

Change and Transition

“It isn’t the changes that do you in, it’s the transitions.”

William Bridges

Bridges definitions of each:

<i>Change</i>	External	Situational e.g. the new boss; new team roles; new policy, program, technology
<i>Transition</i>	Internal	Psychological reorientation people need to go through in order to move through change effectively.



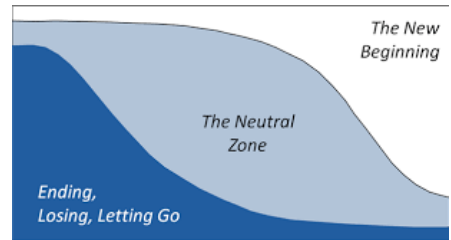
Source: Managing Transitions, William Bridges

Transitions

- Unless transition occurs, we will not move through change effectively.
- Transition begins with an ending i.e. letting go of something

Three Phases of Transition:

- No clear boundaries between phases.
- You can be in more than one at a time.
- Movement through phases is “marked by a change in the *dominance* of one phase as it gives way to the next.”



Source: Managing Transitions, William Bridges

Transitions

• Endings:

- Common endings / loss associated with organizational change:
 - Security: “Is everything changing? Will it ever be the same again?”
 - Competence: “Can I learn the new skills? Will I ever be the expert again?”
 - Relationships: “Will our relationship continue? Will I ever see these people again?”
 - Sense of direction: “What’s important? Where are we headed?”
 - Territory: “Where are the boundaries?”
 - Control: “Does anyone care what I think? Everything feels out of my control”

• Neutral Zone:

- We feel disconnected from the past and emotionally unconnected to the present.
- Trying to figure out how to do things in the new way feels uncomfortable.

• New beginnings: People need the Four P’s:

- The Purpose
- A Picture
- The Plan, and
- A Part to Play.
- Eventually, the new beginning becomes the new norm.

Source: Managing Transitions, William Bridges



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Endings

“You can’t steal second base with your foot still on first.”

- Identify what is ending and who will have to let go of what.
- Acknowledge the losses openly and empathetically.
- Define what is over and what is not.
- Treat the past with respect; Take a piece of the old with you.

Endings ensure continuity of what really matters.

Source: Managing Transitions, William Bridges



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Neutral Zone

“It’s like being between trapezes. It’s Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There’s nothing to hold onto.”

Marilyn Ferguson, American futurist

- The old way is gone but the new way is not yet comfortable.
- It is a difficult time...yet, it can also be a very creative time.

1. Acknowledge the neutral zone.
2. Provide temporary systems and structures to support people.
 - a. Set short-range goals w/checkpoints.
 - b. Adapt rules/roles/reporting relationships.
 - c. Clarify expectations with upper-level managers.
 - d. Co-define skills/attitudes/training needed.
3. Encourage, model, and engage people in taking stock and considering creative solutions to issues.



Source: Managing Transitions, William Bridges

Needs During Transition

What I Need	How I Get It



Resilience

“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing, the last of the human freedoms – to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances.”

– Viktor Frankl

