



BA (Hons) Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

(LCLM6003) Leading and Implementing Change: Jaguar Land Rover

A Strategic Plan at Jaguar-Land Rover



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Executive Summary

This report sets out a strategic change plan for Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the UK's largest car maker. It looks at JLR's 'Reimagine' plan to move to electric cars, go digital, and reach net-zero carbon. The report studies the internal and external forces behind this change, including new electric-car laws, post-Brexit trade rules, changing stakeholder expectations, and two recent events that tested this transformation under pressure: an August 2025 cyberattack that halted production for around five weeks, cost the UK economy an estimated £1.9 billion, and led the government to guarantee a £1.5 billion loan for JLR's suppliers (GB News, 2025), and the 2024 'Copy Nothing' brand relaunch, which triggered a strong public backlash within 48 hours of release (DesignRush, 2024). It then critically reviews three change models taught in this module: Lewin's (1951) Unfreeze-Change-Refreeze model, Kotter's (1996) Eight-Step Model, and Pettigrew's (1987) model of change. It also examines leadership style and culture, drawing on Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958), Bass and Avolio (1994), Handy (1993), and Schein (2010). Finally, the report sets out a clear change plan: SMART objectives, a five-year budget, a stakeholder map based on Mendelow (1991), a communication plan that uses the Kübler-Ross (1969) Change Curve, and a plan to check progress. The main message is that JLR should keep pushing its transformation forward while learning the stakeholder lessons of its recent history.

1. Introduction to Jaguar Land Rover

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) is the UK's largest car maker by revenue. Tata Motors has owned JLR since it bought the company from Ford for £1.15 billion in 2008 (Jaguar Land Rover, 2024). JLR is based in Coventry and builds cars at Solihull, Halewood and Castle Bromwich, as well as plants in Slovakia, China, India and Brazil. Land Rover, with its Range Rover, Defender and Discovery models, brings in most of the group's revenue. Jaguar has found it harder to compete with BMW, Audi and Mercedes-Benz.

JLR earned £26.3 billion in revenue in 2018. But from 2019 it hit serious trouble: weaker demand in China, the backlash against diesel cars, COVID-19, a global shortage of computer chips, and the rising cost of switching to electric cars. Together, these caused losses of about £4.5 billion by 2022 (Jaguar Land Rover, 2024). In response, JLR launched its 'Reimagine' strategy in 2021. This plan makes every model electric, turns Jaguar into an ultra-luxury electric brand, aims for net-zero carbon by 2039, and commits £15 billion of investment over five years. By 2023-24, the recovery was clear: revenue reached £29.0 billion, with a profit before tax of £2.3 billion.

That recovery has since been tested twice, by the August 2025 cyberattack and the 2024 'Copy Nothing' brand relaunch (see the Executive Summary for the scale of both). Together, these events show that even a well-funded change plan can go wrong if stakeholder communication is poor, and, alongside the electrification programme, test JLR's ability to lead change under pressure, the central question examined in this report.

This report is written as if by a Senior Strategic Manager, asked by the Board to build an evidence-based change plan. It uses public financial and industry reports, not internal JLR data. Section 2 looks at the environmental forces driving JLR's change. Section 3 critically reviews

the change models that fit JLR best. Section 4 looks at leadership and culture. Section 5 sets out a structured change management plan.

2. Environmental Analysis: Internal and External Change Drivers

2.1 External Environment

A PESTLE analysis is a simple way to study the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental forces acting on JLR (Johnson, Whittington and Scholes, 2017). Figure 1 sets these forces out, alongside JLR's micro (industry) and internal environment, using the standard three-levels-of-business-environment model.

On the political and legal side, the UK government plans to end sales of new petrol and diesel cars by 2035, while EU emissions rules keep getting stricter. Together, these make going electric a legal requirement, not just a business choice (SMMT, 2024). Post-Brexit trade rules add pressure too: under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, a set share of a car's value must come from the UK or EU to qualify for lower tariffs a real problem given JLR's battery supply chains have mostly been based in Asia, and a reason behind its £4 billion battery gigafactory deal with Tata Group in Somerset (SMMT, 2024). Burnes (2017) notes that new laws often create the urgency that managers alone cannot generate.

On the economic side, between 2019 and 2023, a global shortage of computer chips cost JLR an estimated £1.5 billion in lost revenue. At the same time, inflation and higher interest rates weakened demand in JLR's main Western markets (Jaguar Land Rover, 2024). More recently, the August 2025 cyberattack showed a new kind of economic risk: one IT breach stopped production on three continents for five weeks, at an estimated UK-wide cost of £1.9 billion (GB News, 2025). Teece (2018) argues that firms in unstable environments need 'dynamic capabilities': the ability to sense problems, act fast, and rearrange resources. The cyberattack shows that cyber-resilience is now as important to that capability as JLR's earlier response to Brexit or the chip shortage.

On the social and technological side, buyers in the premium car market now want sustainability, connectivity and personalisation. Tesla has shown that electric and luxury can go together (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Software and AI services such as predictive maintenance and self-driving features could make up 45% of car industry profit by 2030

(McKinsey & Company, 2023). This is changing where competitive advantage comes from. Jaguar's 2024 'Copy Nothing' rebrand aimed to show this shift but instead caused heavy public criticism. Many saw it as a bold public statement made without enough groundwork with dealers and existing stakeholders (DesignRush, 2024), a point discussed again in Section 3.2. Digital change is also reaching car retail: JLR, like other premium brands, is moving from dealer stock towards direct online ordering, echoing the wider shift to online shopping, and needing new digital skills in sales and service, not just in the car itself.

These pressures do not affect every rival equally. Tesla and Chinese firms like BYD built electric-first businesses with no old diesel investment to lose. BMW and Mercedes-Benz, like JLR, are moving on from a combustion-engine base. This means JLR's speed of change, not just its direction, decides whether it gains or loses ground. This supports Johnson, Whittington and Scholes' (2017) point: PESTLE factors matter less on their own than in how fast and well a firm turns them into action.

Figure 1 brings these forces together, showing how JLR's macro (PESTLE), micro (industry), and internal environments connect.

THREE LEVELS OF THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT — APPLIED TO JAGUAR LAND ROVER

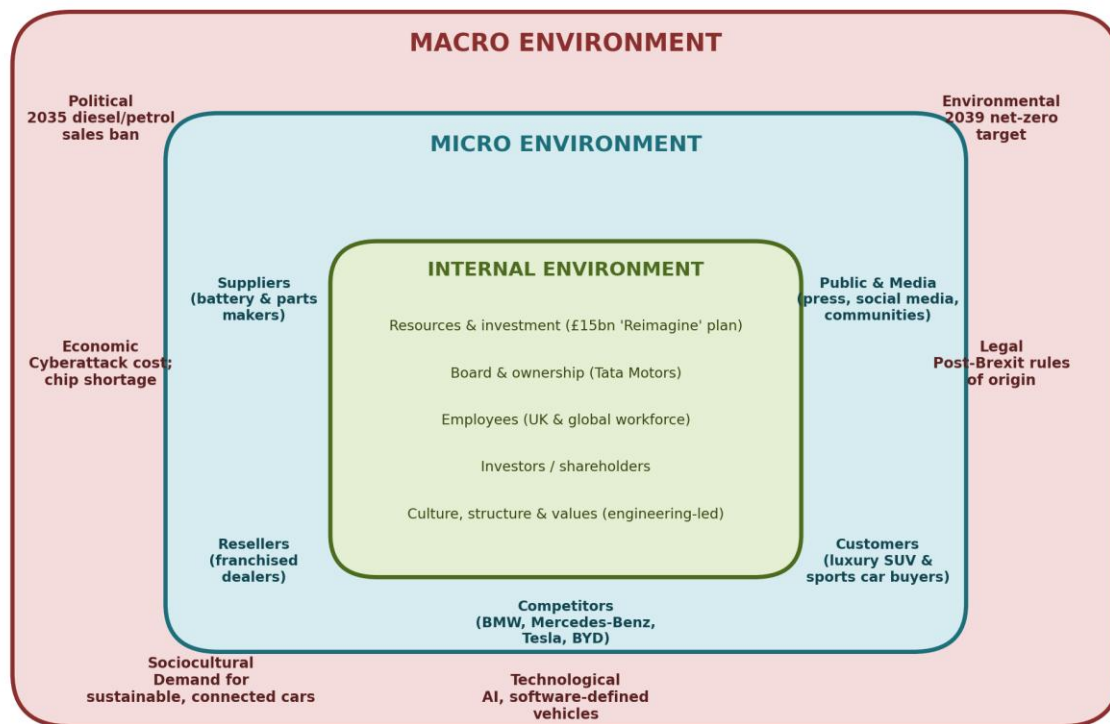


Figure 1: The three levels of the business environment, applied to JLR (adapted from the macro-micro-internal environment model).

2.2 Stakeholder Considerations

JLR's transformation affects many different stakeholders. Freeman (1984) argues that every group affected by a company has a fair claim on its decisions. This is a wider view than Friedman's (1970), who believed a firm's only duty is to its shareholders. Freeman's view helps decide the order in which JLR should communicate change. Mendelow's (1991) power-interest matrix is a practical tool for setting these priorities (Table 1).

Quadrant	JLR stakeholders
Manage closely (high power / high interest)	Tata Motors; UK Government; Executive Board
Keep satisfied (high power / low interest)	Institutional investors; EU regulators
Keep informed (low power / high interest)	Employees; franchised dealers; existing customers; media and wider public
Minimal effort (low power / low interest)	Peripheral suppliers; general public outside core markets

Table 1: Mendelow's power-interest matrix applied to JLR.

The rebrand backlash shows one limit of treating this matrix as fixed. On paper, the media and the public sit in the low-power quadrant. Yet the campaign got over 160 million views in 48

hours (DesignRush, 2024). This shows that social media can give so-called 'low-power' groups fast, powerful influence, and a change plan must watch them just as closely as its formally powerful stakeholders.

2.3 Internal Environment

Inside the company, JLR's engineering-led history built world-class cars, but it also made JLR slower and more cautious about digital and electric change (Burnes, 2017). Too much reliance on diesel, and too little investment in software and connectivity, left JLR exposed compared with German rivals and new electric brands. Managing staff across many countries adds more complexity. Tidd and Bessant (2021) say firms with many sites need clear systems for sharing skills between them. JLR is building this through AI-based quality checks, digital twins, and supply chain data under 'Reimagine'. The move to all-electric production at Halewood, alongside up to 200 voluntary redundancies there in January 2025, shows that this change has a real cost for staff as well as a strategic logic (The Workers Union, 2025).

3. Critical Evaluation of Change Management Models

JLR's transformation is large enough to test against three change models central to this module: Lewin's (1951) planned-change model, Kotter's (1996) eight-step model, and Pettigrew's (1987) model of change. Each gives a different view of how JLR has moved, and must keep moving, through this period.

3.1 Lewin's Unfreeze-Change-Refreeze Model

Lewin's (1951) three-stage model describes change as unfreezing old routines, moving to a new way of working, and then refreezing it in place (Cameron and Green, 2019). JLR's 'unfreezing' happened in 2019-2021, when heavy losses and a public strategy review broke people's confidence in the old diesel-led model. The 'change' stage is the 'Reimagine' programme itself. 'Refreezing', making digital-first, electric-first behaviour permanent, is the hardest and least finished stage. The 2025 cyberattack is a reminder that JLR's environment is too unstable to assume any final, settled state. Burnes (2017, p. 267) argues that Lewin's straight-line structure 'understates the messy, iterative, and politically charged nature of organisational change'. For JLR, Lewin's model best explains why change was urgent, not how to sequence it exactly.

3.2 Kotter's Eight-Step Change Model

Kotter's (1996) model has eight steps: create urgency, build a guiding team, form a vision, communicate the vision, remove barriers to action, create short-term wins, keep the momentum going, and make the change part of the culture. JLR's open disclosure of its losses built real urgency. New senior leaders and technology partnerships form a guiding team. The 2039 net-zero target and £15 billion investment give a clear vision. Beer and Nohria (2000) note that change built on both sound economics and real investment in capability tends to last better than change driven by financial pressure alone, which broadly fits JLR. However, the 'Copy Nothing' rebrand shows a weakness at step four: Kotter (1996) says leaders must communicate the vision to build support, yet the campaign was shown to the public before the dealers and loyal customers whose support mattered most, and it had to be withdrawn within 48 hours (DesignRush, 2024). Kotter's model has also been criticised as too top-down, giving too little weight to what employees think (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999). Even so, it remains the most useful framework for guiding JLR's transformation

3.3 Pettigrew's Contextualist Model of Change

Pettigrew's (1987) model looks at change through three linked parts: content (what is changing), context (the internal and external conditions around it), and process (how the change is negotiated and carried out). Unlike Lewin and Kotter, who set out a fixed order of steps, Pettigrew sees these three parts as constantly interacting, not staged. Applied to JLR: the content is electrification, digitalisation and net-zero; the context is both the external pressures in Section 2 and JLR's engineering-led culture; and the process is 'Reimagine' itself, including the leadership and communication choices covered in Section 4. Pettigrew's (1987) own research suggests big organisational change usually takes five to ten years to take hold, which fits the culture analysis in Section 4.2. The model's strength is that it refuses to separate strategy from the messy politics and history of the organisation carrying it out; this explains well why the rebrand, despite having plenty of resources, still failed in its process rather than its content. Its main weakness is that it explains more than it prescribes.

Taken together, Kotter's model gives the clearest step-by-step guidance for JLR's transformation. Lewin explains why urgency was needed. Pettigrew's model best explains why the way change is carried out, not the strategy itself, has been the repeated point of failure, as shown by both the rebrand and parts of workforce communication. None of the three models was built with a sudden crisis like a cyberattack in mind. This is a real gap: all three assume

managers keep some control over the pace of change, but the 2025 shutdown was forced on JLR overnight. This suggests JLR's change models need to sit alongside a separate crisis-response plan, not replace one, a point developed further in Section 5.4.

4. Leadership and Organisational Culture

4.1 Leadership Style

Leadership style is widely seen as a key factor in whether change succeeds (Northouse, 2022). Tannenbaum and Schmidt's (1958) continuum running from 'tells', through 'sells' and 'consults', to 'joins' is a useful way to view JLR's approach. The decision to go electric was announced in a direct, 'tells' style, driven by urgent losses and new laws. But the details of how to do it, such as partnerships and staff retraining, have involved more consultation. JLR's leadership has also shown signs of transformational leadership, which Bass and Avolio (1994) define as inspiring people to work for a shared vision beyond their own interests. The 2039 net-zero goal and the public relaunch of Jaguar as an all-electric brand are good examples of 'inspirational motivation'. Being open about past financial failure reflects 'idealised influence'.

Northouse (2022) warns that transformational leadership can be fragile if it depends too much on one person. JLR's change of leader from Thierry Bolloré to Adrian Mardell, within a short space of time, is a live example of this risk. It supports Kotter's (1996) point that lasting change must be built into systems and culture, not one person's authority. The rebrand also shows a style mismatch: a highly direct, 'tells' approach was used for a decision about the public brand identity that needed more consultation, closer to Tannenbaum and Schmidt's 'consults' or 'joins', given how directly it affected dealers and existing customers. This fits Katz's (1955) view that good leadership needs strong 'human skill', working well with people, not just technical or conceptual skill. Mumford et al.'s (2000) model adds that leadership also depends on personal traits, competencies, and career history, not skill alone. JLR's senior team mixes long-serving engineers with newer hires from software backgrounds, and success depends on both groups building shared skills, rather than running as two separate leadership cultures inside one company.

4.2 Organisational Culture

Handy (1993) describes JLR's traditional culture as close to a 'role culture', one that values set procedures, engineering skill and hierarchy. This built excellent cars, but it also resists sudden change. Deal and Kennedy's (1982) model sorts culture by two things: how fast feedback

comes, and how much risk is involved. Long, engineering-led car development sits closer to their 'process culture' (low risk, slow feedback) than to the fast, high-risk cultures common in software firms. JLR's challenge is to build faster-feedback ways of working for its software and AI teams, without losing the careful, safety-first culture that engineering and manufacturing still need. Schein's (2010) three layers of culture visible signs, stated values, and deep assumptions help explain why this is hard. 'Reimagine' branding and cross-functional teams change the visible layer fairly fast. But the deep assumption that engineering skill alone wins in the market takes much longer to change, and Pettigrew (1987) suggests it usually takes five to ten years, not one product cycle.

Culture is often one of the biggest barriers to change. This is why organisations need 'change agents', people, from inside or outside, whose job is to support, guide and model new behaviour (Carnall, 2014). JLR uses both: internal cross-functional teams and external technology partners. Internal agents know how things are really done. External partners bring fresh thinking and new skills, but at first, they lack knowledge of JLR's history and culture.

5. Strategic Change Management Plan

5.1 Proposed Change and SMART Objectives

This plan is built on four pillars carried over from 'Reimagine': full electrification of Jaguar and faster electrification of Land Rover; AI and Industry 4.0 technology across UK plants; a company-owned connected-vehicle software platform; and a carbon-neutral supply chain to support the 2039 net-zero target. A fifth pillar, cyber-resilience, is added directly because of the 2025 attack. These pillars link to the external pressures in Section 2 and the models discussed in Sections 3-4. Following Cameron and Green (2019), the objectives below are SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Each objective has a named executive owner, so that, in line with Kotter's (1996) call for a guiding team, no single leader carries the whole transformation alone.

1. Launch three fully electric Jaguar models generating £3 billion combined annual revenue by FY2027-28.
2. Reduce manufacturing defect rates by 35% via AI-enabled quality control by December 2027.
3. Improve ultra-luxury segment Net Promoter Score by 20 percentage points against the 2024 baseline by December 2028.

4. Cut Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions across UK manufacturing by 50% against a 2021 baseline by 2030.
5. Complete an independent cyber-security audit of all UK plants and key suppliers, and restore full production resilience, by the end of 2026.

5.2 Financial Plan

The plan is funded from JLR's existing five-year, £15 billion 'Reimagine' budget (Jaguar Land Rover, 2024), with money set aside for cyber-resilience because of the scale of the 2025 disruption. Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) say a lack of resources is a leading cause of change failure, so having enough funding matters as much as how it is shared out (Table 2).

Investment area	Allocation	Timeframe
EV platform development	£6.0bn	2025-2028
AI and digital manufacturing	£2.5bn	2025-2027
Software and connected services	£3.0bn	2025-2030
Supply chain sustainability	£2.0bn	2025-2030
Workforce reskilling	£1.0bn	2025-2029
Cyber-resilience and IT continuity	£0.5bn	2026-2028
Total	£15.0bn	2025-2030

Table 2: Five-year investment plan. Source: adapted from Jaguar Land Rover (2024).

Funding comes from retained profit as performance improves, continued support from Tata Motors, the UK Automotive Transformation Fund, and the £1.5 billion government loan guarantee given during the 2025 crisis (GB News, 2025). That loan guarantee shows that state support is available when supply-chain stability is at risk.

5.3 Communication Plan

Following Kotter's (1996) point that a vision must be communicated often and through many channels, this plan targets employees, investors, customers, and supply chain and technology partners. Change on this scale is personal as well as organisational, so the plan also uses the Kübler-Ross (1969) Change Curve. As Figure 2 shows for JLR, people move through four stages when facing major change: shock or denial, anger or resistance, exploration, and finally acceptance and commitment. For Halewood staff facing both an EV transition and redundancies, and for staff who lived through the 2025 cyberattack, this means giving support based on where people really are emotionally, not where the transformation schedule assumes they should be.

THE JOURNEY THROUGH CHANGE — APPLIED TO JLR'S TRANSFORMATION (adapted from Russell, 2003)

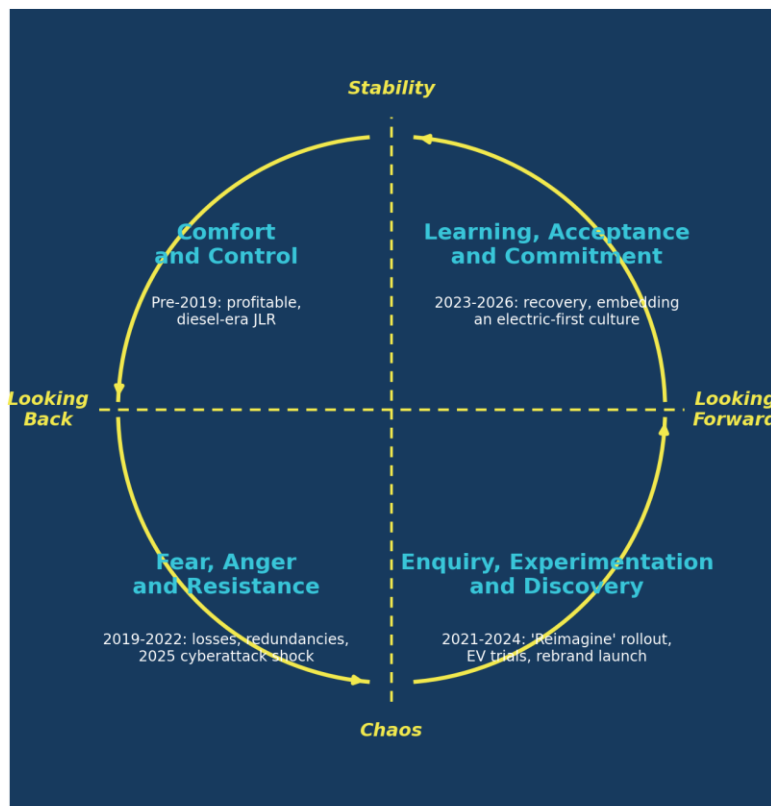


Figure 2: The journey through change, applied to JLR's transformation (adapted from Russell, 2003, cited in University of Wales Trinity Saint David, 2026).

A network of around 500 employee 'change champions' puts this into practice, passing on communication and picking up resistance early. This directly answers the rebrand's key lesson: dealers and existing owners should be briefed and consulted before any public campaign, not after it, following Mendelow's (1991) advice to manage high-interest stakeholders closely rather than treat them as a broadcast audience. Investors get quarterly updates against the SMART objectives. Customer messaging presents electrification as adding to, not diluting, brand heritage. Technology and supply partners are engaged through a dedicated summit that explains technical needs and the support on offer.

5.4 Evaluation Plan

A three-level evaluation framework tracks progress. Monthly operational KPIs cover EV production volumes, defect rates, training completion, and cyber-incident response times. Quarterly strategic reviews check the five SMART objectives, run by the Executive Committee and reported to the Board. An annual culture survey, based on Schein's (2010) three levels,

checks whether innovation and sustainability values are becoming real habits, not just stated aims. Percy (2019) lists poor stakeholder engagement, not enough resources, the wrong culture, unmanaged resistance, and failing to find root causes as the most common reasons change programmes fail. Table 3 maps each of these to a JLR-specific risk and this plan's response.

Common failure factor (Percy, 2019)	JLR-specific risk	Mitigation in this plan
Insufficient stakeholder engagement	Repeat of rebrand-style backlash	Dealer/customer consultation before public launches (5.3)
Insufficient resources	EV/software investment under-funded	Ring-fenced £15bn+ budget (5.2)
Unsuitable culture	Engineering-first culture resists AI/software shift	Cross-functional teams; annual culture survey (4.2, 5.4)
Unmanaged resistance	Workforce anxiety from redundancies/shift changes	Change champions; Change Curve-informed support (5.3)
Failure to find root causes	Cyberattack treated as one-off IT issue	Independent cyber-security audit objective (5.1)

Table 3: Common change-failure factors mapped to JLR-specific risks and mitigations.

This evaluation plan keeps two things separate, which JLR's recent history shows are easy to mix up: measuring progress on a planned transformation, and testing resilience against an unplanned shock. The SMART objectives and KPI tracking above cover the first. The second needs the independent cyber-security audit from Section 5.1 to become a standing check, not a one-off response to 2025. Teece (2018) argues that dynamic capability must be kept up, not rebuilt after every crisis. A formal strategic review in 2027 gives JLR a chance to adjust investment and objectives in light of market conditions and the lessons of 2025.

6. Conclusion

JLR stands at a real turning point. This is shaped by external pressures electric-car laws, post-Brexit trade rules, and a landmark cyberattack and by internal gaps in capability rooted in its engineering-led history. Of the models studied, Kotter's (1996) framework gives the clearest operational guidance, Lewin (1951) explains why urgency was needed, and Pettigrew's (1987) model best explains why execution, not strategy itself, has been the repeated cause of failure. JLR's leadership has been good at setting out a vision, but the 'Copy Nothing' rebrand shows the cost of using a directive style for a decision that needed wider consultation. Schein's (2010) and Pettigrew's (1987) work on culture confirms that shifting JLR's deep assumptions will take years, not one campaign cycle.

The change plan set out here brings all this together: a £15 billion investment programme; SMART objectives covering electrification, AI, software and cyber-resilience; a stakeholder

communication strategy shaped directly by the rebrand's failure and the Kübler-Ross (1969) Change Curve; and a three-level evaluation framework built around known causes of change failure (Percy, 2019). Together, these give JLR a clear, evidence-based route through this transformation. If carried out with discipline and real care for the people living through it, this plan offers a credible path to a resilient, digitally competitive JLR.

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