

# Quality Improvement Basics: Change Management Models, Part 1

## Slide 1 Objectives

After completing this module, participants will be able to

- Discuss key actions to involve teams in change efforts at all stages of implementation, including beginning, middle, and end.
- Complete a force field analysis, identifying driving and restraining forces impacting change efforts
- Describe the three elements of the Switch model that, when applied, support transformational change

## Slide 2 Equilibrium Model: Phases of Change

Kurt Lewin, often recognized as the “founder of social psychology” was one of the first to study group dynamics and organization development. He adapted a change model from engineering in the 1950s, proposing that organizations must maintain a certain equilibrium to maintain the health and viability of the organization. In order to change, he proposed that organizations must go through a 3-step cycle: Unfreeze, Change, then Refreeze.

## Slide 3 Equilibrium Model: Phases of Change continued

The Unfreeze, Change, Refreeze steps represent the beginning, middle, and end of how individuals and organizations undergo the change process.

- In the beginning, or unfreeze, phase we prepare the organization for change and break down the status quo. Communication here is key – people must understand why the current way of doing things cannot continue and why action needs to be taken. What poor outcomes are leading to the need for change?
- Only after the case has been made can we move onto the middle or change phase. Staff will want to understand the benefits of the change, both in terms of improving outcomes and answering the important question, “what’s in it for me?” Open, honest, and timely communication is essential for building trust and engendering support for the change.
- After going through the change phase, we are ready to refreeze by making our new mode of operation our standard mode of operation. This doesn’t mean our work is done – during this phase, we need to support teams by maintaining motivation, monitoring implementation, and identifying factors that support and challenge the new way of doing things and then adapting the process and building safety nets as appropriate. And, importantly, we want to take time to celebrate our team’s success. Change is hard, don’t let the hard work go unrecognized!

## Slide 4 Force Field Analysis

Another model that we can credit to Kurt Lewin is that of the force field analysis, which enables you to identify the factors or ‘forces’ that are either driving or restraining change.

In this graphic you can see the line in the center represents our current state and the big blue arrow in the background is the direction we want to move to achieve our improvement goal on the right. In the middle, we have our driving and restraining forces - those factors helping to push or hinder the change

needed to achieve our goal. The factors on the chart are examples and not listed in any particular order or level of impact.

What force field analysis encourages us to do is consider those factors and how they are at odds with each other and impact achievement of the goal. The equilibrium within the organization (represented by the vertical line in the diagram) is maintained through a balance of driving and restraining forces. When these forces become unbalanced, this is when an organization will undergo a change process as the driving and restraining forces achieve a new and balanced equilibrium. Often, the default is to focus on increasing driving forces to achieve change, but Lewin suggested that potentially more important is considering how we can reduce restraining forces hindering change. He proposed that increasing intensity on the driving side could simultaneously increase related restraining forces and maintain the equilibrium.

### **Slide 5 Force Field Factors**

Here is a list of factors you might wish to consider...listed in no particular order. Each factor could be categorized as a restraining or driving force such as positive or negative attitudes, minimal or high costs, conflicting or aligning events, etc. Our list here includes...

This list is not exhaustive, and you'll likely come up with others than have an impact in your organization.

### **Slide 6 Force Field Analysis Tool**

You can find the factors from the previous slide in the Force Field Analysis tool, included in the Templates and Tools section of the QI Basics course webpage or through the QR code/link on this slide. There is a separate table in the tool for both the driving and restraining factors that you'll identify...then you can rank each factor as having high/medium and low impact and consider how to address restraining forces or leverage driving forces to achieve your desired change.

By listing the driving and restraining factors and giving them some rank or weighting, your team can discuss if and how they'll impact your progress. Not all factors may not be at play when you start your small tests of change, but you'll be ready with a plan if they come up.

### **Slide 7 Switch Model for Change**

Another perspective on change was introduced in the New York Times best-selling book 'Switch' by Chip and Dan Heath, published in 2010.

Switch poses the question:

Why is it so hard to make lasting changes in our companies, communities, and lives?

The conflict is balancing and appealing to both the rational and emotional minds— competing for control of how we act. Change is a combination of both the rational and emotional, and the book presents methods to enable change to come about by building pathways to reach our rational and emotional makeup.

The book discusses how we speak and appeal to:

- Knowledge – such as data/facts, best practices, models
- Feelings – including stories, connections, meaningful goals
- Skills – our workflows, processes, tools, training

Another way to think of Knowledge, Feelings and Skills is to translate those into the Head, Heart and Hands, a familiar paradigm of approaching and carrying out decision-making.

For purposes of Quality Improvement, the lessons in Switch will help you focus on methods to navigate your team and others impacted by proposed changes with specific steps.

### Slide 8 Major Lessons from Switch

Here are a few major lessons from the book Switch:

- There are three surprises about change.
  - What looks like a people problem is often a situation problem.
  - What looks like lack of productivity is often exhaustion.
  - What looks like resistance is often a lack of clarity and understanding.
- Change often fails because our emotional side and our rational side can't cooperate long enough for the desired change to take effect.
- Another reason change often fails is because of our surrounding environment, that is the situation we are in or the path we are on that impacts our behaviors
- Change isn't easy, but with the right framework, it becomes easier

### Slide 9 In Summary

Lewin describes the phases people go through as we make changes: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. Each of these phases requires involvement of the team. In the beginning or unfreeze phase, we need to explain the why behind the effort. In the middle, during the change, we need to ensure people understand what's in it for them. And don't forget the importance of celebrating and monitoring progress after change has occurred during the end or refreeze phase.

A force field analysis can be useful for assessing the forces driving and restraining the change you wish to accomplish. The status quo will be maintained unless driving forces are stronger than restraining forces.

And through the Switch model we learned about the importance of appealing to knowledge, feelings, and skills (sometimes referred to as the head, heart, and hands) to garner support for change efforts. Different approaches work for different people; some people will require more than one approach to understand, support, and implement the change.

In the next module, we'll consider two additional change models and explore some similarities across all the change models discussed.

We focus on several change models in this course, as change is crucial to health care quality improvement. By understanding key themes to support change across models, you can determine which actions might work best in your organizational culture.