a colleague of mine at CCL, where he has assisted numerous clients globally; many of them in the Fortune 500; with successfully navigating the complexities of change. His opening advice for clients essentially boils down to this: check your ego at the door. The fact is that almost no one has done a great job of figuring out the intricacies of leading through continuous change, in large part because there's not a predictable formula for it. Every change initiative demands a customized approach that must first be created and then constantly adjusted as conditions evolve. Bill cannot offer the Easy Button that the iconic Staples advertising campaign made popular, but in this book he does deliver an invaluable four-step framework for leading change. His emphasis on Discovering, Deciding, Doing, and Discerning offers a superb starting point for mapping out change initiatives in organizations of every size and type in any sector. As a member of several corporate boards, I have learned the importance of stepping back and looking at the larger reality of what's happening in a business environment, which makes it possible to help leaders see things that they might ordinarily miss because they are too focused on narrow objectives. The process Bill describes equips every leader to take the stance of a board member, of someone who cares deeply about the success of the organization and is thus willing to challenge conventional thinking in search of bolder and smarter alternatives. While leading change is the kind of topic that can easily elicit theoretical responses, Bill remains eminently practical, breaking the extremely challenging process of change into manageable increments that make the seemingly impossible finally approachable. And that is a welcome gift because the sooner business leaders understand and experiment with the principles of leading change, the sooner they can build better, more sustainable businesses for the benefit of everyone. Bill's trenchant insights, applied by the governments, NGOs, and educational institutions that are just as critical to the health of society, will help us build a better world, too. John R. Ryan, President and CEO, Center for Creative Leadership, March 2015