



# Insperity®



THE INSPERITY GUIDE TO

*Leading through*

**CHANGE**

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leadership**

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FORGING  
*New*  
PATHS





Greek philosopher Heraclitus is known for saying

**“The only thing that is constant is change,”**

a phrase that will ring true with any business leader. Time may change the landscape you’re used to, but if you are prepared to blaze new trails, you will still be successful.

In this guide, we’ll discuss how you can prepare yourself and your team to navigate the peaks and valleys of change initiatives. Effective leadership can make the difference between a successful journey or one that fails, ultimately impacting your business’s competitiveness and long-term success.

# Trailblazing Leadership

## Importance of effective leadership during periods of change

As a leader, being properly prepared for change, whether planned or unplanned, is key. This way, you can help your business adapt and overcome in any business climate.

Solid leadership paired with change management can help employees better understand why change happens and boost their dedication when adopting fresh initiatives. And if it becomes turbulent, you're the one employees will look to for motivation. Stable leadership provides the direction your team needs and ensures the change initiative supports the organization's ability to thrive.



## Plot your course: Navigating change

### Inspire performance

Motivating and enabling employees promotes a culture of cutting-edge ideas, high productivity and quality performance.

### Foster flexibility

Cultivating an environment of resilience can help employees reframe the way they see change. Instead of harboring feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, your team can view change as a chance for learning and expansion.

### A win-win combination

Powerful leadership fires up employees and drives performance. Change management provides the equipment and tactics needed as a guide. Incorporating the two creates a firm foundation for organizations to adapt and advance in a fluctuating business environment.





# Pack the PROPER TOOLS

## KEY QUALITIES FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE LEADERSHIP

For effective change leadership, leaders need a few key qualities and skills to successfully lead through transitional periods.

- Be a coach instead of a boss or delegator.
- Deliver a consistent company culture experience.
- Focus on building engagement and resilience within employees.

These three qualities alone will help increase trust, attract and retain star employees and help your workforce avoid the pits of change fatigue.

## LEADING CHANGE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

### DON'T FORGET TECH ON YOUR TREK

Today's leaders are challenged with change management across time zones and screens, with both hybrid and remote work being commonplace. Don't forget to consider your flexible work environment when creating a change management plan!

### TOP TIPS FOR VIRTUAL TEAM BUILDING THROUGH CHANGE

- Enable robust communication (using an array of channels).
- Make collaboration a priority.
- Tailor your communication to your employees' work styles.

# USING *your* COMPASS

## Leading with vision and purpose

Everyone counts on the leader to do just that – lead. And during times of change, employees particularly look to leaders for guidance. In order to lead, you need to know where you're going.



## See the forest *and* the trees

Your mission is your company's purpose. It's why you do what you do. But what about your vision? While the mission statement is broad and lofty, the vision statement narrows it down. Does your vision inspire and motivate? Consider:

- What's the strategic direction?
- What do you want to accomplish?
- What are the goals?
- Where do you want to be in the future – and by what date?

## Light the path:

### **Align your team with the vision**

If someone holds up a lantern in the dark, the path is easy to find. Your mission, vision and values are the lantern for your company. Making sure employees can "see the light" will align your organizational goals with your workforce and foster a culture of engagement, productivity and growth.





# Communicate to Stay on course

**Change makes everyone uneasy** — whether it's planned or unexpected. That's why proper communication is crucial. Before and during a change initiative, articulate the reasons behind the change, and be as specific as possible.

## Over-inform your employees

Communicate change plans early and often with everyone who will be affected by them. Your employees need to know:

- What's being planned and why?
- When it will happen?
- What they can expect?
- What's in it for them?

## Explore communication channels

You may choose to communicate through several channels, such as:

- Town hall meetings (in person or via video conferencing)
- Company intranet messages
- Dedicated office hours
- Other channels, such as mobile apps, video and email

*Delivering strong, positive communications from leadership helps address employees' fears surrounding transitions. Good, consistent messaging will ensure business continuity and make the change initiative more successful.*

# CAMPFIRE CONVERSATIONS

## Emotional intelligence in leadership

Emotional intelligence, or EQ, includes the ability to recognize, understand and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others.

### Remember:

1. Leaders influence emotions.
2. Emotions drive people.
3. People drive performance.

As a leader, it's important to lead employees down the path of change with empathy and trust. There are many ways to cultivate these feelings, including establishing a personal connection with your employees, showing humility, ditching micromanagement and keeping the lines of communication open. And don't forget to make room for mistakes – both yours and theirs.

## CHARTING THE PATH FROM EMPLOYEE TO Change champion

As your business embarks on new journeys, it's crucial to have support and guidance along the way. This means tapping into your most valuable resource – your people – and identifying those who could become change champions.





# EXPLORING NEW GROUNDS

*with change champions*



## Profile of a change champion

- Engaged
- On board with changes
- Open to new ideas
- Positive and serves as a role model
- Good interpersonal skills and relationships
- Helps persuade others to support new initiatives

## How to identify change champions

Remember that not every employee can or wants to become a change champion, but you should try to identify possible candidates in different areas of the company:

**Visionaries:** Upper-level managers who bring the big-picture vision

**Guides:** Mid-level managers who support team members by answering questions, setting the tone and leading the way

**Team members:** Employees who are doing the work and can provide valuable feedback throughout the transition and implementation phases

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## Ways change champions can help prevent change fatigue

1. Slow down the process when you see employees struggling.
2. Over-communicate to keep employees engaged and informed.
3. Be open to ideas for how to improve the process.

# SUMMITING CHANGE CHALLENGES WITH *Resilience*



Much as a backpacker trains for months leading up to a trip through the mountains, **resilience and agility** must be developed before and during times of change. There are ways you can help your workforce gain these skills and maintain momentum through transitional periods.

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### Steps to promote resilience in employees

1. Openly acknowledge challenges and negative events.
2. Remind employees what they can control.
3. Practice regular communication and transparency.
4. Prioritize areas of focus.
5. Delegate tasks to team members.
6. Promote an agile work environment.
7. Check in with your team regularly to gauge wellbeing.





# KINDLE THE FIRE: STRATEGIES TO SUSTAIN CHANGE READINESS

A daily investment in actions that sustain change readiness can help ensure you're an effective, consistent change leader for the long run, ready to guide your employees through anything they may face.

## Use trail markers

By tracking, analyzing and leveraging metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) about your workforce, you can shift to a proactive planning mindset. Metrics may include headcount, salaries, tenure and turnover, while KPIs can be recruitment costs; employee productivity, engagement or retention; or diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I)-related indicators.

## Bridge any gaps

Want to know if employees feel confident in their roles and know what's expected of them? Just ask! Whether it's an anonymous employee engagement survey, a one-on-one

check-in with your direct reports or a team meeting, maintain constant communication with your employees to understand how resilient they're feeling. **Remember – resilient employees are employees who will handle future change with ease.**

## Trust your guide

Find a partner to help guide you. A professional employer organization (PEO) – a form of human resources outsourcing known as “co-employment” – can provide critical guidance to help your organization optimize change-management practices and navigate obstacles along the way. A PEO helps you:

1. Maintain HR-related compliance.
2. Develop a successful people strategy.
3. Implement an adaptable HR infrastructure.



## ABOUT INSPERITY

Insperty's scalable HR solutions offer an optimal blend of service and technology to facilitate growth by streamlining processes related to payroll, benefits, talent management and HR compliance. We provide the tools to help you lighten your administrative load, maximize productivity and manage risks – so you can focus on growth.

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