

Hywel Dda University Health Board

Leading Change



Session Outline

- **Hywel Dda UHB – our operating environment**
- **Leadership challenges and complexities**
- **Preparing to lead change**
- **Emotions of change**
- **Resistance to change**
- **Change Fatigue**
- **Enforced change – leading change when you are not in control**

Be prepared...

**We are going to ask for your
thoughts and ideas rather than
talk at you during this session,
so...**

**Be curious
Ask questions
Critical thinking
Reflect**



Hywel Dda UHB

Hywel Dda University Health Board exists to sustain and improve the health of the population it serves by providing high quality services to those that need them.



Hywel Dda UHB - Context

- Provides primary and secondary health care provision
- 389,000 population
- Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion
- One quarter of Wales' land mass - rurality
- 4 acute hospital sites
- Numerous community sites

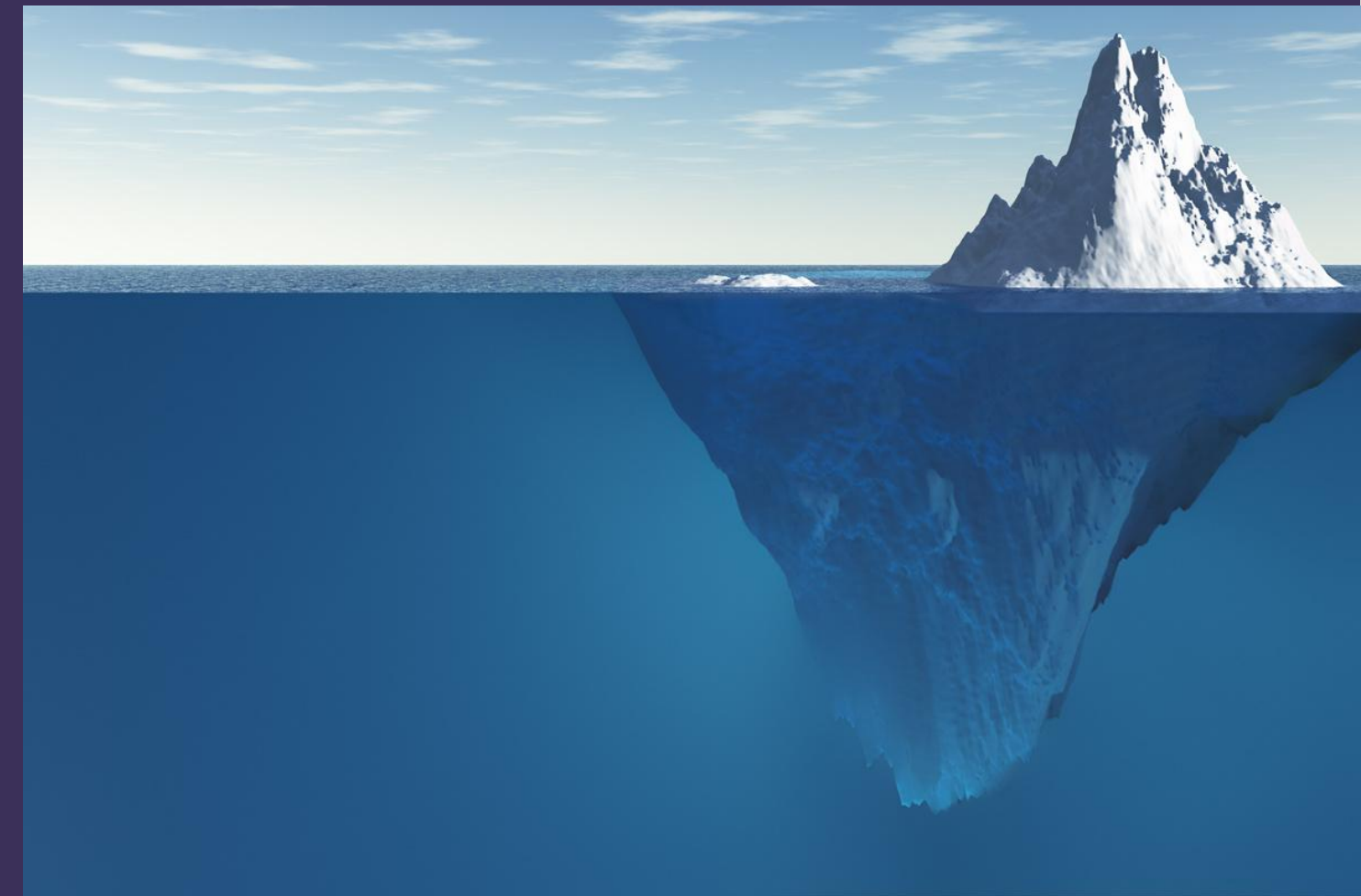
Hywel Dda - Staffing

- **Hywel Dda employs around 12,000 staff**
- **Including medics and dentists, nurses, midwives, health visitors and therapists, and other staff groups including administrative and support roles**
- **Staff are based in hospitals, community, corporate offices and local hubs**
- **Approximately 1900 of these are in leadership roles**

In groups: What do you think our culture could look and feel like?

Bear in mind we have...

- **Lots of sites**
- **Lots of staff doing lots of differing roles**
- **Lots of 'history'/'baggage'**
- **A cross section of ages/personalities/genders employed**



Hywel Dda – Scrutiny

Community

We are responsible for and accountable to our communities of Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire

Performance

Audit Wales and Health Inspectorate Wales meet at least twice a year to discuss how each health board is performing

Governance

Via the Welsh NHS confederation (provides a guide governance, conflicts of interest, improving board effectiveness, and stakeholder and partnerships)

Political

including financial scrutiny due to extreme current financial challenges

Press

NHS in Wales is a public funded, devolved responsibility, with over half of Welsh Government budget spent on it



Hywel Dda – VUCA Environment

- **VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous)**
– originates from the **Military arena** and describes the **ever-changing operating environment**
- **This acronym accurately describe the environment that HDUHB continues to operate in**
- **In small groups:- What do you think could be the current VUCA environmental factors affecting HDUHB...? Think PESTLE factors...**

Understanding the context of change

- **Change is inevitable and constant - our 'Healthier Mid and West Wales' strategy requires us all to change – OCP, CSP, Strategy Refresh, Targeted Intervention**
- **Change comes in different shapes and sizes – and will continue to (Team, Service, Organisational, National levels)**
- **Leaders are fundamental to successful change happening (this is not someone else's responsibility)**

Leading Change

Based on what you know about HDUHB so far and what you hear and read in the news about the 'state of the NHS in Wales'...

What do you think could be the challenges and complexities of leading change in HDUHB?



Within HDUHB, our leaders are supported with their development to help them navigate the complexities of leading in the organisation

Part of our team's role, is to provide leaders with time and space to reflect, learn and prepare for change



We get our leaders thinking about...

The Leadership Mindset for Change

Managing Emotion and Resistance to Change

Recognising and Managing Change Fatigue

Understanding and Responding to Team Reactions to Change

Leading Change When You're Not in Control



Preparing for Change



Why Your Brain Makes

Change So Hard





Change Readiness

How do you respond to
change?

What have you noticed in
other people?





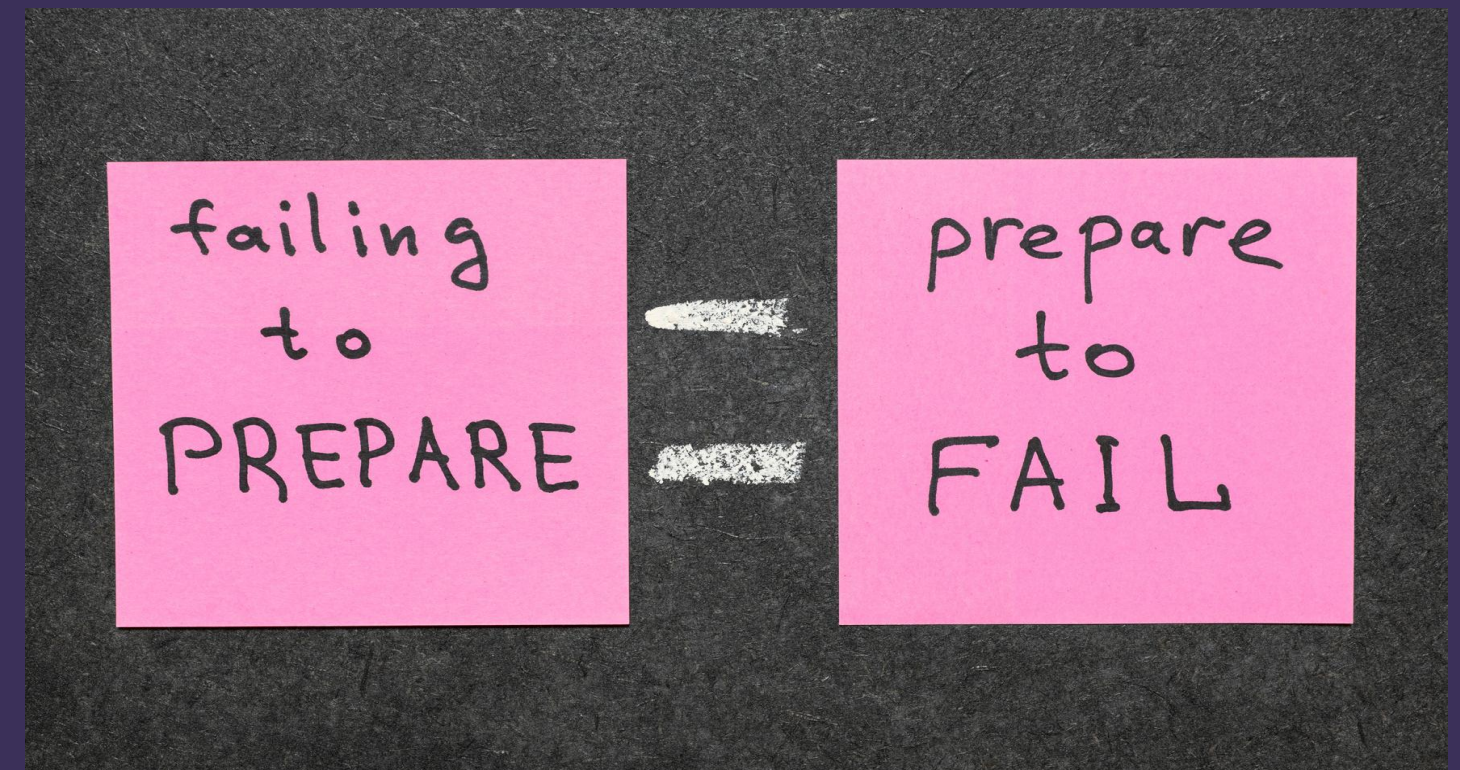
**What makes change
leadership difficult?**

Is the problem with...



Change itself?

OR



How you prepare for it?



CHANGE

Developing a change-ready mindset

Mindsets

Why is your mindset important when leading people and teams through change?

What are the characteristics of a fixed mindset and a growth mindset?

Fixed vs Growth

Fixed	Growth
Avoids challenges	Embraces challenges
Gives up easily	Persists in the face of setbacks
Sees effort as fruitless	Sees effort as a path to mastery
Ignores useful feedback	Learns from feedback/criticism
Feels threatened by others' success	Finds inspiration in others' success

Examples of Mindset Shifts

From Avoiding Challenges to Embracing Them:
Fixed Mindset: "This new policy is too complex; it's better to stick with what we know."

Growth Mindset: "This new policy is challenging, but it offers a great opportunity to improve our processes and outcomes."

From Seeing Effort as Fruitless to Viewing It as a Path to Mastery:

Fixed Mindset: "We've tried similar initiatives before, and they didn't work. It's not worth the effort."

Growth Mindset: "Every effort brings us closer to finding a solution. Let's learn from past attempts and refine our approach."

From Ignoring Feedback to Learning from It:

Fixed Mindset: "Criticism means I'm not good enough."

Growth Mindset: "Feedback is valuable information that can help me grow and improve."

Key points

Having the right mindset when leading people and teams through change can make or break its success.

Role modelling a growth mindset to your teams and upwards is part of your role as a leader – everyone is watching you!

Curiosity is an essential part of leading with a growth mindset.

Emotions of Change

**Never forget
change is
emotional...**

- **Change is never linear despite the simplicity of change models offered by academics**
- **Change involves people, all with differing thoughts, experiences, personalities, feelings and emotions**
- **Some people thrive on change, others dig their heels in... some are just purely fatigued... by 'life in the blender'**



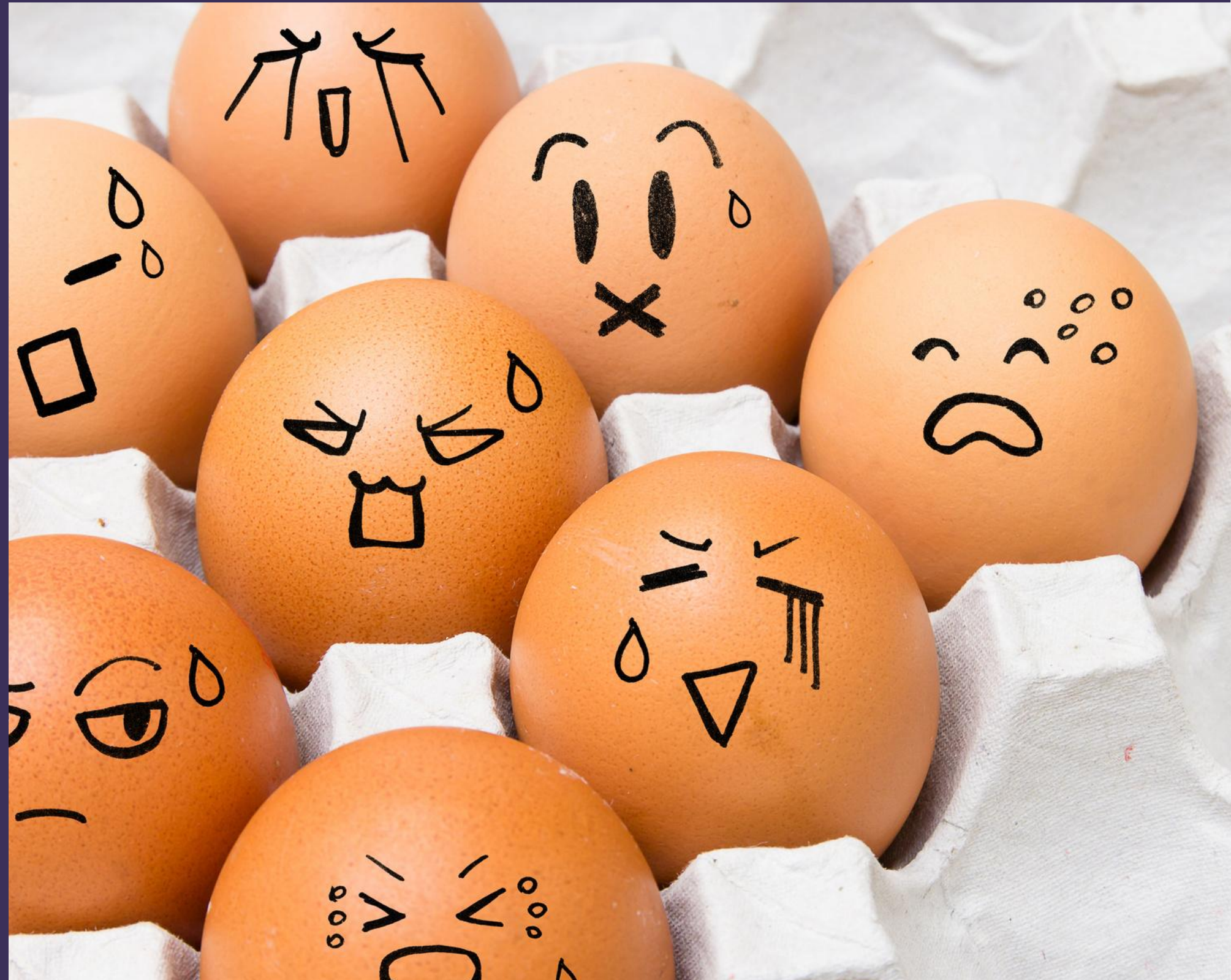


**“Change is
inevitable.
And yet fear,
anger, and
confusion are
often our first
reactions to
changes.”**

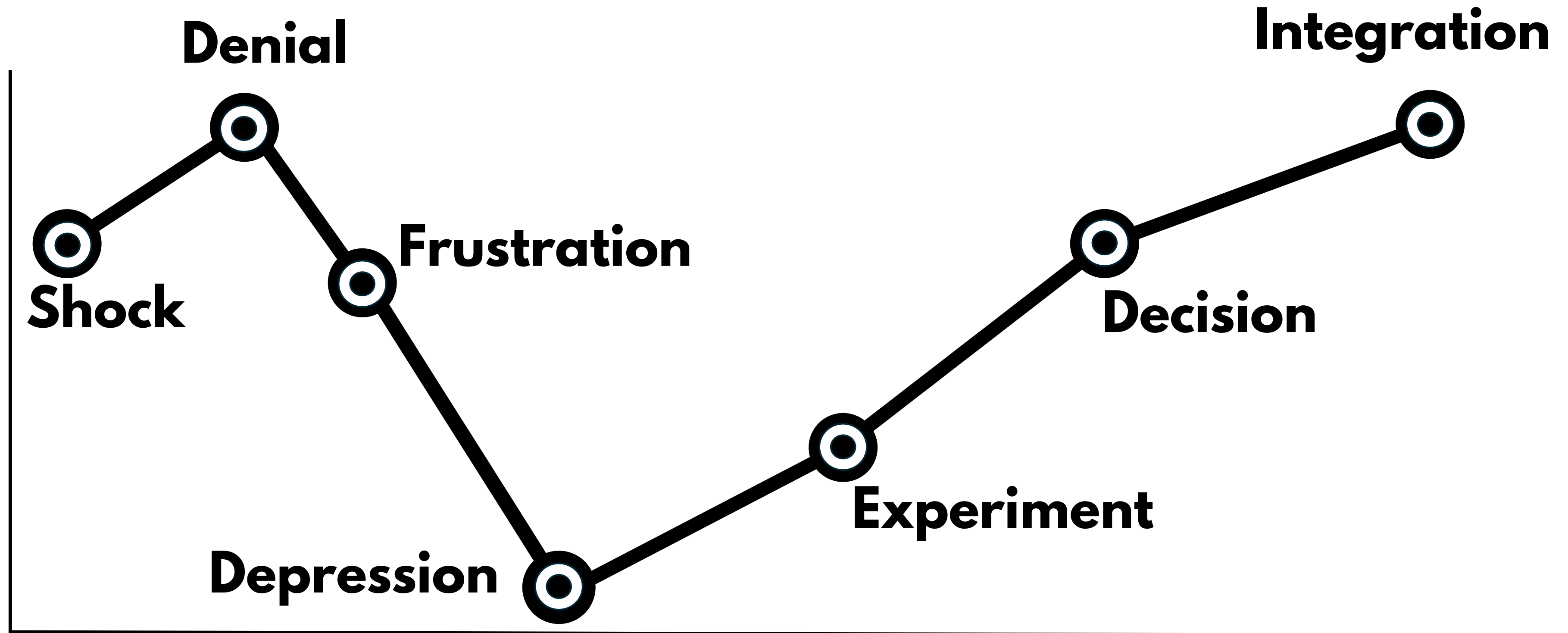
Simon Sinek



As a leader during change, if you're not talking about emotions with your team, you're missing the point.



Understanding and Responding to Team Reactions



The Kubler-Ross Change Curve

Four Doors of Change



**Things we
used to be
able to do
and still can**



**Things we
couldn't do
before and still
can't now**



**Things we used
to be able to do
before but can't
now**



**Things we
couldn't do
before but can
now**

Fear of the Unknown



Business as usual



Let it go



Go for it



Continue Doing



Never did, Still won't



Stop doing



Start doing

Individual Activity:

- **Reflect on a current or recent change.**
- **Write a list for each door.**

Group Discussion:

- **Which door was hardest to fill?**
- **What emotions are tied to each door?**
- **How can this model be used in team meetings or change communications?**
- **What strategies can you use to support your team in the “Stop Doing” and “Start Doing” doors?**

**Reflect on how can you
help others overcome
emotional barriers to
change...**



Resistance to Change

**Do people resist
change, or do
they resist being
changed?**



Why people resist change



Attachment to old ways



Fear of failure



Perceived threat



Loss of control



Curtailed freedom



Diminished power



Threatened job security



Too much uncertainty



Climate of mistrust



Concern for co-workers



Unclear benefits



Forced change



Work overload



Disruption



Poor communication



Mismanagement

**Resistance to
change –
some more
possible
reasons...**

Sometimes people resist change because of:

- **A short-sighted self-interest, rather than focusing on the success of the team/service or organisation**
- **Personality type**
- **Their perception of the situation – people may disagree on the reasons for the change, or its advantages/ disadvantages (including you as a leader!)**
- **Low personal tolerance of change – need for security or change fatigue...**

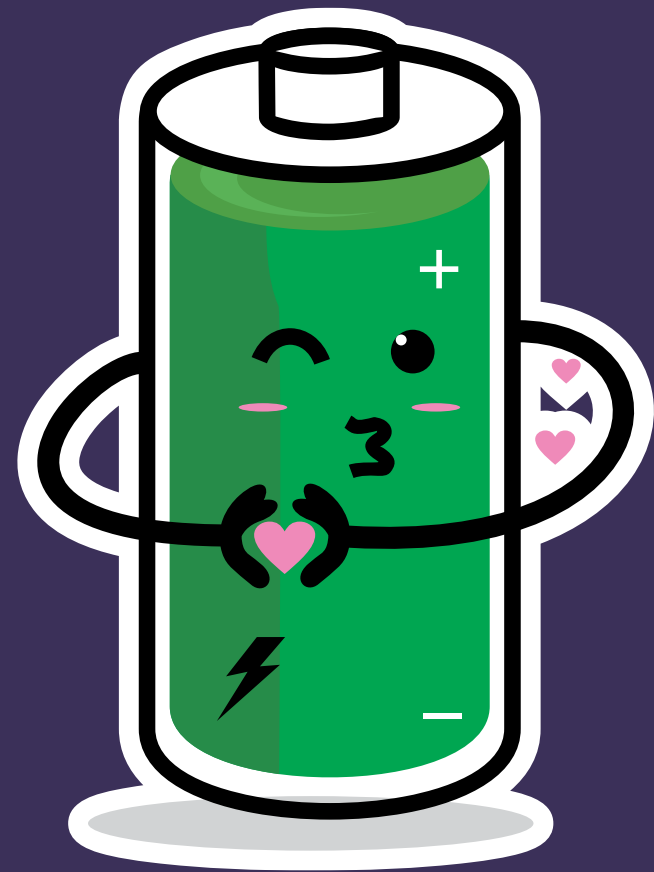
Change Fatigue

The Feeling of Change



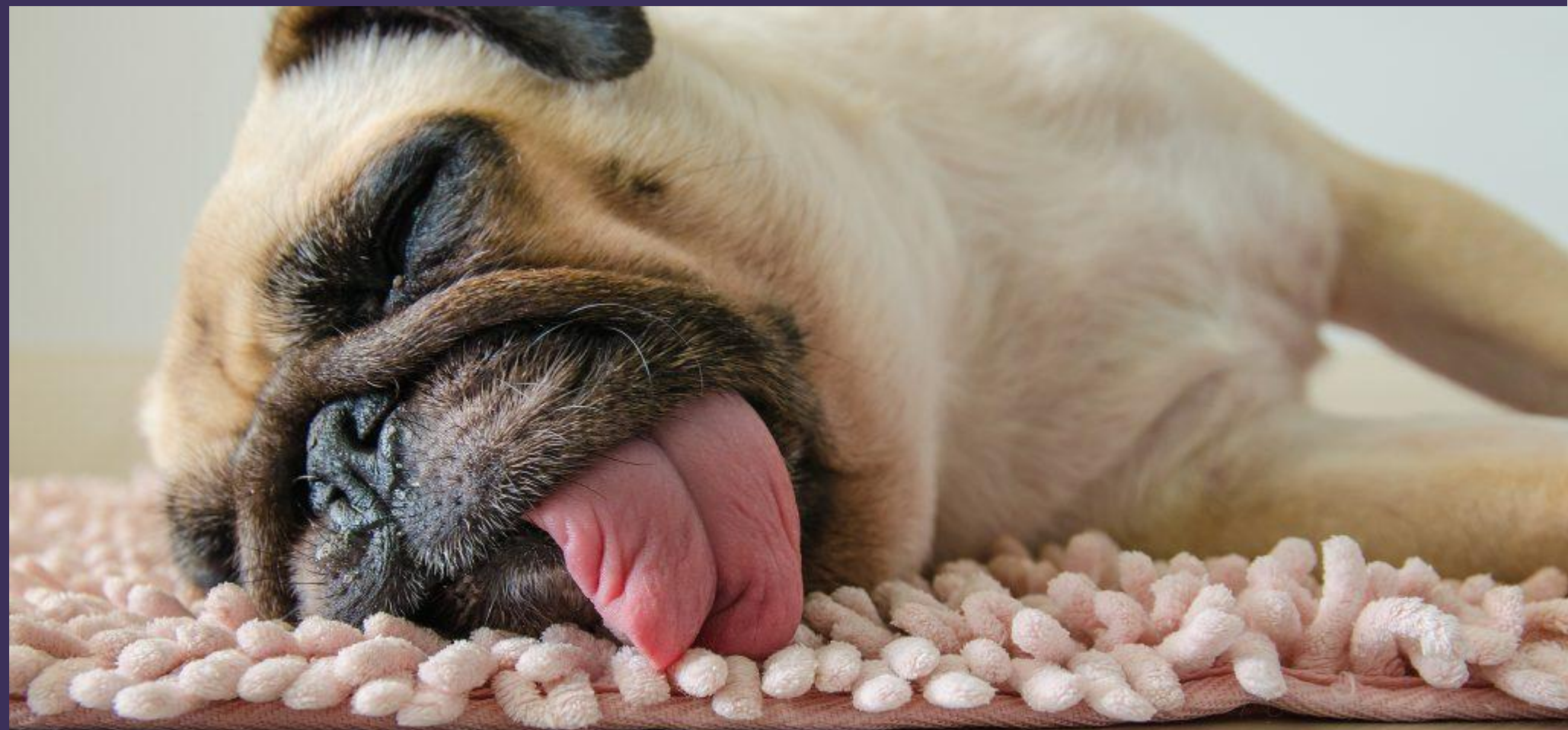
“Change excites me”

“Change drains me”



Recognising and Managing Change Fatigue

- Change fatigue is the physical and emotional exhaustion that occurs when individuals are overwhelmed by continuous change.
- Recognising and addressing change fatigue is crucial to maintain team morale and productivity.



Signs and Symptoms...

- **Physical Symptoms:**
Fatigue, headaches, sleep disturbances
- **Emotional Symptoms:**
Anxiety, irritability, feelings of helplessness
- **Behavioural Symptoms:**
Decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, resistance to change

Enforced Change

Leading Change when you are not in Control



Case study - context

What follows is a fictitious case study of a hospital closure.

You maybe in a leadership role (a line manager, or a middle manager) but sometimes in organisational life you have no control of a change.

An enforced change maybe due to a number of factors – maybe PESTLE factors or beyond

As the leader, you may not agree with the change yourself, but you as a leader need to overcome this personal feeling and lead your people through change

But, change is always emotional – both for the leader and their people. You cannot ignore feelings.



Context

This case study explores the enforced closure of a fictitious Community Hospital - a deeply emotional and complex change process involving multiple stakeholders, high staff impact, and significant operational challenges.



Scene 1



Following public consultation and various reports, the Hospital Board proposed the closure of the Community Hospital due to the building being no longer fit for purpose.

Despite similar proposals in 2010 and 2014, the community hospital remained open, leading staff to believe this was another false alarm.

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

How do repeated, unfulfilled change proposals affect staff trust and engagement?

Scene 2



Staff Engagement Begins

HR and unions engaged in 1:1 meetings with staff.

Each person had at least two meetings. Emotions ran high—anger, bitterness, disbelief.

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

What strategies can leaders use to support staff experiencing grief or anger during enforced change?

Scene 3

On-Site Support



HR representatives were physically present at the community hospital in the lead-up to the final decision, offering emotional support and answering questions.

Some staff appreciated this presence, while others questioned the absence of senior executives from the board.

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

**How important is visible leadership during times of change?
What impact does it have on staff morale?**

Scene 4

The Announcement



Line managers and their staff gathered to watch the live broadcast of the Board meeting. The announcement confirmed the closure. Emotions ranged from shock and grief to resignation and acceptance.

“I’ve worked here for 35 years—it’s all I’ve known.”

“It’s sad, but maybe it’s time for a new adventure.”

Leadership Pause and Reflection Prompt:

How can leaders support staff through the emotional stages of change, especially when the change is non-negotiable?

Scene 5

Decanting the Hospital



Patient intake ceased, and the community hospital was gradually emptied. Support teams including HR representatives remained on-site daily.

Staff (including line managers) expressed feelings of abandonment, fear, and uncertainty.

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

What role does continuity of support play in maintaining staff wellbeing during transitions?

Scene 6

Staff Redeployment



Staff were moved to roles in community care or to the large City Hospital.

Some faced logistical challenges (e.g., transport, unfamiliar environments).

While expenses were reimbursed, the inconvenience added to the emotional toll.

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

How can leaders ensure practical support (e.g., transport, expenses) is timely and effective during redeployment?

Scene 7

The Aftermath



Managers faced administrative pressures—new contracts, payroll updates, initiating Pay and Mileage Protection agreements.

Delays in the paperwork led to frustration, anger and feelings of being undervalued.

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

What systems or processes could be improved to reduce operational stress and ensure a smoother transition for staff?

Scene 8

The New Way



Staff integrated into new teams and roles. Some felt unwelcome, others were resistant to new ways of working, while some struggled with the loss of choice and identity.

“I didn’t choose to work in a large city hospital—I chose a community hospital.”

Leadership Pause and Reflection:

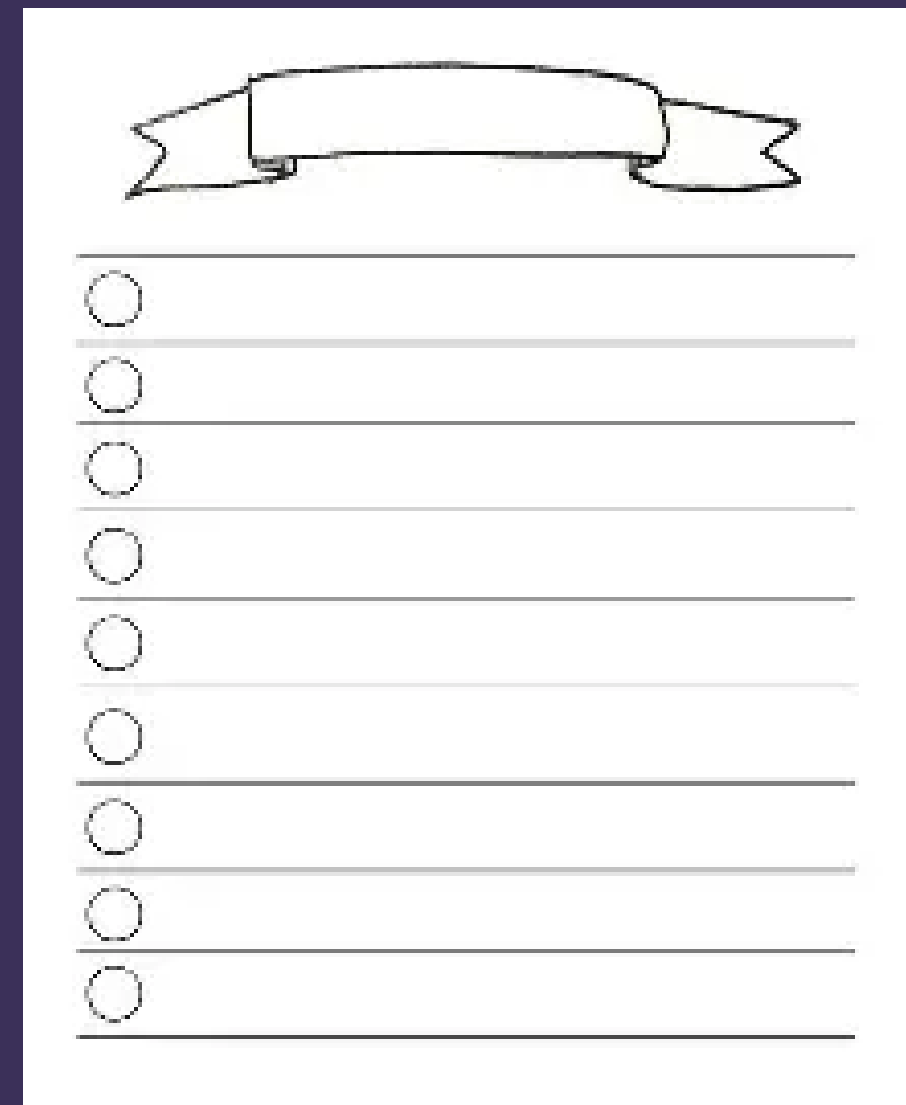
How can leaders foster inclusion and rebuild team cohesion after enforced change?

Now your thoughts...

Having listened to the case study presented:-

In small groups, discuss what you feel are the lessons learnt from this enforced change

Make a list (don't just focus 'on the bad').



○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

Lessons Learned:-

The HR process and TU support maybe best in class but people feel things still – change is emotional both for individuals and teams (change curve)

As a leader of people, your support after a change is just as critical as before and during.

Senior leaders (the decision makers) need to be visible and present.

Change impacts everyone differently—one size does not fit all – change is personal.

Ongoing leadership support is needed to repair relationships and build trust.

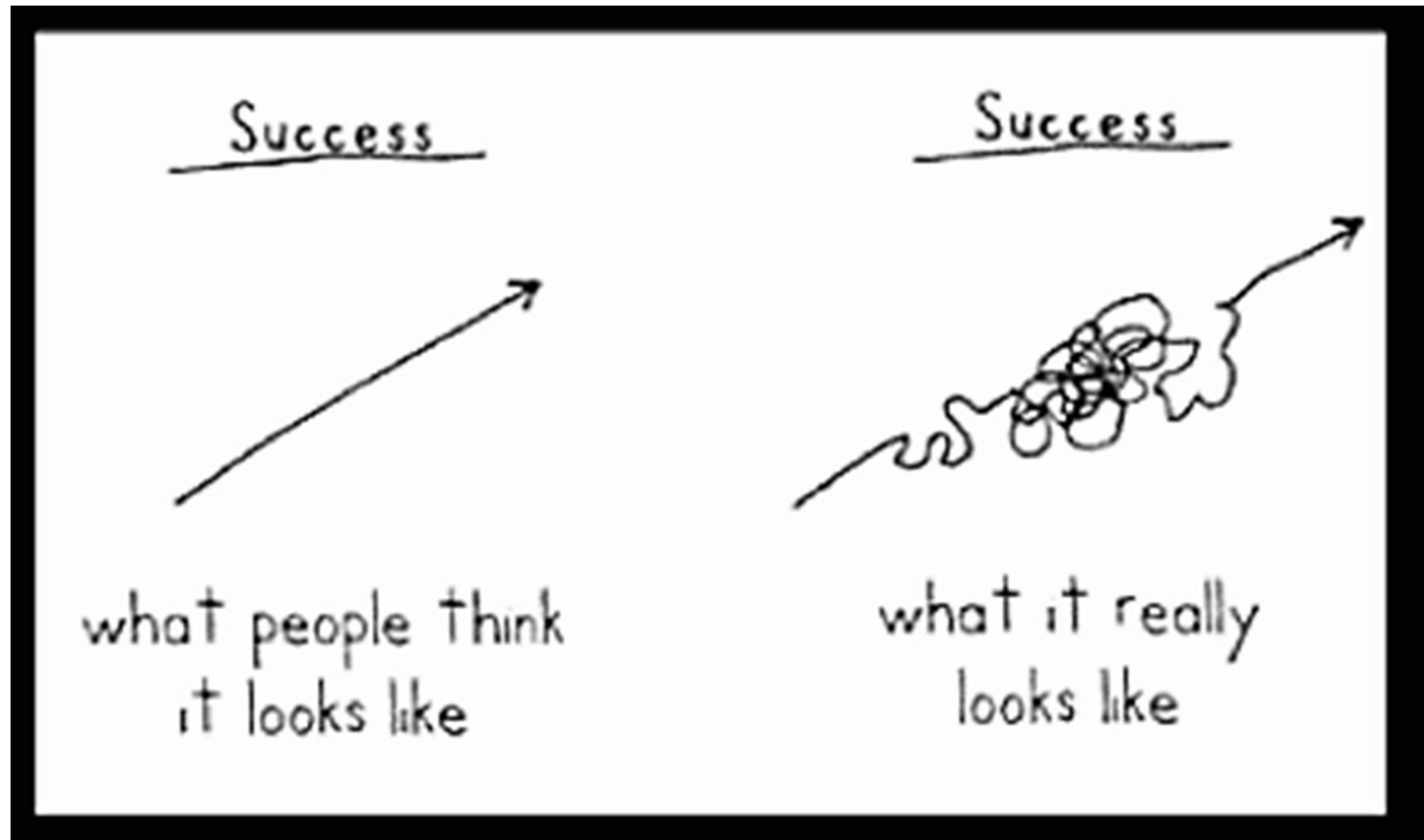
Communication must be clear, regular, and multi-channel.

What are your reflections and personal leadership take aways...

1. What would you do differently if you were leading this change?

2. What lessons can you apply to your own leadership practice?

The reality of leading people through change



Any questions?

Diolch/ Thank you



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