

31<sup>ST</sup> INSTITUTE ON REHABILITATION ISSUES:

LEADING AND MANAGING CHANGE IN PUBLIC VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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### *Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) Continuing Education Credit*

Readers are encouraged to use the 31<sup>st</sup> Institute on Rehabilitation Issues monograph *Leading and Managing Change in Public Vocational Rehabilitation* as a self-study course in order to obtain continuing education credit for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). Persons interested in earning CRC credit should study the questions at the end of each chapter. Then go to the University of Arkansas CURRENTS Web site, [www.rcep6.org](http://www.rcep6.org), to register and take the online examination. There is a \$25 registration fee to take the exam.

Additional online exams for CRC using previously published IRIs are available at the University of Arkansas CURRENTS Web site and at the George Washington University Web site, <http://www.gwu.edu/~rrcep/>.

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# Preface

*Stop congratulating yourself. Your best efforts have not been enough.*

“Wait a minute,” you say, “I have a great management team, the Governor has just recognized our agency as a Malcolm Baldrige award recipient. The state legislature approved a five percent increase in our budget. We are serving more people this year than last. And I recently was acknowledged as humanitarian of the year by the State Association of Chambers of Commerce. How dare you say that what I am doing is not enough?”

It’s simple. Take a step outside of your agency. Forget about the “Vocational Rehabilitation Program” for a minute. Look at the numbers. People with disabilities continue to experience rates of poverty, un/underemployment, social isolation, and inadequate education at rates higher than nearly any other group in this country. Past and current efforts have not made significant changes. Just as the poor were left behind in the Gulf States when Hurricane Katrina devastated the area, people with disabilities have been left behind. This Nation’s population of people with disabilities has problems that are not being solved through new placement strategies or the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with sister state agencies. The nearly 100 years of VR strategies have not made the economic and social impact that is needed. In short, we have not done enough.

Consider the following:

Human knowledge is expected to be doubling every year by the year 2012. (Ambani, 2002) By 2010 technical information will be doubling every 72 hours. (McCain & Jukes, 2000)

An average of 20,000 new, amended and changed laws, statutes and ordinances are added to the books of our country's Federal, State, County and city legal systems each month their governing bodies are in session. (Quisenberry, 2002)

The internet is doubling in size every 120 days and more than 80% of the sites that will exist a year from now don't exist today. (McCain & Jukes, 2000)

Are you ready for this future?

This document is a challenge to you. This is a "Call to Action." It is an effort to assist you to examine who and what you are. It is an effort to move you, the reader, the administrator, the advocate, the leader. This document offers you tools to evaluate who you are; to encourage and excite you into becoming an even greater leader so that you can tackle larger issues. This reading will explore the concept of the "Three Dimensional Leader" as a vehicle for building a defining legacy.

After reading this brief preface, you may feel that this challenge sounds grandiose. You may even think it insulting and insensitive to your many great achievements. In fact, you may not want to continue past this page. The evidence shows that the people you serve are consistently one of the poorest, most isolated and marginalized groups in the country. Clearly your one-dimensional efforts have resulted in mediocrity. Is mediocrity what you want as your legacy?





## Chapter One

# Call to Action

Welcome. We are pleased that upon reading the Preface, you chose to continue. This represents either curiosity or a commitment to change. In either case, we hope that this “Call to Action” creates a renewed and expanded energy in you for creating, managing and leading change.

As the Primary Study Group (PSG) on “Leading and Managing Change” wrestled with how to approach this topic, all eyes turned to Steve Wooderson, Director of the Iowa Division of Rehabilitation Services, as he formed an “L” with both arms while pushing the palms of his hands toward the ceiling. He told the PSG that he wanted to “push the discussion to a higher level.” At this point in the process, Steve and the rest of the PSG were not certain of exactly what was meant. Over the next several weeks, Steve’s challenge resulted in our recognition that VR agencies must take an activist role that reaches outside of their organizations in order to address the complex and serious issues facing people with disabilities. The urgency felt by this IRI group resulted in a “Call to Action” for addressing Change.

Change. Do you welcome it, or run from it? Does it fill you with uncertainty and fear, or fuel your creative juices? Change alters, transforms, even revolutionizes. It can happen gradually, with a well thought out plan and goal, or suddenly and chaotically. Our reaction to change depends largely on whether it is self-directed or externally created. Change has both emotional and behavioral aspects. It can be exhilarating or frightening.

During the last several decades, changing systems, enacted laws and a shift to increased consumer involvement and control have all positively impacted

the lives of people with disabilities. Nevertheless, in the United States, having a disability still means being socially isolated, un/underemployed and living at a poverty rate higher than virtually any other categorical group. For many, it means being unnecessarily institutionalized, unable to find safe accessible housing, and unprepared to successfully transition from school to a career. The 2004 National Organization on Disability/Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities confirms this reality.

For many, having a disability means struggling daily with a fragmented system that is administered by multiple government and private agencies with contradictory and competing rules. For millions of Americans, despite the 1999 Supreme Court decision of *Olmstead v. L.C.* (527 U.S. 581) affirming the right to services in the most integrated setting, a public policy bias toward segregated services and institutional care continues and translates into social isolation. For students with disabilities, it means having an increased school dropout rate. As a result, virtually all social and economic indicators measuring quality of life are lower for Americans with disabilities than their non-disabled counterparts.

Other social and economic trends such as budget deficits, the growing cost of the Medicaid program, and cultural changes in the workplace, impose new challenges on the VR professional in planning programs and forming partnerships. The VR system was not designed to address the interplay of all of these complex issues. Successfully managing a VR system depends on addressing the many competing priorities.

Efforts have been made to consolidate the VR program with other workforce development programs. The Rehabilitation Act has been part of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) since 1998. WIA's initial authorization ended in 2003, and negotiations surrounding the reauthorization have included proposals to further the integration of the VR program into the nation's workforce system, as well as increasing the amount of VR funds to be used in paying for the one-stop infrastructure.

The one-stop system is intended to reduce duplication and provide services more efficiently and cost-effectively. When the governing principles of the WIA reauthorization center on cost-effectiveness and efficiency measures, values such as assisting individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain employment that is "consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice" are at risk.

As VR professionals, we must decide how we are going to respond to these proposals. How can we maintain the values we hold and the funding we've fought so hard to obtain for rehabilitation services for people with disabilities while working in a larger context of collaboration, partnership and

integration with our nation's workforce system? How can we partner with people with disabilities to overcome these threats to the viability of the VR program? How can we use these changes to address more resources for the issues of poverty and unemployment faced by many people with disabilities? How can we improve the world we live in?

Our vision is a world in which people with disabilities live independently, enjoy self-determination, make informed choices, contribute to society, pursue meaningful careers and enjoy full inclusion and integration in the mainstream of American society. As VR professionals we are change agents in the lives of people with disabilities. We are also change agents within our communities. It is our mission to change the way society views disability. How can we make these changes happen?

The purpose of this document is to equip you as a rehabilitation leader with a context for leading VR organizations through rapidly changing environments. We must manage change in order to be a catalyst for advances in inclusion, integration and full participation for people with disabilities. We must create organizations that people with disabilities, partners and policy-makers value and embrace. We must position our organizations to support broader policy initiatives in the community that will address the systemic barriers facing people we serve.

This document also provides a context for understanding the environment affecting people with disabilities and public vocational rehabilitation; frameworks for action; tools that will assist you to assess your orientation to change, identify what you care about, your core values, and provide you with a framework for leading change on multiple levels.

We challenge you to look at yourself and how you are responding to the changing world of VR. We ask you to respond to three central questions.

1. Do you see yourself and, more importantly, do you act as a person responsible for making your organization what it should be?
2. Are you positioning your agency to influence and create a better world for people with disabilities, not just react to outside forces?
3. Do you use your position to create a different world for people with disabilities?

The tools provided will help you to assess yourself on these three dimensions and to move to a position of power where you can lead and create positive action. Models are included to help you move from the current state to the desired state, moving through the chaos of denial, resistance and anger, to commitment to organizational change which can impact cultural change.

The document includes an opportunity to explore three dimensions of leadership, including ways to position your organization so that you are participating in other statewide efforts that lead to the full participation of people with disabilities in the community.

There is a challenge for creating a “Legacy.” The document encourages you to examine what is most important to you and how to position the agency so that lasting and substantial changes will occur. Creating a legacy is covered in the context of moving systems and transforming organizations.

Creating positive change is what leadership is all about. In order to improve vocational rehabilitation services in our nation we must transform our services, not just manage them. In order to increase the employment opportunities of people with disabilities we must make changes. Failure to change leads to stagnation. People with disabilities will continue to have the highest unemployment rate of any group if the status quo is not challenged. In order to improve our outcomes, we must find new ways to do our work. Leaders must generate urgency for making changes. Then a strategy for change can be developed and implemented. In order to achieve organizational change, individual change is required. Leo Tolstoy wrote “Everyone thinks about changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”

We must evolve. We must change. If we’re not growing, which also requires change, we’re dying. “Equilibrium is death.” (Pascale, Millemann, & Gioja, 2000, pg. 19)

## Chapter Two

# The Challenge to be a Three-Dimensional Leader

Leaders. We need them now more than ever.

But what kind of leaders do we need? We believe that we need leaders who can succeed in three dimensions. We invite you to challenge yourself to act effectively as a three-dimensional leader who:

### **1. Makes the organization what it should be.**

Take responsibility to see that your organization lives up to the principles that guide and challenge all rehabilitation organizations:

- Full inclusion and participation in the mainstream for people with disabilities
- Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work
- Respect for self-determination and informed choice

The Dimension One leader is responsible for setting the strategic vision for the organization and for helping others in the organization to develop the goals and steps needed to achieve that vision. This dimension is about individual performance and how the leader models behavior for others. The leader has direct control and authority over the strategic direction and accountability for outcomes achieved.

### **2. Positions your organization to influence and create positive change, not just react.**

Proactively define the issues and shape the debate on disability and reha-

bilitation issues in the public policy arena and in the community.

A leader in Dimension Two initiates change through the power of position and the power of the program. The knowledge, authority and even the money that your program represents may create a seat for you at the table as you interact with other organizations and programs to develop positions on issues that impact the disability community, workforce programs, etc. But you will not be considered a contributing member unless you make your voice heard. It is not enough to sit back and wait to be invited to participate with other programs. Dimension 2 leaders seek opportunities to develop new relationships with other organizations and community programs in order to expand resources and share ideas that will strengthen and broaden their organizations' goals.

### **3. Changes the world, not just the organization.**

Our commitment to the principles that guide vocational rehabilitation invites us to a third dimension of leadership; making a broader contribution to the integration and full participation of people with disabilities using the visibility and standing that our positions give us.

In Dimension Three, the leader acts as a follower and supporter of efforts initiated by others to address serious issues that impact society. The role of the leader may be to serve as a mentor, encouraging and facilitating the growth of other leaders, or simply to contribute talents and resources to strengthen the positions of allies.

This chapter will describe what we mean by a “Three-Dimensional (3-D) Leader” and give you a chance to look at yourself in all three dimensions. Our intent is to both challenge you to become that leader and to show you that you already have experience with, or exposure to, 3-D leadership.

## **What is a Three-Dimensional Leader?**

***Dimension One: A leader who works tirelessly and effectively to make the organization what it should be.***

*Are we doing enough? Are we doing it well enough? Where could we improve? Are we acting in a way that is true to our principles and values?*

These questions and others like them drive the leader in Dimension One (D1). Dimension One leaders ask others to share their compulsion to learn, change, improve, grow; to become something closer to the organization we'd be if we could have it the way we want it.

Leaders are focused on continuous improvement, finding “the better way.” This ranges from how we treat consumers and staff to whether our financial resources are properly aligned with the organization's strategic objectives.

These leaders create a continuous learning environment where staff members have the opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge and prepare themselves for the changing demands of the world. These leaders encourage and reward innovation in the workplace.

The DI leader may impact the organization in a range of ways from specific initiatives to improve selected aspects of the organization's business process to transformational change that completely restructures the way the organization operates. Our Spotlight Experiences in Chapter 7 provide an example of implementation of a new case and financial management system in a Midwest state agency. (See *Strategies to Implement Iowa General's New Case and Financial Management Technology*, p. 82)

An example of a wholesale change in the organization's culture creating an ongoing process of improvement that engages all reaches of the organization is found in another of the Spotlight Experiences. (See *Profile in Strategic Change; Vermont's Vision 2000*, p. 77)

Whatever the approach, the process never stops. The leader continually engages people in the organization in improving what the organization does, how it does it and the results it gets. They also regularly engage people outside the organization to help assess how the organization is doing and where it could do better.

And then they do it again. The people they serve deserve nothing less.

*Now use the worksheet on page 18 to analyze your own Dimension One change.*

# Worksheet: Dimensions of Change Initiatives

**Think of a time when you:**



Led or made a change in your organization to make it more like it should be.

**Review the three Rehab Act principles:**

- ...Full inclusion and participation in the mainstream
- ...Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work and
- ...Respect for self-determination and informed choice

**How did your change relate to them?**

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**What did you learn from making that change:**

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**What did you do that helped you make the change? What "worked"?**

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**What would you do differently if you could do it over again?**

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## Lead Change Where You Are!

*How do you become a local change agent? William Hendricks believes you have to “find a way to meet your needs and the partner’s needs at the same time.”*

*In the summer of 2000, Nancy Pate and William Hendricks, transition counselors for Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, began working on a way to create work experiences for 44 students with developmental disabilities. The main problem was finding transportation to the work sites.*

*They solved the problem by working with Bob Haddock, director of the Tulsa Public Schools Transportation Department (TPS). Bob agreed to bus the high school students to several worksites if Nancy and Bill would provide him with students to work at the TPS transportation department. The Vocational Rehabilitation agency funds the student salaries.*

*Five years later, more than 300 students have received a variety of community work experiences and secured good jobs in personnel services, accounting, laundry, maintenance and housekeeping. They have jobs in radio communications, Geo map coding, data entry and more.*

*Bill said “It was a good marriage from the beginning. It met both our needs.”*

### **Dimension 2: A leader who positions the organization to influence and create change, not just react.**

The Dimension Two (D2) leader helps define the issues and shape the debate on disability and rehabilitation issues in the public policy arena and in the community. D2 Leaders don’t wait to deal with changes after they’ve been defined and decided by others.

The fascinating secret of leadership at any level of an organization, even the top, is how little you really control. You may have the ability to direct things within your organization, but your success and the fate of your organization has much to do with the decisions made by a wide array of people who don’t work for you. Some of them make decisions about how much money your agency has to work with as well as the rules and results that will define your work. Others have opinions and agendas about what your agency should be doing and try to influence policy- and decision-makers. Others are your partners or competitors, depending on the issue or situation.

Leadership in Dimension Two requires leaders to use skills that go beyond wielding the power of position. They are engaged with others who, in many cases, have more power than they do. Success grows out of an understanding

of the interests, values and agendas of the key people involved in the issue. The leader uses that insight to chart a course that works with the interests of those key players. You succeed by defining success in a way others can, and do, support.

In this leadership role it is key to build credibility with others. The D2 leader must be recognized for her knowledge and expertise. The leader's program or organization must be recognized for its contribution to the overall benefit of the community or state. These characteristics will open the door to participation in the discussion of issues. However, in order to retain this "membership" and be taken seriously, D2 leaders must work hard to build relationships with other members and to learn about their programs. In this way they are able to develop persuasive and convincing positions that support the needs of the group while preserving services for their own constituency.

The effective D2 leader recognizes what is happening in the environment and positions the organization to influence and create change, not just react. Some of that work translates into changes to improve the organization's purposes and processes described in Dimension One leadership. But it doesn't stop there. The leader is also responsible to anticipate or predict what might happen in the future and develop scenarios and contingency plans to prepare for those eventualities. Sometimes a leader may have to take charge by shaping a future as in the case study of one northwestern state's strategy on One Stop implementation. (See Alaska's Strategy for One Stop Leadership, p. 72)

The second dimension of leadership could involve redefining relationships and roles that reshape your organization in a fundamental way, like the exciting process illustrated in a third Spotlight Experience from a center for independent living in the Northeast. (See Civil Rights through Profits: Resource Center for Independent Living, New York, p. 68)

Effective leadership in Dimension Two requires the leader to think ahead six months or more, recognize what is happening and what is likely to happen that could effect the organization and chart a course that shapes that future rather than wait and react once the change has already blown the organization off course.

*Once again use the worksheet on page 21. This time consider a change that you led or observed.*

# Worksheet: Dimensions of Change Initiatives

Think of a time when you:



Positioned your organization to influence and create, not just react to, change

**Review the three Rehab Act principles:**

- ... Full inclusion and participation in the mainstream
- ... Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work and
- ... Respect for self-determination and informed choice

**How did your change relate to them?**

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**What did you learn from making that change:**

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**What did you do that helped you make the change? What "worked"?**

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**What would you do differently if you could do it over again?**

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### ***Dimension 3: A leader who endeavors to change the world, not just the organization.***

Leadership in this dimension can very well be exercised through your activities and strategies in the first two dimensions.

- Are your efforts to improve your organization grounded and guided by the principles of full inclusion, the right to pursue a meaningful career and respect for self-determination and informed choice? Do your solutions focus on moving your organization closer to living them fully?
- Do you bring these principles to your efforts to influence and create change in your work with others?

Just as the second dimension of leadership calls for a wider set of skills than the first dimension, Dimension Three (D3) challenges us to assume an even more challenging role: to help achieve goals defined by others, including the very people we are committed to empowering.

We contribute, not by making a visionary call to action or taking responsibility to develop strategies for others to follow—we contribute by working with leaders in the disability community and leaders in the broader community to create the world people with disabilities deserve: full inclusion and participation in the mainstream of society.

This may be the hardest leadership role to play for those privileged to lead an organization. This role requires you to step back and let others lead. However, the position you hold can bring attention and sometimes resources to an issue that may not get the support it needs without your involvement. In Dimension Three, the leader serves as a resource to a cause for which they feel a deep commitment but which does not directly impact his or her organization.

There are many challenges already defined by disability rights organizations, centers for independent living and others in your area. Some of those challenges and the efforts to overcome them actually connect well with your organization's mission. For example, in many communities transportation is a major barrier to the integration and full participation of people with disabilities. Of course, it also limits their employment opportunities.

The challenge of leadership in the third dimension is to recognize these struggles as opportunities to support people with disabilities in their decades-long efforts to eliminate the barriers in society that hold them back. Find a way to be part of or assist the coalitions or campaigns that emerge in your community or state. Contribute by finding a way to use the advantages that

your office brings—information, credibility, connections, etc—to further the cause.

As a leader in a public rehabilitation program, you are placed in a position of fiduciary responsibility. This responsibility comes at a cost and occasionally creates conflict when your decisions are not in keeping with the desires of others in the disability community. These conflicts create opportunities for coalition building. Identify those individuals who also have strong convictions and meet with them to help identify those areas where changes are needed for broad and sweeping contributions to the lives of people with disabilities. Find the areas in common based on the three foundational principles: full inclusion and participation, pursuit of a meaningful career and self-determination. These individuals will become part of your powerful coalition for leadership and change and you will become part of theirs.

There are opportunities in the broader community, as well.

What about the literacy program started in the immigrant community? Does it include or address people with disabilities? How could you help make sure it does?

Consider the campaign by the business community to revitalize downtown. Does it include universal design so that people with disabilities truly experience a welcoming environment?

Other potential areas include improving transportation, education and job opportunities. How can you help make the great ideas being launched by leaders in your community great ideas for people with disabilities?

*Finally, please complete the worksheet on the next page for Dimension 3.*

If you found it difficult to think of an example in one or more of these dimensions that you personally initiated, think of one initiated by someone else you've watched or worked with.

What did you observe about his or her experience? What lessons did you learn from the experience?

The next chapter will share the legacy of leadership we inherit and are responsible to continue.

# Worksheet: Dimensions of Change Initiatives

Think of a time when you:



Took some action that contributed to efforts to create an environment in your community or state that increased integration and full participation of people with disabilities.

**Review the three Rehab Act principles:**

- ...Full inclusion and participation in the mainstream
- ...Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work and
- ...Respect for self-determination and informed choice

**How did your change relate to them?**

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**What did you learn from making that change:**

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**What did you do that helped you make the change? What "worked"?**

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**What would you do differently if you could do it over again?**

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## Chapter Three

# Legacy of Three-Dimensional Leaders

In the last chapter, you learned what it takes to be a three-dimensional leader. Now, we would like to look at how the history of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program has been shaped by individuals who exemplified three-dimensional leadership. Some of these leaders worked inside the public VR program to make the organization effective in achieving its mission. Other leaders worked outside of the public VR program to advocate for change and innovation in service delivery to better meet the needs of consumers. While we have selected persons of national stature who exemplify three-dimensional leadership, we are hopeful that you will apply these characteristics to yourself to see how you measure up to the best in the field. Also, while the process of choosing only a few leaders out of so many who have excelled is subjective, we want to acknowledge the many other star performers who could just as easily have been the subjects of this chapter.

### **Mary Switzer**

Any discussion of the history of the public VR program, or the principles embodied in it, would be incomplete without describing the individual who is recognized as its most powerful leader. Mary Switzer became the second director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) in 1950, and was its charismatic leader until her retirement in 1970. She garnered presidential and congressional support for the program that led to annual budget increases and a growing national consciousness of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities. The following excerpt from the OVR 1951 Annual Report gives a sense of Switzer's vision for the VR program, and ultimately how

this vision affects the future for individuals with disabilities:

Rehabilitation means different things to different people. To some it means the maximum possible restoration of impaired physical functioning. To some it means vocational training for a job. To still others it means placement in a job matched to the physical capacity of the individual. But to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the term has a broader meaning. In relation to the handicapped person who can be prepared for gainful employment, it means restoring him to the fullest physical, mental, social, vocational, and economic usefulness for which he is capable (OVR/FSA Annual Report, 1951, p. 2).

Here, Switzer states a vision for the OVR that is consistent with the mission of the federal VR program and demonstrates the first characteristic of a three-dimensional leader: making your organization what it should be. Her vision is to restore individuals with disabilities to the full extent of their capabilities. It is a vision that has been consistent throughout the history of the VR program, in spite of attempts to temper it by promoting short cuts to entry-level jobs that often meet the needs of employers, rather than the goals of individuals with disabilities receiving VR services.

Switzer's administration of the VR program during the 1960s saw the emergence of a number of U.S. Department of Labor funded initiatives, such as the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), to train unemployed people. Gradually, the focus of the MDTA became poverty reduction, targeting welfare recipients and low-income youth. The MDTA was later folded into the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act, which formed part of President Johnson's "Great Society" initiative. This legislation had little impact on the VR program because of its unique system of providing comprehensive services and not just training (Friedlander, Greenberg, & Robins, 1997, p. 1833).

Mary Switzer observed this growing group of "hard core" unemployed individuals whose needs were not being met by the standard procedures of the generic employment program. She enlarged her vision of the program to include these individuals, whom she believed could be prepared for jobs by using the same method as practiced with individuals with disabilities. She was convincing, and President Johnson urged the passage of legislation that would broaden the eligibility criteria for the VR program and assist millions of Americans to take advantage of the rehabilitation process. Because of her

experience and successful track record in government, she had positioned herself to influence and create change, not just react.

In carrying the message that the VR program could be helpful to individuals who were typically not considered eligible for services from the public VR program, she focused on the following two important values that still reverberate in contemporary American society: first, the emphasis the VR program places on the positive worth of each individual; and second, the cost-effectiveness of the program. While prejudice against persons with disabilities still exists, the current situation is an improvement over the open hostility, forced institutionalization, and overt discrimination that pervaded America prior to the legal and social changes that occurred during the latter part of the twentieth century. Switzer's leadership in rehabilitation contributed to this sea change.

Switzer gained wide support for the values she espoused by meeting with politicians, employers, persons with disabilities, and other stakeholders in the public VR program. During her administration OVR continued to develop cooperative agreements with other federal agencies with a mutual interest in and a responsibility for improving the service delivery and employment of individuals with disabilities.

She fostered interagency linkages, inter-state collaboration and sharing of effective practices. She broadened the scope of the rehabilitation legislation to include international research in order to improve the plight of individuals with disabilities from other countries. She communicated her vision to others in a convincing manner that brought additional support. Finally, in recognition of her own personal strengths and limitations, she delegated authority for many managerial concerns within the federal bureaucracy to skilled subordinates so that she could continue to advocate effectively on behalf of individuals with disabilities.

## **Ed Roberts**

Ed Roberts, considered a pioneer of the disability rights movement, began his quest in the 1960s to reshape how America viewed individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with significant disabilities, and to improve service delivery to enable them to live independently in their communities. Severely disabled from polio, which he contracted as a teenager, he had virtually no functional movement and was dependent on a respirator to breathe. Justin Dart, another disability rights activist who will be discussed later in this chapter, described Roberts as follows:

He was a major prophet of the new revolution of independence, not for nations or groups, but for people as individuals.

Ed declared that people with disabilities are fully human; that they have a right and a responsibility to throw off traditional paternalism, to take control of their own lives, to help build a new culture in which they and all people participate fully in the leadership, the labor and the fruits of society (Dart, 1995).

His courage spurred others to join the disability rights movement and to take a stand to ensure people with the most significant disabilities received services and had a voice in what those services would be.

Roberts had a vision of how organizations should be run so they would contribute to the integration and full participation of people with disabilities. In 1972, he founded the Berkeley Center for Independent Living (CIL). He challenged an entrenched system using the methods of the student activists of the 1960s and early 1970s to accomplish his goals. He used his position as an activist to influence and create change in organizations from the outside, continually engaging the disability service community in the discussion of how people with disabilities can be more fully in control of the services they need and more completely integrated into the community.

Roberts became the director of the California Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) in 1974. He demonstrated the third characteristic of a three-dimensional leader by establishing nine CILs across the state, based on the model of the original CIL that he founded in Berkeley. The success of the centers demonstrated that the CIL model could be replicated. Using his position of influence as the director of the California DRS, Roberts promoted the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout California DRS. He encouraged the development of state-level policies and guidance to improve consumer involvement in the decisions affecting their lives and in managing the programs designed to provide services to them. Hundreds of CILs were developed following the example of the Berkeley CIL. In addition, thousands of individuals with significant disabilities became employed as a result of the efforts and example of Ed Roberts.

## **Justin Dart**

I won't change history single-handedly, but maybe I can plant a few seeds... I reach out to you with passion, with love, I cry out to you. Lead! Lead!

Justin Dart Jr. ([www.caringinstitute.org](http://www.caringinstitute.org), 5/19/85)

Justin Dart was born into wealth and privilege. His grandfather founded

the Walgreens Drugstore chain; his father was a successful business executive; and his mother was a successful writer. Dart later described how he became a “super loser” as a way of establishing his identity in a family of “super winners.” He said of his early years that people did not like him and that he did not like himself. His troublesome youth was interrupted, however, when at age 18 he contracted polio. Although he survived the disease, he was no longer able to walk and had to use a wheelchair. What would have been an insurmountable obstacle to many became a challenge which caused him to become a staunch advocate for disability rights throughout his life. He attended the University of Houston from 1951 to 1954, earning both a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in political science and history. His goal was to become a teacher, but the university withheld his teaching certificate because he used a wheelchair ([www.namisc.org](http://www.namisc.org), Justin Dart, An Obituary, pg. 2, 5/19/05).

In 1956, he went into business, later opening businesses in Japan and Mexico. He founded Japan Tupperware in 1963 and made it a priority to hire women and people with disabilities as his businesses expanded. In Japan, he helped significantly disabled people move out of institutions and gave them jobs within his company ([www.namisc.org](http://www.namisc.org), pg. 3, 5/19/05).

Dart established work environments and hiring practices in his businesses that demonstrated the principles of human and disability rights that were so important to him. He made his organization what he envisioned it should be.

By the 1970s Dart and his wife, Yoshiko, had sold their business interests and dedicated their lives to the cause of human and disability rights ([www.namisc.org](http://www.namisc.org), pg. 3). From this point until his death in June 2002, Dart worked tirelessly as a disability activist. Starting in Texas in the 1980s, he became Chair of the Texas Governor’s Committee for Persons with Disabilities. In 1981, President Reagan appointed him to be vice-chair of the National Council on Disability. In 1986, Dart was appointed Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), located within the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in the U.S. Department of Education. Dart called for radical changes in the organization, recommending inclusion of people with disabilities in every aspect of planning and oversight of the program. His feelings were so strong about these issues that he was asked to resign after providing testimony before Congress that was highly critical of the OSERS and RSA. He put his job on the line in an attempt to influence and create change in the organization.

During the 1980s, the Darts engaged in a national tour, meeting with disability activists in every state in order to promote interest in the development

of national disability rights legislation. This effort resulted in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. He worked tirelessly to pass this legislation and is affectionately known as “the father of the Americans with Disabilities Act.” In 1994 when there were significant attacks on the ADA, he founded the nonprofit organization, Justice for All, to counter the attacks, once again leading the charge and encouraging grassroots movements to work together toward a single goal of disability rights. In 1998, President Bill Clinton honored him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor awarded by the nation.

Dart devoted his life and much of his personal wealth to the cause of disability rights and empowerment. He remained dedicated to his vision of a “revolution of empowerment.” This would be, he said, “a revolution that confronts and eliminates obsolete thoughts and systems, that focuses the full power of science and free-enterprise democracy on the systematic empowerment of every person to live his or her God-given potential” ([www.namisc.org](http://www.namisc.org), pg. 3). He encouraged individuals to become leaders and thereby maximize their power and influence in making change occur.

Mary Switzer, Ed Roberts, and Justin Dart embody the characteristics of the three-dimensional leader. Each took personal responsibility to make sure that organizations lived up to the principles that guide all rehabilitation organizations. All took risks to position their organizations and businesses to create the positive changes they envisioned rather than waiting for an external stimulus. While it may be observed that Dart was more of an outsider than the other two and spent less time within the confines of an organizational entity, he equaled the other two in shaping the future of rehabilitation and disability rights in this country. Those of us in the disability community or working in the field of rehabilitation today have benefited from the legacies of these three great leaders and can testify to the fact that these individuals were not satisfied with effecting change within their own organizations but did, indeed, change the world.

The exemplary leadership of Switzer, Roberts and Dart challenges us to guard the principles of full inclusion, the right to pursue a meaningful career and respect for self-determination and informed choice and to ensure the continuation of the legacy they fought so hard to create. Are you up to the challenge? Are you taking the first steps to lead from your position in the organization, or are you ready to take on the world? Read on and find out.

## **Chapter Four**

# **Prepare To Change**

We inherit a legacy of three-dimensional leadership that has been guided by commitment to the principles of full inclusion, the right to pursue a meaningful career and self-determination and informed choice.

Now it's your turn. This chapter gives you the chance to think about the challenges and possibilities that call to you as a three-dimensional leader. It will also give you some information to consider about personal readiness for change in general, and specifically for leading change.

As you read through and respond to the suggestions that follow, consider what is important to you and what you care about. Review your answers to the worksheet questions from Chapter Two for your context for change.

# Worksheet: Planning a Change

List the things you would change, if you could have it the way you want it:



To make your organization what it should be...if it lived up fully to the three principles that guide and challenge you and your organization:

- Full inclusion and participation in the mainstream
- Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work and  
and
- Respect for self-determination and informed choice

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To position your organization to influence and create, not just react to, change.

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To use the visibility and standing of your position to help make a more inclusive and integrated world for people with disabilities.

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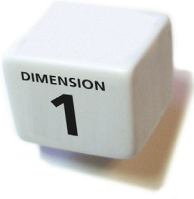
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# Worksheet: Assessing Attitudes



List people inside and outside your organization who have told you what they would change, if they could have it the way they want it. What have they said to you?

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How would they like your organization to position itself on issues or challenges they see?

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What needs to happen to create a truly inclusive and welcoming environment for people with disabilities in your community and state?

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You've just done some thinking about the three dimensions of leadership that are needed. The challenges and opportunities ahead can fill our careers. In fact, they will.

You and others may have different views about changes that need to be made. These changes can make up a pretty long list. Some may even conflict! Three-dimensional leadership isn't easy, but necessary. Even critical! We have many miles to go before we sleep.

## **Are You Prepared?**

*Everyone* can choose to make the organization what he or she would like it to be. And this means *you!* *You are a leader!* Sometimes you may not feel like one, or you may be saying to yourself, "No, that is someone else higher up in my organization." But the fact of the matter is that *everyone* is a leader.

You've now invested some time reading about change and about 3-D leadership. Let's look now at how to apply this to you, where you are at any point in time or any position in your organization. The rest of this chapter offers some guidance for self assessment. Your attitude is key to successful change in all three dimensions so it's worth investing time and some resources in personal preparation.

There is a critical set of principles that determines your success in managing or embracing the change process. Let's look at them.

- I cannot control others.
- I can control myself.
- I accept responsibility for my actions, reactions, decisions and emotions.
- I share responsibility for the success of change leadership in my organization.

Now, think about the above statements and how you feel when you consider them. Do they make you feel uneasy or confident? What does that feeling tell you about your readiness for change and leadership opportunities?

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# If YOU DO what YOU have always DONE YOU will GET what YOU have always GOTTEN

## You

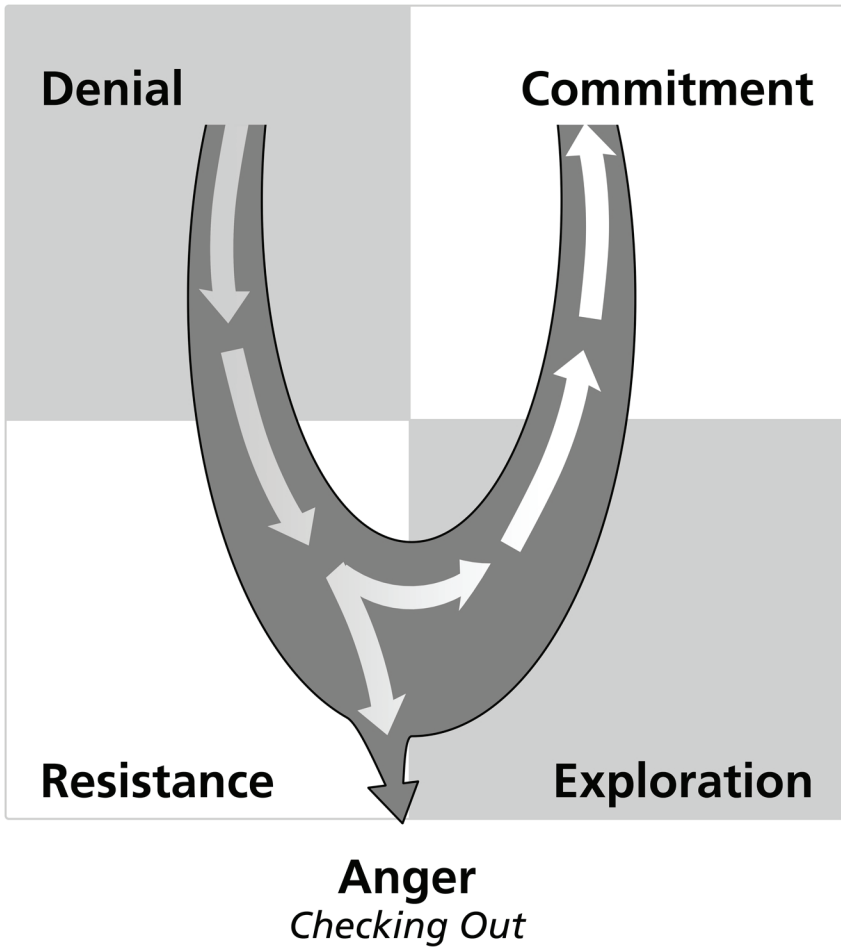
The most important word in the illustration above is *you*. In order to assist you in determining where you are in your readiness to be a three dimensional leader in an ever changing environment, the Study Group would like to suggest a few assessments that may be useful to you. These can also be used as coaching tools to help others identify and/or discuss their current state in terms of readiness or impact of the organizational change being faced.

Let's begin by looking at a model that places reaction to change on a curve. (Bibler, 1989) Regardless of your role in making a change, - yes, even if you're leading it - you will experience reactions or responses to the events that unfold. This grid helps us to map our own reactions and understand the reactions of others.

Denial is that place on the change curve where we can still believe the change has nothing to do with us, or, at least, that it won't have that much effect. This stage is sometimes referred to as "uninformed enthusiasm." As long as the change is affecting someone else, it's just fine. During the denial phase many of us will avoid the subject, pretend it isn't happening or hide in the minutia of daily tasks. If you find yourself saying, "I'll believe it when I see it," you might be in denial about an impending change.

Over time your reactions will adjust to your experience with the organization change effort.

Once the change becomes real, most of us will resist in some way or other. Resistance comes in many forms and may be active or passive, but is usually a response to information about the change effort and how it will affect each of us. The resistance phase is important because we begin gathering information about what the change involves. This phase is also called "informed



cynicism” and is a prerequisite for true commitment. Most of us will move through resistance toward exploration and commitment, but others will opt to “check out.”

The critical point on the change curve is at the bottom of the graph, where a choice between acceptance and rejection is made. This probably doesn’t occur at a discrete moment in time, and very rarely is it accompanied by a drum roll, but it is a turning point, with or without the drama.

You know a change is happening. You know that you are part of it. You’ve gathered/received as much information as you could and evaluated it for potential benefit and risk. Some of the information seems overwhelming, even impossible, and it makes you mad that you have to change. If you were the one who dreamed up this change, you question whether it will be worth it. Everyone seems mad and you’re mad, too. But, given some time and lots of communication, you and most of the critical partners will get over it and

begin to look for the best new ways to make this change work.

Those who continue to resist the change will become angrier. They will either leave for a new opportunity to be happy elsewhere or stay and complain, withdraw, refuse to cooperate, and ultimately “quit on the job.” These employees will attempt to undermine the success of a change project. Managers will be wise to keep these employees close, to bring them into the fold, or let them go.

The exploration phase on the change curve refers to the period after resistance when we move into “hopeful adoption.” Here the curve gains upward momentum and employees begin to see more positive than negative possibilities associated with the change.

If change leaders are diligent, persistent and sensitive to the needs of followers, the upward curve will lead to commitment. The change will be accepted, you will enjoy the benefits of it and wonder why you ever did whatever you did the old way. Using the information from the Change Curve Model can help you get there.

## **Assess Your Reaction to Change**

Based on Bibler’s change curve, The Diagonal Group, a consulting firm, created the Change Reaction Survey© in working with organizations engaged in change. They utilize the assessment as a tool because it gives individuals common points of reference and language. When used within a work group or team, it enables individuals to compare progress in a standard manner and understand the dynamics with which colleagues are struggling. Following is the Change Reaction Survey.

### **Change Reaction Survey©**

Think about a major change that you recently experienced or are currently experiencing. The following 24 statements are some examples of how you might think and feel about the changes you are facing.

Your responses need to describe how you actually think and feel today, not how you think you “should” think and feel.

Enter your rating (0-3) next to the number that corresponds to the statement that best matches your reactions today.

Read each item and make your decision quickly.

When you’ve finished, transfer your numbers to the *Reaction Grid* located in Appendix A on page 107.

**Responses:**

0=Strongly disagree; 1=Somewhat disagree; 2=Somewhat agree; 3=Strongly agree

- \_\_\_ 1. I'm taking things one day at a time.
- \_\_\_ 2. I'm not excited about these changes.
- \_\_\_ 3. I'm ready to begin....let's go!
- \_\_\_ 4. I can't wait to get started; the possibilities are exciting.
- \_\_\_ 5. The reality of the change hasn't really set in.
- \_\_\_ 6. I'm not sure I can do what is expected.
- \_\_\_ 7. This stuff looks good—let's get moving!
- \_\_\_ 8. I feel good about what has come out of this process.
- \_\_\_ 9. I don't see what all the fuss is about.
- \_\_\_ 10. Why are we doing this? I didn't see anything broken in the first place.
- \_\_\_ 11. I've got some great ideas about how this could work for me.
- \_\_\_ 12. This initiative makes so much sense; if only we had done this earlier.
- \_\_\_ 13. This really doesn't affect me.
- \_\_\_ 14. This is the same thing as before...just a few new labels.
- \_\_\_ 15. Let me know what I can do to help.
- \_\_\_ 16. I like this a lot better than before.
- \_\_\_ 17. I don't have any feelings about the change.
- \_\_\_ 18. I'm having trouble staying focused and paying attention to my work.
- \_\_\_ 19. There look like some good opportunities for me.
- \_\_\_ 20. I really feel good about myself and what I've accomplished.
- \_\_\_ 21. I just try to do what I have to.
- \_\_\_ 22. I'm upset about the way this whole thing has been carried out.
- \_\_\_ 23. I see some ways that I can contribute to the change.
- \_\_\_ 24. I'm confident of my ability to handle the next changes.

# POWERFUL

8. Lead and Make it happen
7. Find Solutions
6. "Own It"
5. Acknowledge Reality
4. Wait and Hope
3. "I can't" - Excuses
2. Blame Others
1. Unaware/Unconscious

powerless

## Assess Your Power for Change

In looking at this chart, assess which of the eight descriptions reflects your current leadership position with regard to each of the Three Dimensions of Leadership. Support your self assessment with specifics in terms of behaviors, comments, relationships, etc. If you feel comfortable in sharing this information in a group setting or with a co-worker, have another individual identify where he/she thinks you are on this scale, again having

them support that assessment with specifics in terms of behaviors, comments, etc. Discuss what differences there might be in your self perception and the perception of others. Where would you like to be on this 1-8 scale? Think about or continue to discuss what behaviors may look like in a higher, more powerful location on the chart.

## Assess your Personal Power

A simple three-question test will help you to understand your control of a situation. These questions are:

1. What and/or whom can I control?
2. What and/or whom can I influence?
3. What and/or who is out of my control?

The answers to these questions will give you some perspective in preparing to deal with change. It will also provide a "reality check" of sorts on the fact that much of the change that happens is out of our control. Therefore, it is the answer to Question #2 that creates your sphere of influence, which is significant. It is the key guiding principle for change success and determines your leadership role within the organization.

## Self-Assess Four Major Dynamics of Change

Another tool that is available on-line through a self-paced class from Pritchett is the FIRS Survey© that measures four dynamics of change:

*Flexibility*, characterized by a ready capability to adapt to new, different or changing conditions;

*Innovativeness*, characterized by, tending toward or introducing something new;

*Risk Tolerance*, the capacity to endure potential loss or peril; and

*Stress Tolerance*, the capacity to endure strain or pressure.

Your responses on the FIRS Survey© create a personal profile consisting of high and low scores on these four dynamics. There are implications of every profile and strategies for increasing the characteristics that make change more bearable. See Appendix B for information regarding registration and fees for this online training and assessment tool.

## Know Yourself

The self assessments that we have encouraged thus far in this chapter deal with you and your capacity for change. As a leader and change agent you create the climate for success of a change effort. Your leadership style, use of leadership roles in various situations, your communication, negotiation and behavioral tendencies all play a part in creating the culture of your organization.

Too often a change initiative may be derailed simply because of the manner in which the leader delivers the message or is perceived by others. If the leader is oblivious to the impact that perception has on the receipt of the message, attempts to move beyond the status quo are stifled.

For this reason, we strongly encourage you to have a real ‘sense of self’ and personal awareness of how your behavior is perceived by others. There are many models and strategies available to gain that understanding, but one critical component we advocate is input from people surrounding you. Many refer to this approach as a “360 degree” assessment; one in which you report your own perception of whatever behavior is being assessed and your report is then compared with input from supervisors, peers and subordinates.

For most individuals who have participated in these types of assessments, it results in a much greater understanding of self. Persons skilled in interpretation and communication of the results are critical as often new revelations about self could conflict with current thinking and even stir up unexpected challenges to the process. Experience shows that with continued emphasis, the long range benefit leads to improved interaction with peers and greater effectiveness in interpersonal communications.

Some 360 degree leadership inventories that Study Group members have used include:

- The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) based on “The Leadership Challenge” by Kouzes and Posner
- The Seven Habits Profile based on “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” by Steven Covey
- Situational Leadership Inventory based on the situational leadership model by Hersey and Blanchard
- Insights Discovery by Insights ® Learning & Development Ltd. (1992-2001, Lothian)

Contact information to order these assessments is included in Appendix B. There are many other leadership inventories, communication style surveys and personality preference scales or behavioral indices. For purposes of this document, we recommend that you explore those that will work for you and your organization. The more you understand about your leadership behavior, the greater the possibility that you will launch your change initiative with care and consideration.

This chapter is entitled “Prepare to Change” for a good reason. We want you to embrace the notion that we are each responsible for the change we want to see in the world, the organization, and ourselves. It’s not about preparing to change *them*. It *is* about the power each of us has to lead, resist, explore, opt out or commit to change.

In the chapters that follow you will be introduced to a framework for change, an opportunity to assess your own readiness for change and a plan to apply all of this knowledge to becoming an effective Three-Dimensional Leader in the face of all these challenges and all these possibilities.



## Chapter Five

# Defining the Change Framework

As a leader, you are often faced with change that is major in scope and designates a fundamental reorientation in the way your organization operates. (McNamara, 1999) This radical, or transformational, change requires a fast shift in mind set. Relationships change, both internally and externally, and systems change as the transformation process moves forward. Quick, significant outcomes are expected and implementation of the new order is rapid, jolting and often fatiguing.

The bad news is that making your organization what it should be and positioning it to create positive change in your community (not to mention changing the world) will probably involve transformational change. The good news is you already know where to start.

Transformational change begins with you. Renee Hanson, in *Organizational Change: How to Survive and Thrive*, states, “What organizational change ultimately requires is that people develop not just new skills and knowledge but a whole new way of looking at things.” In the preceding exercises, you envisioned a better future for yourself, your organization, your community and your world. You have a whole new way of looking at things. Now you can take action to share that vision with others and work together toward making it a reality. As a Three-Dimensional Leader, you can begin building a framework for change.

Five basic elements are important to consider, regardless of the scope of the change. Successful change is dependent on how well you:

- Develop and communicate a powerful call to action

- Carefully assess the attitudes of those involved in the change
- Build strong and dependable coalitions of pro-change activists
- Empower people at all levels of the process to begin implementing the changes and,
- Assure that the “new way” is mastered and normalized.

### **Step 1: Call to Action**

Before you can even begin to deal with or lead major change, you must stop to ask and answer some tough questions. For example:

- What is the true essence of this change?
- How does it relate to the underlying principles of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?
- If I am initiating this change, is it worth the risk to me as the leader, to the organization, the local community, the larger disability community?
- Is this a change that is coming whether I like it or not? How can I be proactive, not just reactive?
- How can I best deal with the implications personally and in all three dimensions of my leadership responsibilities?
- Why is this change important? Why now?

For the most part, life is not made easier for leaders by major change. When radical, transformational change is looming on the horizon, has already begun as a result of outside forces, or both factors are at work, the “why” questions are important ones to answer honestly and candidly.

Change occurs on multiple levels and is driven by multiple perspectives. The answers to the “why” questions are different based on perspective. The Call to Action must be designed to take into consideration as many perspectives as possible. It is important for you to understand your own perspective before you can effectively influence others to act.

As a leader at the top you must view change from a wide variety of perspectives, including its impact on the organization you lead. You may need to consider issues related to rapidly changing technology, national and state politics, funding, disability advocates, changing local, state, and national regulations, just to name a few. You must always be cognizant of how to position

your organization, and use your influence, to develop and sustain a positive, powerful vision for the future.

As a middle management leader your issues relate to the internal operating systems of the organization, the partnership needed with your service community, and the impact you can have on the rights of people with disabilities. Your concerns may relate more directly to the quality of consumer services, meeting performance goals, communication challenges and collaboration with internal customers and local external resources.

As a non management leader, your questions may relate to yourself and your colleagues. How will the changes impact your ability to do your job and serve your consumers? How will the changes impact your status and influence? How will you work together with others in new relationships?

Regardless of the organizational level from which you lead, or which of the three dimensions you seek to influence, the Call to Action is a critical element in any framework for change. You must:

- Have a clear picture of what you want to accomplish and communicate your vision strongly, passionately, and repeatedly.
- Create a sense of urgency related to the change in order for people to take the difficult actions required for the process to begin. Change for its own sake is seldom a good idea.
- Build trust and credibility among all those involved if people are to be willing to move outside their comfort zone and support any change.

## **Step 2: Assess Attitudes**

As the vision for change emerges, it is important to assess just where individuals are in their willingness to embrace the new ways of thinking, communicating and behaving.

In order to move forward and proactively deal with the challenges of radical, transformational change, you must facilitate a confrontation with the “undiscussables.” These are issues that are critical to opening communications and building trust but have been too threatening to discuss in open dialogue. These issues become the proverbial elephant in the living room. Failure to deal with the “undiscussables” can make change, at both the collective and personal level, impossible. (Quinn, 1996)

How are the people impacted by the change reacting to the Call to Action? As a leader, it is up to you to accurately determine who supports the change, and at what level. In order to do that, you need to determine whether those impacted by the change are *True Believers*, *Forced Believers*, or

*Non-Believers.*

*True Believers* who are enrolled (fully behind the change) or committed (willing to actively enroll others) truly want the “new” reality promised by the vision. The committed person brings energy, passion and excitement to the process. The committed person doesn’t play by the rules of the game. She is responsible for the game. If the rules of the game stand in the way of achieving the vision, she will find ways to change the rules. (National Executive Leadership Institute, 1999)

*Forced Believers* make up the majority of individuals impacted when radical, transformational changes begin to occur. These are folks who are riding the fence. They are not sure that the changes are positive on any level, but they are willing to reserve judgment, at least temporarily.

Some forced believers exercise grudging compliance. They tend to dislike the changes, and mistrust the true believers, but they are minimally cooperative in implementing changes, generally out of fear of retribution or job loss.

Another category of forced believers are the formally compliant group. They remain reasonably neutral about the new vision and changes, but are always careful to obey the letter of the transformations, if not the spirit. They want to be perceived to be on board. They generally have a surface level understanding of what is happening, but their heart is not yet in the new game.

Finally, the forced believer category includes those who are doing their best to genuinely comply. They have some level of understanding, and even agreement with the new state, and are struggling to add passion and excitement to their belief. They are the best candidates to become true believers early in the process.

*Non-Believers* are an inevitable part of all change processes. Individuals who take a stand in this category are either apathetic or noncompliant. Those who are apathetic were probably not very productive in the “old” order of things, and will likely present similar problems in the new order. Their issue is less about change than job performance. Noncompliant members of the organization are those who have strongly held disagreements with the new direction of things. They may have been satisfied with the way things were done and remain firmly unconvinced that changes need to be made.

Every participant in the change process requires your support and encouragement. As a change leader it is critical to “manage the white space.” The white space is the gap between what people do and say and what they think and feel. The larger the gap between action and belief, the more dysfunction the individual, and ultimately the process, are likely to experience. The

goal at this juncture in the change process must be to provide forced and non believers with as much information, support and guidance regarding non-negotiable aspects as needed to transition them to the ranks of the true believers. Ultimately, individuals who are unable to embrace at least forced believer status will leave the organization, voluntarily or otherwise.

True believers require significant amounts of encouragement and support as well, especially from the leader whose vision they embrace and whose call to action they support. As the new environment emerges they are in the minority, and outside the mainstream of standard systems. These are the transformational leaders who are willing to “die for the cause” and provide the energy and persistence all change processes require to be successful.

*You are not alone!*

Change is a process that relies heavily on overcoming inertia. As a change leader, once you have successfully negotiated steps 1 and 2 above, the good news is that you are well on your way to facilitating radical, transformational change. The other part of the good news is that you are not alone!

### **Step 3: Form a Powerful Coalition**

As the change process gets underway, you need to identify the true believers. This is called “diagonal slicing.” Those who strongly support the changes embodied in the vision will be found at all levels impacted by the change process. They will have diverse work responsibilities, levels of power and responsibility, informal authority and motivations.

They will communicate within their work groups their thoughts and support for the new ideas and changes. At some point, they will become a “critical mass.” There will be enough true believers to begin implementation of significant changes, provide training to other participants and explain the changes to external constituents. Experimentation will occur and insight will be gained which will continue to improve services and create success. Nothing breeds success like success.

While true believers become a driving force for change, very powerful coalitions may be formed with others who share commitment to similar long-term outcomes. There may be dissenting voices among coalition members and a healthy diversity of perspectives. There may be opposition to some of the strategies planned to reach the change goal. However, if the coalition is aligned toward the long-term change, differences create opportunities for problem solving and alternatives that may be greater than those devised by true believers alone.

## **Step 4: Expand Commitment & Empower Others to Act**

The change process is well under way. The entire dynamic of change is feeling and acting a bit chaotic. Transitions are occurring at different rates and levels. Overall productivity may be temporarily lower. Realignments are taking place, resulting in significant communication and management challenges.

You may very well feel regretful for having taken on the challenge of change at all. The prevailing insight tends to be “if I had known it would be this difficult, I never would have started.” Transformational leadership is risky business, and clearly not for the faint-hearted! This is the time to remind yourself that change in all three dimensions is necessary to the survival of organizations, community services and opportunities for people with disabilities.

This is a time to expand the numbers of those who are true believers and expect others to move from grudging compliance to at least formal compliance and so on up the scale. You should expect true believers to spend a significant amount of their time teaching others about the new “state.” Experimentation continues and useful insights lead to confirmation of valid ways of thinking, improved practices, new relationships and value added outcomes for people with disabilities.

Empowering others to act is a key element in any successful change strategy. Participants in the change who have the authority to make choices and the support to take risks will provide the innovative and creative ideas needed to move through the chaotic transition phase and into the new emerging state. Empowered true believers develop and create new systems and models that will provide small, successful “wins” which can become the foundational building blocks for new structures within the organization.

Encouragement and avenues for sharing success stories must become a priority. Even small successes reinforce new ideas and behaviors and promote the learning and professional growth needed. Overall confidence increases, and the number of people willing to give the new way a try grows. Participants have new experiences and develop new ideas and concepts which result in new perspectives. Roles are redefined to match the “new, emergent order of things.” New roles encourage new patterns of action, and the cycle of empowerment begins anew. (Quinn, 1996)

## **Step 5: Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization**

Eventually, chaos subsides and life returns to a more manageable level of activity. The new reality is better able to meet the emerging needs of the internal and external environments. Values have shifted to encompass the

current state. New technologies and systems have been mastered, informal organizational structures have reformed and consolidated, and all is back to a somewhat different “normal.”

Normalization, which is a necessary part of the cycle, can become a dead end. For transformational change to continue, the transformational cycle must be complete. The change process will continue when there is ongoing evaluation, reinvention, and realignment by 3-D leaders.

As a change leader in any of the three dimensions, it is important for you to be aware of pitfalls that often doom the best intentioned changes: *stagnation, illusion, panic* and *exhaustion*.

*Stagnation:* Sometimes the desire for change is stymied by an overpowering fear of failure, and the process never even begins.

*Illusion:* As organizations, systems, and even cultures struggle to define their vision, enthusiasm sometimes moves the discussions beyond the practical into the world of illusions. Transformational change cannot occur if the vision is not possible to achieve, even with hard work and dedication.

*Panic:* Experimentation is required to determine the best course of action in the early stages of the change process. By definition, not all experiments are successful. The process can get side-tracked during this phase and those involved may retreat, panic-stricken, from the change initiative because of one or more high profile failures.

*Exhaustion:* Sometimes change fails because the leader simply runs out of steam. Change is a very high maintenance, high energy activity. Exhaustion may prevent a leader from continuing to improve and challenge the organization once the initial change is completed.

Today, and very likely in the future, radical, transformational change is the norm. Now you have a general five step framework for implementing change. How ready are you to be a leader of change in all three dimensions? Chapter 6 will assist you in answering that question, and provide guidelines for developing a plan of action.



## Chapter Six

# Develop Your Plan of Action

### **Next Steps in Becoming a 3-D Change Leader: Your Plan**

We hope that you have begun to see your role as a leader in your organization, at every level of the organization. Armed with self awareness and an understanding of change processes, it's time to develop your plan. Starting exactly where you are, the grid on the next page is the basis of a plan to become a Three-Dimensional Leader of change. What course will you set for your personal journey of discovery and how ready are you to begin? As you answer the questions in this chapter, you may wish to return to this grid to see your change initiative in relation to other steps and dimensions. Always keep in mind the values that matter most, which inspire the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) legacy:

- Full inclusion, participation in the mainstream of society;
- Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work; and
- Respect for self-determination and informed choice.

What legacy will you create? Who will you inspire? Where would your organization be without you?

## DIMENSIONS

	D1	D2	D3
<b>Call to Action</b>	Identify organizational barriers to fulfilling mission	Identify opportunities in the environment to promote key principles	Identify far-reaching initiatives with potential for socio/cultural/political change
<b>Assessing Attitudes</b>	Check out multiple perspectives of colleagues	Conduct environmental scan	Evaluate actions and positions of initiative leaders
<b>Building Coalitions</b>	Identify those who can influence improvement	Plan strategically with allies	Use “The Force” of already established coalitions
<b>Empowering Others</b>	Engage others in the call to action	Provide mechanisms for involving others	Use personal or positional power to support actions of others
<b>Consolidation, Mastery, and Normalization</b>	Integrate new behaviors and processes for continuous improvement	Maintain and improve systems change	Maintain the new world order until the next revolution!

## STEPS

## You're Ready To Act!

By using the grid as a guide, you should be ready to answer your “Call to Action.” The following pages provide a series of questions and suggestions that will help you clarify your focus on one, two, or all three dimensions of leadership.

Following the Framework for Change presented in Chapter 5, these questions and suggestions guide you to:

- assess and decide what you want to commit to as a change leader;
- consider the environment you need to work within to make those changes;
- identify steps you can take to pursue your call to action.

The guidance provided in this chapter challenges you to consider the steps you can take to act in each of the three leadership dimensions. What and how much you choose to take on at any particular time is up to you, of course. Practice makes perfect, or at least better. We encourage you to commit to what you care about deeply and see it through to fruition. Then try, try again. Remember, leaders are never done.



## Leadership Dimension One: Make your organization what it should be

### Your Call To Action

Let's start by revisiting the Chapter 4 lists of changes you and others want made.

On page 33, you listed a number of things that you would change to make your organization what it should be if it lived up fully to the three principles that guide and challenge you and your organization.

On page 34, you listed changes that people inside and outside your organization would change if they could have it like they want it.

Let's think about what's on those lists.

### *What can you control? What can you influence?*

Go back to those two lists and circle the items that you can control or in-

fluence in any significant way.

### ***What's really important?***

Think about the items you've circled. Which of these would make a significant difference in helping your organization truly live up to the three VR principles?

- Full inclusion and participation in the mainstream
- Right to pursue a meaningful career, not just work and
- Respect for self-determination and informed choice

Write the ones you think would make the biggest difference here:

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### ***What do you care about most?***

Consider the list you just made above. What on that list motivates you? Challenges you? Inspires you?

Imagine yourself addressing a group of staff members. Can you see yourself passionately answering their questions, "Why is this change important?" and "Why now?" about anything on your list?

## **Assessing Attitudes**

Now that you've identified some changes you care about and that you think would make a significant difference, consider that your window on the world may not allow you to see all that's really there. Who can help you see the whole picture? Be careful not to turn to people who see things the same way you do.

For example, what is the perspective and what are the suggestions of people with different cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds? Don't assume it's the same as yours, the majority of your clients and staff or, for that matter, as each other.

Another great source to help you see the rest of the picture is those inside and outside the organization who don't always agree with you. What are they seeing that you're not? Listen to learn--not defend or explain--and see what realities have eluded you.

How do the perceptions and suggestions of these people relate to the items on your list? Are there some things you want to modify or add to your list?

***Assessing your Call to Action***

You may have more than one item on the list that motivates, challenges and inspires you. There may be a whole handful—or more.

Are there a few key issues or challenges that need to be tackled? Or do you need to challenge yourself and others to commit to more fundamental, transformational change?

What do you want to commit to now? What can you see through to fruition?

What is your Call To Action?

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**Forming a Powerful Coalition**

***Who else cares about and will want the changes involved in your Call To Action? Why?***

Take stock of the attitudes and readiness of the people who will be involved in responding to your Call To Action.

Who are your True Believers...and what are their reasons for seeing this kind of change as a positive thing? Don't make the mistake of assuming that your reasons and motivations are what move others...or that they share the same reasons with each other.

Understand who are the natural allies, supporters and champions of your Call To Action and why they are prepared to play those roles.

***Who would support these changes, IF...***

Most people react to change with reservations because they fear something they value could be lost or they aren't sure they (or you) are up to making it work. What can you do to identify and address those concerns?

Who will come along if they see a key person or two getting on board? Who are those key people in your organization who have that kind of influence? Don't assume it's only the ones with titles!

***Who likes it just the way it is?***

Are there people dedicated to the way things are done now? Why? Is it because they fear the impact that these changes will have on them? Perhaps there are some who are committed to a professional or philosophical model that they believe is in conflict with the direction you want to take the orga-

nization.

***What do you know...and how much don't you know?***

Were you able to answer these questions completely and with confidence? Or did you find yourself not sure you knew enough to answer at all?

Perhaps it was somewhere in between.

What steps could you take to find out more about the interests, values, hopes and fears of the people you want to involve in your Call To Action?

## **Forming A Powerful Coalition**

***Who needs to be on board?***

Identify the people who need to be involved and on board in order to move this forward. Think about the people who influence the attitudes of others as well as people who hold key positions in your organization.

For each person, think about why they would want to move forward with your Call to Action now—what are their interests, values, hopes, agendas that do or could line up with the changes you want to make? Why *wouldn't* they want to line up with your Call to Action. Why not *now*?

Who needs to be on board to move your call to action forward? Use the worksheet on the following page to assist in assessing attitudes and forming a powerful coalition.

# Worksheet: Dimensions of Change Initiatives

<b>Key Person</b>	<b>Why would they want to move this call to action forward?</b>	<b>Why wouldn't they? Why not now?</b>

***What do you need to do to line up your powerful coalition?***

What steps can you take to line up a critical mass of these people before you issue your Call To Action?

How can you make your Call To Action theirs, as well? What roles can you offer to them to help shape the work that it will take to get it done? Working with their interests and involving them in how to move the initiative forward enlists them as partners.

How many is enough? The more of these key people who share a commitment to the Call To Action with you, the fewer things rely on your energy, authority and persistence alone.

**Expand Commitment and Empower Others to Act**

You and your powerful coalition have some work to do! How can you communicate the Call To Action and provide a meaningful process that invites and supports people throughout your organization to play a part in making it happen?

The following questions can help you and your coalition think through how you want to move forward:

***How should the Call to Action be communicated?***

You may have already shared your Call To Action with some or all in your organization. Regardless, it needs to be communicated early, often and persuasively. Who can play a role in communicating the Call To Action? What methods and vehicles do you want to use?

***How can you involve people in figuring out the “how to’s”?***

Your Call To Action defined where you want things to go, but not how to get there. Invite people throughout the organization to help figure that out. Provide them with opportunities to talk with you and with each other about the paths and options that could move toward the future you want. The greater role they have in developing the answers, the more ownership in the process and the implementation they will have.

***What do people need to succeed?***

What information do they need to be an effective part in the change process? What else do they want or need to be able to play a constructive role in helping move the organization forward as you have asked? What skills do they need to develop to enable them to succeed in the new world you are creating together?

***What is your message about risk?***

People need to know what happens if they make a mistake. Things are changing. New approaches don't always work out the way you thought. In

fact, if you're too careful you won't change very much. Be clear about your expectations about people taking risks and back up your words with actions. If there are parameters or bedrock principles you don't want violated as people experiment with new ways of doing business, communicate them loudly and clearly.

### ***What structures do you need?***

The process of change itself needs structures to support it. How do you want to identify and organize the leadership of this change initiative? Are there temporary groups that need to be charged with certain tasks?

As the change process begins to bear fruit, you will need to change or drop some structures that are a part of the past...and create new ones to support the future. What can you do to identify those structures as part of your change initiative?

### ***How can you learn as you go?***

What processes can you build in to capture the lessons that you and others are learning as you take on this initiative? What works...and how can it be replicated? What lessons did you learn the hard way...and how can others be told so they can avoid them?

## **Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization**

### ***How do you make it happen over time?***

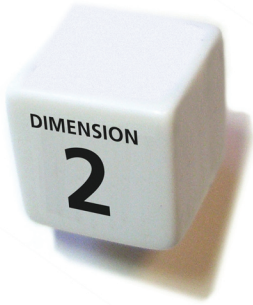
Your experimentation and learning needs to be converted into the structures, processes and policies that ensure ongoing success. Involving the people responsible for key organization roles like budget, operations, policy and personnel will help identify the changes needed to translate the upheaval of change into the routine of tomorrow.

### ***How can you monitor and evaluate your new way of doing business?***

Your Call To Action had a reason...you wanted things to be better. How so? Are you measuring your activities and your results to see if that is, in fact, happening? What are you doing with the information you get from your assessments? Do you use it to help identify where things can be improved further?

### ***Don't get comfortable***

Are we doing enough? Are we doing it well enough? Are we acting in a way that is true to our principles and values? Remember...leaders never settle. What's next!?



## Leadership Dimension Two: Position your organization to influence and create change...not just react

A leader helps define the issues and shapes the debate on disability and rehabilitation issues in the public policy arena and in the community. How? Let's use the same Framework for Change, with a little adaptation, to think it through.

### Your Call To Action

#### *Is your periscope up?*

First, recognize that your day-to-day work of running the organization can take you away from the job everyone in the agency is counting on you to do...scan the environment and guide them on a path that gets you all safely to where you trying to go. Are you keeping track of what's going on around your organization? Are you actively considering what could happen over the next six months and beyond that could affect your organization? Are you at the right tables talking to the people you who can give you the early signals of what's brewing?

#### *What's happening and about to happen that could affect your organization?*

What issues, policy initiatives or agendas are being discussed by people who can make decisions that affect you? How could each of those play out in ways that help or hurt where you are trying to take the agency? Which line up well with the VR principles ...and which would make it more difficult for your organization to live up to them fully? Which ones have real energy behind them? Why?

#### *What is your strategic opportunity?*

Where can you have an influence on the discussion? Which issue or potential initiative presents an opportunity for you to bring fresh ideas and momentum to something that you see as potentially making a positive difference for people with disabilities, if done the right way?

On the issues and agendas that could be harmful, size up the ones that fall within your sphere of influence. Which ones can you shape in a way that neutralizes the harm they might otherwise do?

### **Your Call To Action**

In this case, your Call To Action is initially aimed at yourself. Identify one (or more, if you choose) unfolding opportunity or threat and commit to developing a strategy to influence how it plays out.

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## **Assessing the Attitudes**

### ***What do you want?***

First assess your own attitude and interests. What do you want to have happen? Why? Be clear on what you are trying to accomplish with your strategy. Understand what are the most important things ..and what would be nice if you can get them.

### ***Who decides? What's important to them?***

Start with the end-game in mind. In the end, who will make the decision on this? When it comes to this issue, what is important to them? Why? How does that relate to what's important to you and your organization?

### ***Who influences them? Why?***

Who influences the ultimate decision-maker/s the most? Why? What is important to those people? How do their interests relate to yours? Whose interests are closely allied enough with yours to invite forming an alliance or other working relationship?

## **Forming a Powerful Coalition**

You've identified an issue you want to influence and you've assessed the interests of the key players involved. Now, where's the game? And how do you play?

### ***What table? Whose table?***

Has someone already created the discussion by calling together some of the interested parties? Is that still in the formation stage? How can you put yourself at that table? If things aren't that far along, what can you do to help bring the discussion together? Are you in a position where you can bring some key players to the table? If not, who is? How can you work with them to support things getting started in the way you think best launches the effort?

### ***Who should be at the table?***

If you're involved in pulling the discussion together, you have two basic

strategy choices in forming that powerful coalition: *Our side* and *All sides*.

*Our side*: Collect your allies and strategize together on how you want to intervene in the policy discussion or initiative that is underway by the ultimate decision-makers.

*All sides*: Invite all parties with a stake in the outcome together and hammer out a consensus agreement. That agreement will likely be very attractive to the ultimate decision-maker/s, if they see all affected parties supporting it.

Which strategy would best serve your purposes in this case?

## **Expand Commitment and Empower Others To Act**

### ***What role can you play to succeed...not to shine?***

Be strategic about the role you play publicly in this effort. Your real success lies in your ability to influence the work of the coalition and in its ultimate success. When you are communicating to others about this effort, present it as a team effort and recognize the leadership of others.

There may be times when someone needs to step forward and take the risk of articulating the need for change publicly. Should that be you? Make that choice and others based on what will help the Coalition succeed.

### ***How can you get others involved in figuring out the “how to’s”?***

This is a coalition of volunteers. If you’re going to step out together, you will all need to do it willingly. The steps you take will have to make sense to everyone involved. The best way to insure that is for everyone to have a hand in figuring out those steps.

Focus on what is really important to you, particularly the successful outcome, and invite others to help figure out the way to get there.

### ***What do people need to succeed?***

What’s in it for your partners? How can they get what they need to make the initiative work for them?

Listen and understand what’s bringing each of them to the table and what they want to happen...then help craft a solution that gets them and you what you each need.

### ***How do you handle risk?***

One clear way to understand each partner’s interests is to listen to what they don’t want to have happen and why. There is risk involved for everyone at the table in doing anything as well as in taking action. Find a path that respects and addresses each partners’ fears and you build trust and confidence that translates into forceful action.

***How can you learn as you go?***

Develop an understanding in your powerful coalition that you can learn as you go. It is important to take steps together to build momentum toward your goal. Those steps will bring new information and new possibilities...and perhaps new challenges. Commit to learning together as you move forward so that you strengthen your coalition as you go, even when dealing with a bump.

**Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization*****Win, lose or draw...what did you learn?***

Mastery comes from doing and learning from your experience. What happened... and why? What affected the outcome the most? Why?

Learn about your own practices and behavior, both as a participant and together as a coalition. What did you do that helped or worked? What would you do differently next time?

***Where do we go from here?***

Your powerful coalition may not need or want to exist over time.

If it has accomplished its goal, it may not make sense to continue as it is, but the goal you accomplished together will live on. Be clear on who is responsible for doing what in the implementation of your success.

What if you lost the battle? Does it make sense to regroup and select a new target? What do you want to do differently to increase your chance of success?

***What's next?***

Up periscope! What's looming on the horizon that presents your next strategic opportunity or threat? Your work on the last one should bring you added clout and connections that will pay off as you tackle the one ahead.



## **Dimension Three: Use your position to contribute to the integration and full participation of people with disabilities**

Our commitment to the principles that guide vocational rehabilitation invites us to a third level... making a broader contribution using the visibility and standing that our positions give us.

We contribute not by making a visionary call to action or taking responsibility to develop strategies for others to follow. We contribute by working with leaders in the disability community and leaders in the broader community to help them create the world people with disabilities deserve...full inclusion and participation in the mainstream of society.

In order to achieve this desired state, you need to be involved in “the community” as most broadly defined. In thinking about your approach in this dimension, consider the issues previously discussed, including poverty, segregation, economic development, to name a few.

Your involvement in these “non-disability” specific areas will afford you the opportunity to make new partners where there will be a two way street of support. Remember the old saw that “to have a friend, you need to be a friend.” Participating in and supporting other groups’ issues will, in turn, expand the number of interest groups that become knowledgeable and willing to act on issues faced in the first two dimensions.

In addition, as you know, all change is political. Examine the extent to which you are able and willing to participate in the political process. At this level, as part of broader coalitions, public policy initiatives may be developed that impact favorably on many segments of the community, including people with disabilities. Use your position to make the necessary political linkages leading to large scale changes.

## **The Call To Action**

### ***Whose Call To Action?***

What initiatives are underway in the disability community? What other initiatives are being pursued in your community that could and should advance opportunities for people with disabilities? Who can you talk with to learn about the plans underway for increased community awareness or greater opportunities in transportation, housing, employment or other important areas of life?

### ***What is your choice?***

Which initiatives can you commit to... that stir your passion? Which ones can make a real difference in the lives and opportunities for people with disabilities? Where could your help make the most difference?

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## Assessing the Attitudes

### *What contribution do they want you to make?*

What contribution do the leaders involved with this initiative want you to make? Are there particular challenges they are facing that you can help overcome? What value do they see you bringing to their coalition?

What can you do?

Be honest with yourself and with them. If you can not make a contribution that's been suggested, let them know. But tell them what you can say "yes" to, including giving them options for how you could be helpful in ways they might not have imagined.

## Joining their Powerful Coalition

### *Are you a silent partner or are you on the letterhead?*

How visible can and should your participation be? That's a strategic decision you and the disability leaders should discuss. Would your name on the letterhead and a visible role bring needed clout and attention or would it bring controversy and distract from the effort? Are there reasons why you need or would you prefer to work behind the scenes? Is that okay with the leaders of the initiative?

## Expanding Commitment and Empowering Others to Act

### *How can you help get it done and not get in the way?*

You're used to running things, developing strategy and making decisions. Be careful not to slip into behaviors that may be welcome in other settings but could be viewed as "taking over" here. Or worse, others start to let you take the lead. Remember, you are helping implement someone else's Call To Action. Even if your role includes advising on strategy or mentoring on leadership skills, respect the leadership role of the disability community or other leaders involved in how you participate.

## Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization

### *Have you learned any lessons?*

As previously noted in Dimensions 1 and 2, integration of change involves the application of lessons learned in the change process. How have you contributed to making the new practices and processes workable for those affected by them? Have the lessons learned contributed to a viable change? Are structures in place to sustain the change?

### *What did you learn about yourself in the role of D3 leader?*

Leading in Dimension 3 means keeping "hands off" the steering wheel and learning how to make significant contributions from the back seat. This

may be a new experience to those in positions of power. How did you handle it? Were you able to make a difference even though you weren't making all the decisions? Mastery of D3 leadership expands the skills and influence of leaders. Are you there yet?

***How can you contribute to the continuous development of the new “status quo”?***

Even if the process led to a desired change, D3 leaders will need to stay alert to opportunities for continuous improvement or development. Today's success will not always look or feel successful. As conditions and attitudes toward people with disabilities evolve, new supports will be needed to sustain or advance the progress made by the community.

## Chapter Seven

# Experiences in Change

The Study Group asked leaders who had recently participated in or directed a change management process to share their experiences and efforts. We have titled these examples “Spotlights.” They are presented as examples—not necessarily good or bad examples, nor as prescriptive or recommended changes that you should make in your organization. The examples we’ve chosen contain elements of both success and lessons learned for the leader.

It will be tempting to view the Spotlights as examples to follow. Remember that it is your Call to Action that needs implementation. All organizations are unique with distinctive cultures, environments, and leaders. Our described framework may not be perfect for you as you try to implement your call to action. Each of the Spotlights represents extensive efforts on the part of leaders to implement their own unique Call to Action

We hope you will see in these real life examples that individuals pursued their goals, chose a course of action grounded in principles, assessed their environment and the challenges they faced and adjusted their strategies as they progressed. These Spotlights are offered as our experiences. Take a glimpse into the real life world of change in large and small organizations, rural and urban.

# SPOTLIGHT EXPERIENCE

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## Civil Rights through Profits

*Resource Center for Independent Living, New York*

Poverty, unemployment and social isolation are the norm for people with disabilities. As is the nature of civil rights organizations in general and independent living centers specifically, multiple strategies are developed to initiate changes which result in improving this status. To this end, the Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc. (RCIL), located in Central New York, regularly evaluates its strategies to determine whether the mission and core values are properly supported.

In two major areas, employment and systems change, RCIL has both successfully led and participated. Federal demonstration grants supported RCIL collaborating with various government and private agencies as a way of increasing competitive employment outcomes for individuals with traumatic brain injuries, as well as individuals in long-term sheltered workshops. At the systems level, the organization either led or actively participated in various public policy/legislative initiatives to increase accessible transportation, implement a Medicaid Buy-In program, and increase, on a state-wide basis, access to a consumer directed personal attendant program, to name a few. Despite a number of successes, the organizational culture of “using learning in order to do better” mandated that new opportunities and models be explored. This is especially critical given the organization’s constant reminder that the vast majority of individuals are unemployed and living below the poverty level.

### **Assessment of the Attitudes and Environment**

RCIL has a culture where self-examination and change are not only embraced but required. Nevertheless, recognition of the difficulty of change is clearly identified. Inertia easily sets in, especially when an organization thinks that it is successful. Growing budgets, positive balance sheets, previous successes with individuals as well as respect in the public policy arena, although flattering, can keep the organization stagnant.

Affecting the external environment required new thinking and bold initiatives. A dwindling population, large company closures and an aging work-

force meant that past practices, albeit previously successful, were not suited for the future.

## **Building a Powerful Coalition**

For years, the disability rights/service model employed by RCIL was to develop strong relationships and partnerships. When the Workforce Investment Board was created, RCIL was represented on the Board of Directors and became a paying partner in the One-Stop. RCIL regularly worked with the district office of the State VR program on a number of demonstration projects as well as delivering core services. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce, RCIL maintained strong ties with the business community. All staff were expected to contribute to the community either through volunteer work or community board membership. As a result, strong relationships and coalitions existed.

## **Empowering Others to Act**

In order to have not only the buy-in of all related parties, but to create an environment where people wanted change to take place, a multi-step process was constructed.

At the annual staff planning retreat, issues related to increasing systems change effectiveness and employment outcomes were discussed in detail. The results of these planning meetings served as the basis for planning sessions with the Board of Directors. Simultaneously, conversations, including focus groups, were taking place with the business community and consumers. What emerged was consensus that a major change in the organizational structure as well as its activities needed to take place. This occurred over a number of months. The time and discussions gave people an opportunity to explore ideas, debate with one another, maintain a dedication to the core values and to create a very specific proposal, including a business plan. This characterizes a process that builds synergy, fosters creativity, and encourages openness to self-examination and new ideas, all of which lead to a comfort with risk-taking. Certainly, these are the traits needed to lead an organizational transformation that addresses the complex and serious social, political and economic issues facing people with disabilities.

## **Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization**

As a result of this process, the Board approved and the Center implemented the creation of three new corporations. To increase consumer employment opportunities, a staff leasing company, Columbia Place Associates (CPA), a for-profit subsidiary, was created. Not only would CPA provide staffing ser-

vices for people with disabilities, it would also serve the general population. CPA would not depend upon support from the VR system or any other governmental unit; instead, it would receive payment from employers purchasing CPA services. As a separate corporation, any existing stigma associated with the RCIL employment program would be eliminated.

In addition to providing greater employment opportunities, a business model was created to generate profit. The purpose for the profits was to support the systems advocacy work of the Center. Although RCIL had been very successful in building budgets to support the provision of services to literally thousands of persons with disabilities in Central New York, the systems work was always difficult to finance. Profits generated would be placed into a newly formed Foundation. This supporting organization was charged with raising dollars for both venture capital and systems advocacy, much of which centered on RCIL's Disability Institute, the public policy, research and education branch of the organization.

To tie all of this together, a third corporation, The Parent, was formed. This corporation had responsibility for planning, governance and auditing functions similar to publicly traded companies meeting the requirements of Sarbanes/Oxley.

## **Benchmarks and Evaluation**

Many of the goals established are either being met or have been met. CPA is profitable. People with disabilities now have an additional option available to them. RCIL's Disability Institute continues to grow and make its presence known in the public policy arena. However, there have been some unanticipated outcomes that impact positively on the organization.

The organization now has a greater entrepreneurial spirit. There is a feeling amongst board and staff that we are living our mission. Promoting independent living and simultaneously becoming more independent and self-supporting as an organization has had a very positive effect on the culture of the organization. Additionally, providing a service where government funds are not involved has allowed many people with disabilities to obtain employment without any stigma. The business community has an expanded view of the organization. Rather than being viewed as another "charitable" group, RCIL is clearly seen as an important and contributing member of the business community. The ripple effect from this alone will be very positive, especially in the public policy area.

## **Lessons Learned**

A few of the most important lessons include:

- No matter how good you think your approach is, it can be improved.
- Create an organizational structure where individuals inside and outside can challenge what is taking place.
- Obtain input from individuals who operate in very different environments.
- Communicate, communicate, communicate. Recognize that people need extensive opportunities to not only learn about new directions, but to have input into them.
- Assume and plan for unanticipated consequences.
- Never assume that the organization is complete or done. While mastery and normalization are taking place, new ideas should be percolating.
- Be prepared to fail and/or change directions. Feel comfortable identifying the “worse case scenarios.”

# SPOTLIGHT EXPERIENCE

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## Alaska's Strategy for One Stop Leadership

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) required agencies to offer services within newly established One Stop Centers. As a mandatory partner, the VR agency in Alaska was concerned with co-locating and partnering more closely with large agencies like the Employment Security Division, WIA Job Training and the Division of Public Assistance. The VR agency feared that the principles highly valued by VR could be diminished:

- Respect for self determination and informed choice
- Right to pursue meaningful careers
- Full inclusion in the mainstream of American society

Also of concern were the principles of autonomy of the VR agency:

- Sole state agency to administer the State Plan for VR.
- An agency with the primary purpose of VR that has a full time VR director and whose staff is employed full time on VR work.
- Decisions affecting individuals such as eligibility, IPE decisions and the allocation and expenditure of resources.

Outside influences were pressing the VR agency to be more closely aligned with the Workforce system. The agency needed a strategy – a course of action – that brought it closer to the Workforce system, yet assured that its resources were utilized for people with disabilities and assuring they had greater access to the universal system.

That strategy was to step into the One Stop leadership, identify areas of commonality and good customer service throughout the system and help mold an accessible network of One Stop Centers.

### **Assessment of the Attitudes and Environment**

With the passage of WIA, the VR agency had been relocated to the De-

partment of Labor and Workforce Development along with the divisions of Employment Security, Business Partnership (WIA job training), Unemployment Insurance, Workers Compensation, Occupational Safety and others.

A new Governor selected a cabinet of business leaders with limited government experience. Management decisions were highly scrutinized. The political environment was one of downsizing, reducing a state budget deficit and seeing government as the problem, not the solution. A top down environment was created, where the VR director was being asked to be a “team player” with DOL management.

Although critical of the Workforce system, the Governor’s leadership had yet to clarify a vision of the One Stop Centers other than make them more meaningful to customers and employers. There was limited awareness of the needs of people with disabilities and the purpose of the VR agency. This lack of information and vision created an opportunity for the VR director to utilize principles from the Rehab Act as a platform for change that would not only lead the VR agency, but the developing One Stop Center network.

## **Building a Powerful Coalition**

Strategies for positioning the organization needed to take into consideration the leadership of other agencies, their resources, attitudes, needs and desire to participate in a re-design of the State’s Job Centers.

The VR agency had adopted a culture of continuous improvements towards empowering individuals with disabilities, improving internal processes and training of VR staff in the principles and practices of informed choice. Maintaining a sole focus on this strategy was felt to continue the isolation of the organization, avoiding the challenges and opportunities the creation of the One Stop Centers realized and ensuring a segregated One Stop environment for people with disabilities.

An Operations Council was created and directors of the partner agencies were invited to meet regularly to discuss service delivery and operations management of the state’s One Stop Centers. These directors became the foundation for a partnership with common purposes. The Council and their immediate staff ranged broadly from “true believers” to “non believers.” Significant cultural differences, volume of clients, conflicting laws and performance standards caused many challenges. From these initial planning efforts came new strategic alliances, where trust was built that fertilized opportunities for growth and change.

Within this environment, when the DOL chose to put out an RFP for planning and service grants, the VR agency submitted an application to conduct a broad environmental scan, assessing the existing practices of informed

choice and customer satisfaction with all customers of the One Stop network.

With WIA requiring that all mandatory partners offer meaningful choices for customers of One Stop Centers, the agency chose to survey the existing practices of “informed choice” with all customers and partners of One Stop Centers. The goal was to develop a baseline of current satisfaction with One Stop Center practices and to develop strategies to make improvements that would benefit all people served in the State’s One Stop Centers, including people with disabilities.

A consultant (former VR director) was contracted initially to survey customers of all mandatory partner agencies, contractors, employers and all job seekers served in One Stop Centers. The contractor held a series of forums, asking key questions, tabulating responses and gathering anecdotal information.

Initial survey debriefings were presented by the State VR director to the Commissioner of Labor, offering insight to the findings and creating strategies for improvement in employer and business relations. These initial briefings were key strategies to the success of the project, as the Commissioner had been very public about the sense of poor performance in the Department, with State services not meeting the needs of the business community.

Subsequent briefings were presented to key stakeholders, including the appointed commissioners of Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services and the appointed directors of the respective mandatory partner agencies. These briefings proved critical to a shared understanding of the problems and laid groundwork for common vision. A more clearly defined plan of improvement emerged, with buy in achieved by these key managing stakeholders that allowed the flow of results to local managers.

This initial survey led to a One Stop network redesign effort, molded grant applications, and continues to shape the formation of customer-focused service delivery methods for multiple agencies.

## **Empowering Others to Act**

Cultural differences in the organizations were and continue to be substantial barriers. A redesign of the One Stops utilizing new principles of customer service is emerging. Areas of service delivery where value is clearly added are targeted for replication throughout the State.

One Stop Center management team leaders have been tasked with developing individual business plans to make needed customer service improvements in their centers.

Some former managers have left after seeing redesign as a loss of turf and

power. Other former managers have emerged as leaders. One particular leader at the Division of Employment Security was empowered by the Operations Council to develop a model One Stop Center, utilizing the practices and principles identified in the assessment and resulting management team meetings. His local management team developed a written plan and redesign funded by the Council. This leader has brought forth significant changes to a local One Stop Center which were not possible prior to the redesign effort: good customer service practices, no wrong door approaches, a more seamless service delivery system and changes that are positive for people with disabilities.

## **Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization**

The One Stop Centers in Alaska continue on a journey of redesign towards providing a value added service for all customers. Grant applications endorsed by the Operations Council and WIB have proved successful as an effective means of continuing the customer service improvement model.

New, more holistic “wrap around” methods of service delivery for people with disabilities are being tried. These initiatives are driven by partnering agencies, utilizing the foundation empowerment principles from the Rehabilitation Act.

These change processes continue today. There are still pockets where personalities continue to generate chaos, where turf is still not shared and leaders have yet to emerge. The culture of managing a network of One Stops, however, has become one of expecting change, not expecting that “things will return to normal.”

## **Benchmarks and Evaluation**

A formal evaluation of the effort needs design. Cultural change is hard to measure. True benchmarks will be:

- A decrease in the number of people with disabilities unemployed,
- An increase in the number of people with disabilities served on Individual Training Accounts,
- An increase in the amount of training all One Stop Center staff receives in disability awareness,
- New methods of service delivery developed in One Stops for those individuals who haven't been successful with traditional service methods.

## Lessons Learned

### *Buy-in by High Level Stakeholders is Critical*

Having Governor appointed commissioners on board ensured a strong desire for continued cooperation among the agencies. With these key stakeholders' involvement, agency infighting and turf wars were avoided. Where a vacuum was identified, leadership evolved.

### *Information About Customer Service is Sensitive*

It was not fully recognized how sensitive the information collected was to the respective organizations. The practice of empowering customers and job seekers had not yet been fully integrated into the cultures of all partner organizations.

Employer feedback was not always complimentary, somewhat contrary to the public messages of the organizations. It was a challenge to facilitate consensus on how to address the differences of opinion.

Risk was highly evident. As employers reported dissatisfaction with elements of the One Stop service delivery, certain commissioners wanted to tear down the system entirely, starting from scratch with a contractor as operator, developing a new generic service delivery system. Other managers denied the findings, choosing to challenge the contractor's information.

### *Agency Cultural Differences are Dominant*

Agency cultural and operational differences were startling. VR assumes the person with a disability is the customer. Other organizations have the employer as the customer. Delegated authority for local decisions isn't comparable across agencies.

Federal performance measurement practices dominated many decisions. No solution has yet emerged to this barrier.

### *Best Practices were Identified*

The individualized system that VR brings to the Workforce system is highly desired by all customers, those with disabilities, employers and job seekers. The "single point of contact" language of the Workforce system is the VR model of service delivery. This individualization has become the focal point of the design of Alaska's One Stop system.

Approaches to employer relations were extensively analyzed. Joint activities were begun to collaborate and share employer relation methods, capitalizing on best practices identified by employers, including the DOL Employment Security Division's award winning Business Connection model and the VR agency's Employer Partnership Account Management efforts. An Integrated Employer Services process was developed, where designated em-

ployer representatives of all agencies work collaboratively within the business community.

All managing stakeholders learned that improvements to the One Stop system that allowed better access for people with disabilities also yielded improvements for the universal Workforce system. The network of services that exist in the VR system – community rehabilitation programs, Independent Living Centers, Tribal VR and SSA contractors – are being brought to the One Stops, ensuring a full array of services for people with disabilities.

The Workforce system in Alaska is co-managed by the VR agency. A stronger VR agency is better positioned to lead and help manage change within the larger arena of the Workforce system. The individualization that is inherent in the VR program is being modeled as best practice. The niche of serving people with disabilities and providing accessibility knowledge was clearly carved out for the VR program.

# SPOTLIGHT EXPERIENCE

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## Profile in Strategic Change

*Vermont's Vision 2000*

### Call to Action

Beginning in the early 1990's, the Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VT VR) was soliciting input from advocacy and consumer groups on the quality of VR services. From this feedback, VT VR knew that the organization needed to change its relationship with consumers. In 1994, VT VR hired an outside consultant to meet with a group of managers to address this need for change. The outside consultant asked the group how VR measures its success. "Employment outcomes" was the response. The consultant asked how many successful closures did VR get last year. "About 500" came the answer. How many do you think you will get this year? "About 500." How many do you think you will get next year. "About 500." The group then recognized the long-standing status quo. The VT VR Director indicated that the organization needed to be a consumer-driven organization and more streamlined in its approach to increase successful employment outcomes. This began the management commitment to a five-year change initiative that dramatically changed the way VT VR does business.

## **Assessment of the Attitudes and Environment**

The Rehabilitation Amendments of 1992 called for a greater consumer role in rehabilitation policy and process. In 1993, VT VR was awarded one of seven national demonstration grants to explore ways to empower consumers in the public vocational rehabilitation system. This became Vermont's "learning laboratory" to experiment with strategies to increase consumer control of their rehabilitation and to provide an environment that encouraged personal responsibility and informed choice. Management made clear the expectation that change would occur, transforming VT VR into a consumer-directed organization. That was not up for debate. What staff could and should do is decide how VR would change. With this, "Vision 2000," VR's change initiative, began.

## **Expand Commitment and Empower Others to Act**

The change initiative, Vision 2000, was values and mission driven. The driving principle for this change was that individuals with disabilities and employers were the customers of VT VR, and that providing these customers with "world class service" was the overall goal. The organization began with the idea that there was value in having the customers directing the organization.

The VT VR Director knew Vision 2000 would take time and resources to effect real change. VR contracted with a consultant to organize and lead the change initiative. This began with drafting a new mission and vision statement and developing goals, objectives, and strategies by which the organization would move forward. The national demonstration grant, the "Consumer Choice Project," also provided staff and funding to experiment with processes to put the individual with a disability in control of the rehabilitation process.

The staff was asked to guide the change. The consultant brought staff and consumer representatives together to look at how VR operates in the present and to develop a vision of how VR should operate in the future. Staff was asked to act out skits for these two views of VR. These skits resulted in VR staff viscerally connecting with the need for change. Staff was able to poke fun at themselves, graphically demonstrate problems in the system, and "feel" the initiative rather than remotely read it on paper. That's where the buy-in began for a majority of the staff.

Management empowered staff to be creative, take risks, and have ownership in the process of change. Each district office began to examine the long-standing bureaucratic policies and procedures with the question, "Is this

of value to our customers?” New procedures and forms were developed. The Director was able to tolerate a certain amount of chaos during this process as district offices moved in different directions. Best practices were shared, and eventually VR settled on a common set of policies and procedures. Staff was able to concretely see how their input was used as a basis for change. The process allowed creative experimenting and buy-in by staff since it was totally staff directed. Reviewing all the change efforts was the consumer-employer State Rehabilitation Council. Representatives from the Council went out to district offices to observe and evaluate the changes.

The creative process occurred at all levels of the organization. VR flattened its hierarchy to emphasize a team process in which everyone in the organization supported the consumer in their efforts to secure employment. Clerical staff was upgraded to human services case aids, provided with training, and began providing basic services when counselors were unavailable. Consumers knew that when they walked into a VR office, they would be warmly welcomed, and that if their counselor was not available, other staff would be able to help. In this way, every member of the team celebrated in the consumers’ successes and felt good about their own jobs.

Offices began to take pride in their services. Waiting rooms were redecorated. Clerical reception desks were lowered to accommodate individuals using wheelchairs. Receptionists learned basic sign language to communicate with deaf consumers coming to VR. The “world class service” theme and “respect for consumers” became the guiding principles for staff. Upon leaving a VR office, one consumer stated that it was hard to believe this was a State agency.

## **Powerful Coalitions**

Vermont VR decided early on that collaboration with other organizations would benefit consumers since most people have multiple needs. VR forged partnerships with the Social Security Administration, the employment and training One-Stop Centers, mental health facilities, corrections departments, and other private and public organizations. These partnerships provided a way to stretch limited dollars and find creative ways to apply programmatic initiatives that fit the unique needs of common clientele.

VR also reached out to public and private employers, not only to establish more employment opportunities for its customers but also to develop peer support among employers to hire individuals with disabilities. VR helped to establish the Business Leadership Network in Vermont and was successful in bringing together key business executives who are committed to supporting other businesses in this effort. This effort has helped to spread the word that

there is a large labor pool of individuals who want to work and that VR is ready and able to provide technical assistance and on-going support.

VR found that by increasing partnerships, the staff established a reputation for being helpful, creative, and customer focused. VR began to be used as a model for other state departments for its collaborative style. As a result, public education about people with disabilities and their value as employees increased.

## **Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization**

As a result of the Vision 2000 initiatives, the numbers of people served and the number of successful employments have increased steadily each year to over 1300 currently. Collaborative partnerships, also a priority, became a way to increase resources, increase job options, and develop good will in the community. Individuals with disabilities noticed the change and applauded our success in making VR a welcoming and respectful place to receive services. VR became the model for other departments in State government.

The major focus of the change process was always on the customers of VR. By framing all change with the major value of enhancing the customer experience, the change was less about staff and more about how to make our services welcoming and effective. Clearly, staff buy-in to the process was critical. This was not token buy-in but involved a long period of experimenting with ideas and procedures initiated in local offices before deciding on a final product. The emphasis was on respect for staff, their ideas, their judgment and their decision-making capabilities. The goal of VR services was clearly delineated as employment. When these three values—respect for our customer, respect for staff and the commitment to employment outcomes—became the elements by which change was evaluated, resistance died. The change created excitement about increased value for the individual with a disability and streamlined efficiency for staff. Everyone benefited.

## **Benchmarks and Evaluation**

After the initial success of Vision 2000, VR recognized the need for continuous improvement. An organization must continually review initiatives, policies and procedures to avoid becoming stagnant. A new strategic plan was developed with the same process of staff input. This time, the strategic plan was developed in the format of a “balanced scorecard” that outlines in a simple, visual format the goals, objectives, measures and targets of the organization based on key themes. This has allowed VR to focus all its efforts according to the values it has set forth in the balanced scorecard, thereby ensuring that VR keeps its vision and principles at the center of its activities. It

also allows VR to continually evaluate its progress according to the measures and targets set for each initiative. By committing to continuous improvement, VR has methods to ensure that its customers remain at the focal center of VR's programs.

## **Lessons Learned**

### ***Share the vision and make the message clear to staff***

Staff were more likely to buy in to the changes when they understood the overall purpose of the change, which is to enhance consumer direction and satisfaction. The wording of the vision was developed with input from all staff, and they understood that their Director was committed to improving the organization. She made it clear that she would tolerate a certain degree of chaos and uncertainty. But she was also stalwart in her belief that change was necessary and would result in a more responsive and higher functioning organization. This message was communicated often and in a variety of ways.

### ***Use data for decision making***

Quite often, decisions were made based on anecdotal evidence or the exception to the rule. For example, management wanted to regulate the number of training days based on the perception that staff were attending too many workshops. A long discussion ensued in management meetings and finally the decision to "run the numbers" was made. It turned out that only one or two staff were abusing the privilege and the vast majority of staff were able to set appropriate training schedules. Had managers not used data in their decision making process, an unnecessary rule would have been enforced, possibly lowering staff morale.

Communication was one of the most important factors in this organizational change. Ensure that communication is both horizontal and vertical

A Malcolm Baldrige survey revealed that communication methods were not at an optimum level in the organization. Although feedback was attempted, it was not consistent and there was little peer to peer sharing throughout the regions. An Implementation team, which has oversight of the strategic plan, and a Pulse Team, which shares input from the field with the Director, were two methods to address this issue. In addition, staff started sharing best practices through interoffice meetings and peer group meetings. Communication vastly improved, as did the opportunities for better service delivery and statewide consistency.

### ***Have input from all levels of staff and external partners***

Input from staff is assured through various measures such as oversight

committees, retreats and staff surveys. External partners are surveyed through 360° performance evaluations and through collaborative partnerships. These methods of gathering input assure staff participation in the continuous improvement process and that VTVR is also addressing the needs and concerns of its partners.

***Give staff time to get used to significant changes before moving on***

When too many changes occur at one time, staff may feel overloaded. We learned that checking in with staff every few months would provide an opportunity for them to express their feelings and to make adjustments if necessary. The Pulse Team is an especially effective mechanism for this. The Pulse Team meets quarterly with the Director and shares information from all twelve districts in the Division.

***Make sure that the infrastructure can support the changes***

This lesson may be the most challenging one we have encountered. How can we assess the impact of a new initiative or project on the human and organizational resources in the Division? Assuring that grant applications include the necessary infrastructure and that staff have an opportunity to comment on the proposed initiatives are two ways to address this issue

# SPOTLIGHT EXPERIENCE

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## Strategies To Implement Iowa's New Case And Financial Management Technology

### Call to Action

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) realized over 5 years ago that the technology being used to support case and business functions had become antiquated. Vendors and business partners had higher expectations for access to electronic payments, quicker turnaround on retrieval of documents, and easier management of paper case record materials and data. The old system was limiting IVRS' ability to improve both processes and outcomes in the financial and case management activities.

- Rehabilitation counselors found themselves buried in bureaucracy

and reacting to requirements.

- Rehabilitation counselors and other field staff were limited in the number of clients served due to slow and burdensome processes.
- Vendors were not receiving payments in a manner that was in keeping with new industry standards.
- As monies became tight, fiscal and case management projections became increasingly important; the antiquated system had tremendous limitations in assimilating various factors required to make accurate decisions.

Two matters of great strategic concern were evaluated prior to the initial launch of the development of IVRS' new case and fiscal management system.

IVRS first reviewed and assessed the option of using the framework of a model in another public vocational rehabilitation agency, as opposed to custom building their own. The strategic decision was based not so much on time or money, but rather on the incorporation of the system into the culture of the agency. To take an existing framework and make adjustments to fit the Iowa culture would limit options and increase the frustration for staff. IVRS made the decision to custom build with the intent to include as many staff as possible in the development of the concept and functionality of the new system.

The second most significant strategic decision was how and when to use the skills and input of the field staff in the process, and how to communicate and develop a feedback loop which kept the project management team and administration in the middle of the fears, concerns and ideas of all staff.

## **Assess Attitudes**

IVRS was in the midst of the most critical period of change of the generation. In the months and years immediately prior to the development of the new case and financial management technology, IVRS had a significant period of transition. Ten of the fourteen field supervisors retired or transitioned in a 4 year period. The agency experienced three different state directors in a matter of 4 years. Due to 'aging out' and 'early out' retirements, the counseling staff had a transition of approximately 30% during the same period. IVRS experienced the closing of the residential program, on site and itinerant vocational assessments and the laying off of all staff related to those functions. Additionally, new expectations were placed upon the staff for quality as well as accountability for quantity.

Two relatively persistent themes remained through the early phases of the development of the new system. Support staff expressed concerns that the new technology would put them out of work, or place expectations on them that required skills beyond their abilities. The counseling staff communicated consistent concerns about turning Master's level counselors into data entry staff.

IVRS field staff did not embrace fully the concept of the new technology when first presented. Funding and contractual constraints created interruptions in the planning and development phases which extended the frustration and increased the uncertainty. Internal and external influences beyond the immediate control of IVRS management created a tremendous challenge in leading the staff through this significant change.

## **Powerful Coalitions**

It was important to the success of implementing the new technology that IVRS field staff be permitted to continue to use their creativity and individualized approaches to services delivery and case management. For that reason, IVRS invested heavily in identifying how the new system should function and look.

As a precursor to identifying members of the team involved in designing the function and look of the system, the IVRS administrator and management staff worked with a contractor to develop a leadership program for supervisory staff. Over the course of several months, supervisors and managers were engaged in hands-on application of principles of change, change management, assessment of leadership skills and a 360 evaluation of their interaction with staff.

## **Expand Commitment – Empower Others to Act**

Parallel to the leadership development training with supervisors and managers, other change management efforts were begun. It was imperative to involve others in the project and begin to communicate that the development of an effective system was based upon the benchmarks jointly established. With that, widespread buy-in was critical and staff input was the key to insuring the effectiveness of the new technology.

- A project management team of seven senior staff was formed. The IVRS administrator was defined as the project sponsor and all critical decisions had to be routed through the sponsor for approval. This allowed for fostering change from the top to all levels of the organization.

- A steering team of approximately forty staff members was established. They represented every office, organization and level of responsibility. In addition to assigning responsibilities and identifying “what” they were responsible for, considerable time was spent on “why” decisions were being made. The principles were constantly held up as the test questions for the tough decisions.
- The project management team emphasized communications. Alternate methods of communication were used, such as newsletters, information on the intranet, along with frequent updates to supervisors in face-to-face meetings and through office visits by different members of the management staff. It became clear early that the most effective communications came as a result of direct personal contact.
- As the development reached midpoint, and close to the point of negative return on the investment when changes were made, the project management team visited all field offices and met with all staff. The meetings typically lasted three hours, and the focus of each meeting was to share the process models and identification of any obvious or critical errors. This supported the work and communications of the forty members of the steering team that had been the conduit of information for many months, plus showed by example the commitment of IVRS to stand on the principles stated since the inception of the development.

## **Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization**

At the time of this writing, the IVRS technology project is in its final stage of development. As for a final word on the effectiveness of the strategies employed, the jury is still out. However, there is much that has been learned about the process, what has been modestly successful and those things that could have been improved.

## **Benchmarks and Evaluation**

The key to the success of any public VR agency is the effectiveness and efficiency of client services. Therefore, this principle was and is constantly used as the measuring tool for the development and implementation of the technology. It was said and practiced that if the new technology did not improve the quality of service delivery to clients, its value was nominal and the investment was a loss to the taxpayers of the State of Iowa. Most specifically, as plans were developed and decisions were made, the project management

team frequently framed their decisions with these questions:

- Will this enable the counselor and support staff to work more efficiently?
- Will this result in at least the same percentage of successful outcomes and enhance the potential for higher percentage of outcomes?
- Will this improve the quality of time spent with clients?
- Will this enable IVRS to serve the maximum number of clients with the most efficient use of resources available?

The question that haunted the project management team the most was, “Will this enable the counselor and support staff to work more efficiently?” Field staff expected that a new “computer system” would inadvertently require them to focus on the system rather than on the client. If the new system needed more information than the old system, would that lead to more work for the staff? The way the risk was mitigated was to provide more than one option for staff with different approaches to use the system effectively. One of the most significant options was to allow the counselors to delegate some activities to support staff. This also drove the reassessment of some of the support roles and led to the development of new classification of workers.

The other most challenging question was defining what was meant by “will this improve the quality of time spent with clients?” At one point, management stated that the new technology would permit counselors to spend more time with their clients. However, as the requirements were developed and the system was built, it became clear that it was not a matter of time that dictated the quality of the services being delivered. As additional resources became available through the use of technology, the shift in thinking required a new approach; thus, quality time was emphasized over the issue of one-on-one time with the client.

## **Lessons Learned**

### ***Management has to be Sold on the Change***

There is a fine line between being “sold” on the change, and being inflexible in making changes based upon the input of the field. That is the reason the administration sets the vision, and the field establishes the parameters and functionality. Once management, with input, establishes the guiding principles, their daily operational involvement is limited to the high end matters. IVRS had more than one occasion where management become involved in

the functionality of the system, only to learn that it made little practical sense or created additional frustration for the users.

### ***Whether it's Technology or Different Color Paper, Change is Tough***

IVRS learned that as hard as management tried, not everyone will embrace change. The nay-sayers add value, however, and can not be stifled or ignored.

### ***More Input Equates to More Work. But it Makes for Better Outcomes***

IVRS made the decision to involve a wide range of individuals in the development of the functionality and look of the new system. Not only were persons from each level and section of the organization involved, but also staff with varying ranges of exposure to technology. The more people involved, the greater work for the developer. But, it meant greater buy-in from staff and also a better product.

### ***New Leaders will Surface when Least Expected***

Because of the wide scope of involvement of staff, new leaders began to emerge. Opportunities for application of those skills were reinforced, and several participated in formal leadership development training. Their leadership is now evident in other areas of the organization beyond the development of the new technology.

# **SPOTLIGHT EXPERIENCE**

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## **Roadmap for Organizational Change: Texas Confidence Builders**

*Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center, Division for Blind Services, Texas  
Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services*

### **Call to Action**

In the mid 1990s, the Executive Director of the Texas Commission for the Blind (now the Division for Blind Services—DBS) asked agency staff to begin benchmarking programs nationwide to determine if the services of the agency were world class in empowering citizens of Texas who were blind. His call to action, known as Texas Confidence Builders, included a mandate

to review the program and services of the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center (CCRC), a comprehensive basic blindness skills training center for blind adults.

## **Assessment of the Attitudes and Environment**

### ***Initial Assessment and Input***

Consumer groups were asked to participate in an onsite review of the CCRC training program and provide feedback to the Center Director and staff. Their summary reports concluded that CCRC was focusing rehabilitation center resources and training time in meeting the needs of people who were blind and had significant secondary disabilities, with the emphasis on consumer issues related to secondary disabilities. The Center, they concluded, was failing to provide the basic blindness skills needed to empower consumers to gain employment and independence. As a result of this emphasis, they noted the following:

- Daily training time had decreased significantly in order to provide time for consumers to receive psychotherapy, meet medical needs, and attend to issues not directly related to blindness.
- Consumers were participating in the program for shorter periods of time than in the 1970s and 1980s, and expectations of their level of functioning with regard to basic blindness skills had been significantly decreased.
- Recidivism had increased dramatically, with some consumers returning for the same program several times in one year.
- CCRC had lost its focus on employment and had directed resources toward improved quality of life at the expense of overall empowerment, independence and positive vocational outcomes.
- Processes and procedures had been implemented which limited the opportunities for the adult population served to develop the level of independence and self sufficiency required for successful rehabilitation.

The Center director instructed staff to begin exploring the programs of other centers, collecting data related to recidivism, employment rates and hourly wages of graduates. In addition, Center programs with a track record of successful training techniques and curricula, and staff development programs designed to educate staff in implementing a more empowerment

focused consumer training program were contacted. Center staff, primarily managers, began to focus staff energies on outcome-based curricula, structured discovery learning techniques, and professional development activities related to implementing the empowerment model of Center services delivery.

### ***Internal and External Reaction***

Information was provided from executive level management about Texas Confidence Builders and the philosophy of empowerment to staff at CCRC and across the state. Most staff responded to the new information with guarded enthusiasm and at least an open mind. Many staff expressed serious concerns about strategies that might be involved in implementing Texas Confidence Builders. At CCRC, the Center Management Team began to work with staff to assist them in better understanding the philosophy and what it was likely to mean within the context of the CCRC training program. All CCRC staff met on numerous occasions to discuss specific Center processes and procedures that needed to be eliminated or changed because they failed to allow consumers the opportunity to be empowered, or sent a message of low expectations. Management made it clear that the CCRC program and service delivery system had to change fundamentally. Some staff were overtly opposed to the changes, while others resisted more covertly. There were, however, a small number of “true believers.” These staff began implementing a number of new strategies in working with consumers. They began to see very positive results. Their commitment grew, and they began to encourage others to develop a more positive attitude toward the new ways of providing services.

The challenges to change also included the external environment. Word of the changes being implemented at CCRC reached groups nationally who expressed strongly worded grave concerns about the direction the program was taking. They objected to the Texas Confidence Builders philosophy and were willing to make their concerns known. Those objecting included at least one consumer group and groups representing rehabilitation professionals. In addition, agency staff working in field offices also expressed their concerns, particularly related to training strategies being implemented at CCRC. These very vocal and public negative reactions to the implementation strategies of the Texas Confidence Builders philosophy had a chilling effect on efforts to move the change agenda forward at CCRC. Even staff who previously had maintained an open mind were concerned about the changes.

## **Expand Commitment and Empower Others to Act**

Agency management realized the need to expand understanding and commitment to the changes resulting from implementation of the new philosophy of service delivery. A Texas Confidence Builders workgroup was created. Staff at all levels and programs from across the state were invited to participate. This was, indeed, a “diagonal slice” which cut up and down the organization. The focus of this group was to develop processes and build tools that would promote the implementation of Texas Confidence Builders in the field as well as at the Center. Workgroup members took information back to staff in the offices where they worked. A format was developed to allow each field region and CCRC to build their own implementation plan based on fundamental components of the philosophy. A common language began to develop so that staff could more easily discuss the philosophy among themselves and with the stakeholders outside the organization. Members of the Workgroup took advantage of every opportunity to discuss the philosophy and implementation strategies with staff, including required staff development training sessions, regional meetings, program meetings, meetings of managers, supervisors and support staff. Brochures and computer presentations were developed to assist workgroup members in sharing the information. Staff were encouraged to enlist the assistance of subject matter experts from across the country in person, via email and in conference calls.

As limited new strategies began to be implemented and small, tentative steps were taken in exploring new techniques for service delivery, staff were encouraged to share successes via the agency InfoNet. Staff began to include whether or not a program or proposed activity was consistent with the Texas Confidence Builders philosophy. CCRC staff began implementing the new philosophy earlier than field staff, and the positive impact on consumers was apparent first in our interactions with Center graduates. CCRC staff were encouraged to take risks, explore new structured discovery learning options, and continue to involve consumers more directly in the teaching/learning process.

## **Forming Powerful Coalitions**

Initially, our coalition-forming efforts focused on the internal organization. We had much to do to convince staff that changes were, in fact, needed, appropriate, and positive. Clearly, old habits die hard, and this change struck at the heart of how each staff person felt about people who are blind and their abilities to be independent, self-actualized citizens in all aspects of their lives. Those staff who, by this point, were “true believers” began to seek out others

who shared their enthusiasm for the changes. Coalitions began to develop at all levels within the organization. The power of these coalitions seemed to reside in having a basic understanding of what empowerment really meant. We realized that in some cases we had moved the process of change forward too fast, and had left some key staff behind. The coalitions were given the opportunity to develop not only new and creative ideas about how to better serve consumers, but were encouraged to find ways to be inclusive of all those “forced believers.”

Numerous examples of coalition building began to blossom. CCRC developed an outreach program to take the basic blindness skills services of the Center out to the field. Center Staff began to partner with field staff to offer one week skills training programs which included consumers from across the region, and required staff to work closely together. The program grew from a pilot of 3 programs anticipated in the first year to over 8 full week programs and numerous shorter, spin off trainings within that year alone. The “Mini-Training,” as we call it, has the advantage of providing consumers with at least the beginnings of a positive attitude toward their blindness, which is the key to successful rehabilitation. In addition, this program provided a great opportunity for “true believer” CCRC volunteers to model the new service delivery system as they partnered with field staff. This program also began to forge a very powerful working relationship between the Center and field staff that had failed to develop in the 30 plus years of the Center’s existence.

Another example of coalition building has occurred with our most negative external audience. The initial reaction of orientation & mobility (O&M) vendors (some 70 strong in Texas) who contract with the organization to provide critical basic travel skills to consumers was almost overwhelmingly and very loudly negative. Many discussions were held with representatives of this group of professionals by management of the organization as well as Center and field staff. A small group of O&M vendors were eventually invited to take part in a training program at CCRC which provides information and experiences related to the new philosophy as it pertains specifically to O&M instruction and travel training. We requested that the vendors who participated give us feedback related to the effectiveness and appropriateness of the training. This pilot group completed the O&M vendor training with a much more positive attitude about the changes. They provided us with very valuable feedback on how to improve the program. Subsequently, the majority of O&M vendors in Texas have participated in this training program. The door has been opened not only for better understanding between a critical professional group and organizational staff, but for improved services to consumers. Through this process, many critics have become colleagues. We still

have areas of less than total agreement, but the dialogue has clearly been a positive one with professional growth and development on both sides.

## **Consolidation, Mastery and Normalization: Benchmarking and Evaluation**

To say that we have come full circle in our process of change, the implementation of the Texas Confidence Builders philosophy, would be overstating our success. Around every corner we find new opportunities and challenges.

- We have consolidated some areas such as staff training to incorporate the new philosophy.
- We have mastered some of the concepts and are implementing them consistently and in a quality manner.
- We have created an environment at CCRC, and in some programs across the state, where what was “new” 5–6 years ago is now almost “old hat”!
- There are folks within the organization already exploring the next evolution of improvements.
- Many aspects of our service delivery system continue to improve.
- We continue to measure our success by the level of empowerment, independence, emotional adjustment, quality of life and career success of our consumers.
- Initial and preliminary data are encouraging.
- We have expanded what has worked best in creative ways.
- We have left behind those experiments that took us down unproductive bunny trails.
- We continue to take risks and explore new options.

The good news is there are more of us doing all these things with greater enthusiasm and focus than ever before. The Division for Blind Services in Texas is a world class provider of rehabilitation services to people who are blind, and major cultural and organizational changes have made us better than ever.

We have come to realize that for over 70 years we have been an extraor-

dinary partner with Texans who are blind in delivering on the promise and legacy of VR.

We have a responsibility to keep getting better!

## Lessons Learned

- Don't initiate major cultural change unless you are prepared to expend the time, energy and resources to see it through. None of us anticipated the effort needed to create the new and improved Division for Blind Services
- Bring your patience and fortitude to the table every day. When faced with change, folks often get really emotional, and almost everyone takes sides. Chaos and turmoil are the status quo for at least some period of time. In our case at CCRC, a conservative estimate would be two years. It seemed like a lifetime.
- Have a very specific and well thought out plan of how to include and educate your external partners before you embark on any major organizational change. It is likely that, even if we had done everything right, we still would have faced massive resistance to the changes we made. Had we been more proactive, perhaps our external stakeholders would not have been so surprised at our actions, and a more civilized dialogue could have transpired from the beginning.
- Don't be discouraged by the fact that some organizational members (usually non believers) will choose to leave rather than change, and that some external partners may never fully agree with the new organizational culture, strategies and priorities.
- Allow plenty of space and permission for internal and external stakeholders to challenge the new ideas and offer suggestions for improvement. Nothing is perfect. If folks have a chance to tweak, the overall outcome is achieved and you have better buy-in...don't get stuck in the "my way is the only way" mode. Communicate, communicate and then do it another hundred times in as many different ways as you can think of.
- Don't be surprised by the unexpected, unusual, unanticipated and down right unforgivable. If it can go wrong, it probably will. Develop a high tolerance for failure and rejection and be prepared to learn from both positive and negative experiences and continue to

move forward. Never quit allowing others to take risks. All our successes to date have been accomplished because someone said yes rather than no to a new approach, idea, strategy, or concept ...in spite of the risks.

# SPOTLIGHT EXPERIENCE

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## The Re-engineering of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Program

### Call to Action

In the mid-1990s, the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) was in a position of strength in several ways. The department had built outstanding facilities throughout the state and had established a highly productive network of work training centers for clients. The numbers of clients served and rehabilitated were among the best in the nation.

However, the agency was entrenched in a process-driven service delivery system that had been in place for decades. Success was measured by the number of “26” closures (resulting in employment). More than 100 counselors striving to rehabilitate South Carolinians with disabilities were assigned goals ranging from 75 to 125 successful closures each. This productivity was driven by a need to be “number one,” even at the risk of a high turnover rate among counselors.

In 1994, the newly appointed agency director decided that it was time to evaluate the “total” program. A longtime staff member, he appreciated the high level of achievement and national recognition the department had built but sensed that changing times pointed to a need to move away from the status quo. Although it had state of the art facilities, the department needed a more client-focused organization. This new director brought in a “futurist” consultant who looked at the way SCVRD was serving clients and was charged with helping the department “make the best better.” It was imperative that the focus be shifted to customer service if the department was to continue to succeed in the rapidly changing environment that the next century would bring.

With the help of this outside consultant, the agency’s Key Result Areas

(KRA) evolved. These seven KRAs were Customer Service; Government Relations; Human Resources; Partnerships; Public Relations; Technology; and Missions, Values and Vision. Each of the KRAs was expanded into committees that were made up of staff from all over the state.

The diversity of staff in each KRA was of critical importance, and full staff participation was encouraged. Openness to change was sought and supported, and the involvement of every participant was valued. A strategic plan was developed for each KRA, setting forth assumptions, short-range visions, long-range visions, and strategic recommendations.

It quickly became apparent that the major institutional changes would be overwhelming for the agency's administrative, supervisory, and support staff.

## **Assessment of Attitude and Environment**

### *Attitudes*

The strategy for making the change was going to be a monumental challenge, and this change needed to be piloted before going statewide for many reasons. The traditional staffing pattern in service delivery had consisted of the counselor and counselor assistant for many years, and now there was talk about the importance of teams in an integrated service delivery system. The supervisor chosen for this demonstration pilot was confident that the staff could change but knew the process would not be an easy one.

The supervisor in this pilot had to convince himself of the need for this change in order to promote it. His belief and support in moving away from a team of two (counselor and counselor assistant) to a team that re-assigned the duties of the counselor assistant to eligibility support, planned services support (active cases), and procurement was put to the test. The demonstration pilot revealed that with the team concept, the agency no longer needed an equal number of casework assistants to VR counselors. A client no longer needed to meet with his/her VR counselor for a non-professional coordinated service; he would meet with the counselor for those services that only a professional VR counselor could perform. The make-up of the new team consisted of an eligibility support specialist, planned services support specialist, procurement specialist (shared), career planning and employment specialist, a representative from the work training center and four or more VR counselors. This team could serve a minimum of 400 active clients.

As this concept expanded throughout the entire office and ultimately the state, management soon found that the merging of several counselors into a team/unit tended to result in a struggle when some counselors were stronger/harder working than others. Team monitoring became a new concept as each case would be reviewed on a monthly basis. This process ensured that all

clients were served with regularity. Support and professional team members were required to have great organizational skills and the ability to multi-task. Frequency of client contact reduced the failure rate as team members became more engaged with the clients, monitored the cases more frequently, incorporated advanced planning in every case and documented the provision of services. Some staff had never worked in a group environment with roles being specific to core duties; consequently, personality conflicts became more apparent. Information about who was working and who was not doing their part was known by everyone on the team, whereas in the past a counselor's weakness could and in some cases would be concealed by an aggressive and high producing assistant. The new team concept held everyone accountable in performing his or her assigned duties.

### ***Environment***

An assessment by the Technology KRA quickly revealed that SCVRD was operating under a very dated system. Staff members were handwriting IPEs, using typewriters with carbon paper, and using transcribing machines as an alternate. The department's technology was perceived as a hindrance to quality services rather than an asset to the process. Soon after the evolution of the Technology KRA, the staff started hearing rumblings that everyone would be required to use computers in completing their work. This information was received with mixed reactions. The older, more seasoned staff found this to be unimaginable since some could not type and perceived computers as intimidating machines that would result in a slower process. Also, clients did not all come into SCVRD offices to access the department's services. Clients were seen at various itinerant sites, most of which did not have the capability to support the new technology. However, the younger/newer staff appeared excited and could not wait to utilize computers in performing their core duties.

Getting up to speed with technology was a driving force, and it was apparent that significant change was necessary. The staff selected to pilot these changes had to be reminded that their recommendations would be the standard for the entire state to emulate. This brought a lot of credibility to what the team was going to be doing. To prevent the disruption of the entire office, only one team was created and selected to participate in the pilot. There was an immediate sense of pride among the individuals assigned to the pilot. In fact, some of their peers thought they were "the chosen," while others felt excluded because a great deal of attention was being focused on this demonstration pilot.

The staff in the pilot initially struggled with meeting productivity goals and had to be reminded and reassured that staff from other offices would

make up the shortfall in the attainment of “26” closures. Therefore, the focus was soon placed on every staff position working effectively and efficiently in providing quality services to clients. The team was assured of State Office support in making resources readily available for system modifications.

## **Powerful Coalitions**

Input from everyone on staff was solicited in order to obtain buy-in. There was no model to follow, so the outcome was unknown, and a lot of discretion was given to the area team and supervisor in making this demonstration pilot successful. The number of staff participating on the team and the selection of team members was left to the discretion of the supervisor. Recommendations to strengthen the team were made by the supervisor. Teambuilding training evolved to include an off-site ropes course and customer service training. This created an atmosphere of respect among the individuals involved and an understanding of the importance of everyone on the team working together. The supervisor also acted as a consultant to provide training, request training, and provide feedback to the team and to the State Office.

## **Expand Commitment and Empowering Others to Act**

In addition to participation in KRAs and focus/work groups, all staff participated in extensive training in customer service and team building. Fundamental to these activities were the department’s mission, values and vision. An environment of openness to change was fostered. Pilot initiatives were undertaken regarding casework, rehabilitation process, staff roles and service provision. Central to all activities and efforts during this period were the elements of a client-centered process in the achievement of competitive employment. As a result, the department moved from goals emphasizing quantity (number of 26 closures) to goals that also tied into provision of quality VR services to all clients. These activities and the atmosphere engendered by management had the effect of bringing forth many additional ideas and recommendations. For instance, the agency established the department-wide “Celebration of Success” program, which brought quarterly recognition of staff nominated by their peers or superiors for achievements in the areas of individual accomplishment, program excellence and customer service.

The introduction of technology was probably easier to implement once everyone had computers on their desks and by the gradual process deployed—little by little the choices to do things the old way were eliminated. It was “either change or be left behind.” Several staff members were resistant to change and opted to find other employment, while others assimilated to the team concept. Those who stayed took advantage of a customized menu

system and database that was geared to maximize the use of staff time in provision and documentation of services. These technology upgrades were the result of widely sought user input and testing. Laptop computers enabled service provision to clients at remote locations.

Working in teams continues to be a challenge in SCVRD's program, but improvement is constant as the department continues to operate in this mode. The agency has invested funding and much staff time in team building training and customer service training, which is now highly valued and is required for every new employee.

## **Benchmarks and Evaluation**

The key management philosophy that has evolved from the re-engineering effort is Program Integrity, which is the balance among compliance, productivity and customer service in the implementation of the integrated service delivery system. Teams are driven by the individualized, client-centered approach to service delivery rather than a process driven one. This concept continues to evolve and improve with use. The full application of technology for casework documentation and case/caseload management has enabled the department to measure all aspects of Program Integrity using a balanced scorecard. Area operations are evaluated according to the "Commissioner's Nine Expectations": (1) implementation of Program Integrity (productivity, customer service and compliance); (2) implementation of the Integrated Service Delivery System; (3) achieving balance in work training centers; (4) professional appearance of staff, buildings and grounds; (5) relationships with local agency directors; (6) relationships with local legislators; (7) reaching direct placement goals for clients; (8) achieving annual "26" closure goals; and (9) making sure all staff understand the expectations.

The success of the demonstration pilot resulted in a significant reduction in the number of support staff providing coordinated services with greater focus on the provision of professional VR services in a client-centered program. Future threats to the stability of SCVRD several years later due to substantial state budget cuts did not result in the termination of any employee, nor have services to individuals with disabilities in South Carolina declined. This is clearly attributable to the re-engineering initiatives prior to the budget cuts.

The end result has not fully developed because improvements continue. But now clients do not have to wait for a counselor to return from a vacation for services to be provided. The team is held accountable for serving clients and the clients are very pleased (based on customer service surveys) with not having to wait on their counselor. If it is a coordinated service like schedul-

ing an appointment, the counselor never has to get involved. The support staff is required to perform this task so that the counselor can focus on those specific duties that impact the client such as counseling and guidance and job placement assistance.

Once the staff realized the benefits and efficiency of this system, it has become a part of their belief system. The quality of services and the frequency with which services are provided have improved greatly.

## **Lessons Learned**

- With a pilot, the outcome is not always predictable, and changes are ongoing throughout the process.
- Adequate and appropriate training of the staff in the integrated service delivery system could have eliminated some challenges that continue to face the organization in the long term.
- Perfection is a moving target—services can always improve no matter how successful they seem.
- An organizational culture change is very difficult but very possible. Some people can and will handle change better than others, and the value and importance of different opinions must be realized. There are many talents that will emerge from people when they are put in an environment that welcomes input.
- One person doesn't know everything, and one never knows where the next great idea will come from.



## Chapter Eight

# Ready, Set...Go!

### Ready?

What can you take from the Spotlights to help you improve your thinking on the change/s you've identified in Chapter 6? Can you benefit from any of the lessons learned described at the end of each Spotlight? Were there things that struck you as you read one or more of the Spotlights that you could use to improve your preparations for your change?

### Ready, set...then Go!

You've thought through your Call to Action, the steps you can take to assess your environment and prepared a strategy to build your powerful coalition. Move on it!

If you wait until you have it all planned perfectly, you'll be finalizing your plan at your retirement party. Do it!

### Do together...

Communicate what you think needs to happen and listen to what people have to say.

Adjust and incorporate their views and bring them on board. Let others create the change with you.

You're leading a jazz jam session, not conducting an orchestra. Keep the principles and your goal in mind, but encourage and invite others to create the path, overcome the obstacles and celebrate the success together.

### **... and learn together**

Set up periodic mileposts to step back and review how things are going so you can adjust based on the things you learn. Do it often with others involved like your powerful coalition. Build in times to involve others beyond that inner circle, as well.

How can you do that review? Here are questions that can help prompt your discussion:

1. What have we done that really worked or helped? Why did it make a difference? How can we take this lesson and apply it to our work ahead?
2. What would we do differently if we could do it over again? What steps do we need to take to deal with the fallout from this lesson learned the hard way?
3. When and how can we celebrate a success and recognize contributions? Mark the progress you're making along the way. Celebrate successes and recognize the contributions that individuals and groups made to those successes.
4. What's needed next? What are the most significant questions or concerns facing us at this stage? Do we need to change anything about how we're organized, communicating or acting to make sure we address these questions and concerns?

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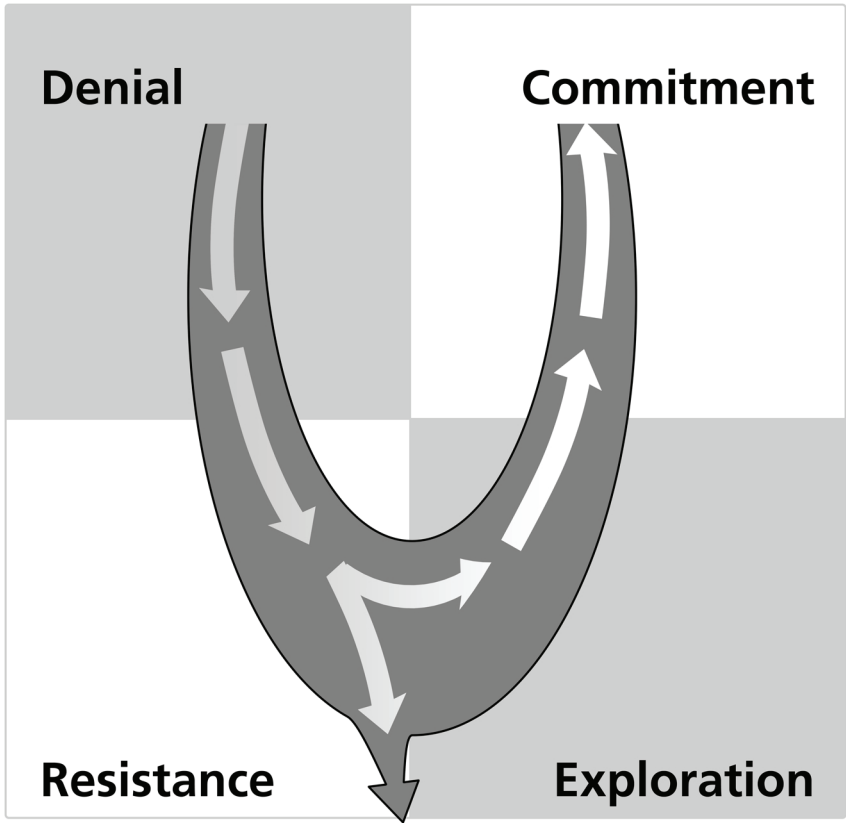


# Appendix A

## Interpreting Your Change Reaction Survey Results

Transfer your numbers to the following *Reaction Grid*. Once you have transferred all numbers, add each column and put those values in the *Total* cells.

1.	2.	3.	4.
5.	6.	7.	8.
9.	10.	11.	12.
13.	14.	15.	16.
17.	18.	19.	20.
21.	22.	23.	24.
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<i>Denial</i>	<i>Resistance</i>	<i>Exploration</i>	<i>Commitment</i>



**Anger**  
*Checking Out*

## Appendix B

# Ordering Information for Assessment Tools

A computer-scored version of *The Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) based on “The Leadership Challenge” by Kouzes and Posner can be ordered from [www.lpionline.com](http://www.lpionline.com).

A free .pdf download of *The Seven Habits Profile* based on “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” by Steven Covey can be found at [www.franklincovey.com](http://www.franklincovey.com), with a direct link at this printing at [www.franklincovey.com/downloads/7\\_Habits\\_Profile.pdf](http://www.franklincovey.com/downloads/7_Habits_Profile.pdf).

*The Situational Leadership Inventory* based on the situational leadership model by Hersey and Blanchard can be ordered from [www.situational.com](http://www.situational.com) or by writing to:

Center for Leadership Studies  
230 West Third Avenue  
Escondido, CA 92025

The *Insights Discovery Personal Profile* by Insights ® Learning & Development Ltd. (1992-2001, Lothian) can be ordered from [www.insights.com](http://www.insights.com).

The *FIRS Survey*© is available online as part of the Business as Unusual program from Pritchett Rummler Brache and can be found at [www.asia-pritchett.com](http://www.asia-pritchett.com)



# Self-Study Questions

1. A three-dimensional leader makes the organization what it should be; positions the organization to influence and create positive change, not just react; and
  - a) Respects self-determination.
  - b) Supports the right to pursue a meaningful career.
  - c) Works for full inclusion.
  - d) Changes the world, not just the organization.
2. According to Mary Switzer, the definition of “rehabilitation” used by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation was
  - a) Maximum possible restoration of impaired physical functioning.
  - b) Vocational training for a job.
  - c) Restoring the individual with a disability to the fullest physical, mental, social, vocational, and economic usefulness for which he is capable.
  - d) Placement in a job matched to the physical capacity of the individual.
3. (T\F) Ed Roberts used his position as an activist to influence and create change in organizations from the outside.
4. (T\F) Justin Dart was asked to resign from his position as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration after calling

for radical changes and presenting testimony before Congress that was highly critical of OSERS and RSA.

5. (T\F) Everyone is a leader.
6. The Bibler Change Curve model shows the following phases in reacting to change:
  - a) Denial, Resistance, Exploration, Commitment
  - b) Denial, Resistance, Commitment, Cooperation
  - c) Denial, Acceptance, Exploration, Normalization
  - d) Denial, Anger, Exploration, Commitment
7. To successfully communicate a Call Action, a leader must
  - a) Have a clear picture of what he wants to accomplish and communicate it strongly, passionately and repeatedly
  - b) Create a sense of urgency related to the change.
  - c) Build trust and credibility among all involved.
  - d) All of the above.
8. In Assessing Attitudes, a leader must
  - a) Accurately determine who supports the change, and at what level.
  - b) Manage the white space.
  - c) Facilitate a discussion of “undiscussables.”
  - d) All of the above.
9. (T\F) Forming a Powerful Coalition primarily involves enlisting the support of those at the top level of the organization.
10. (T\F) In Expanding Commitment and Empowering Others to Act, ways of sharing success stories must become a priority.
11. (T\F) In Expanding Commitment and Empowering Others to Act, true believers spend a large amount of their time teaching others.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ may prevent a leader from continuing to improve and challenge the organization once the initial change is completed.
  - a) Non-Believers
  - b) Upper management
  - c) Exhaustion

d) Panic

13. The experience of the Resource Center for Independent Living in Central New York demonstrates that even when an organization has developed a culture that embraces self-examination and encourages challenges from within and without,
  - a) Federal grants and other resources are still the driving forces.
  - b) Inertia can set in and keep the organization stagnant.
  - c) Positive balance sheets, successes with individuals and respect in the public policy arena indicate that the status quo is working.
  - d) Annual staff planning retreats are still necessary.
  
14. In Alaska's experience, state leaders' lack of vision for the One Stop Centers and lack of information on the needs of people with disabilities created
  - a) A political environment of downsizing and reducing a state budget deficit.
  - b) A cabinet of business leaders.
  - c) An opportunity for the VR director to use principles from the Rehab Act as a platform for change in developing the One Stop Network.
  - d) An autonomous state VR agency.
  
15. (T\F) The Alaska VR agency found a definitive solution to the cultural differences between the agencies in their coalition.
  
16. One of the keys to the success of Vermont's Vision 2000 change initiative was the fact that
  - a) Vermont has a smaller population than many other states.
  - b) Management empowered staff to be creative, take risks, and have ownership in the process of change.
  - c) VR measured its success by employment outcomes.
  - d) Waiting rooms were redecorated.
  
17. Vermont VR learned that
  - a) Better decisions were made using data rather than anecdotal evidence.
  - b) Communication needed to flow both horizontally and vertically.
  - c) Organizations should ensure that their infrastructure can support the changes.

d) All of the above.

18. Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) addressed staff fears about new technology by

- a) Providing staff with options and different approaches to using the new technology.
- b) Forming a steering committee of staff members representing every office, organization and level of responsibility.
- c) Stifling and ignoring nay-sayers.
- d) Both A and B.

19. (T\F) IVRS learned that the change process provided the opportunity for new leaders to emerge.

20. The experience of the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center in Texas taught them that

- a) Some members of the organization will choose to leave rather than change.
- b) People can get very emotional when faced with change.
- c) Allow others to take risks.
- d) All of the above.

OTHER INSTITUTE ON REHABILITATION ISSUES PUBLICATIONS

—28<sup>TH</sup> IRI—

*Distance Education: Opportunities and Issues for the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program*

*Investing in the Transition of Youth with Disabilities to Productive Careers*

—29<sup>TH</sup> IRI—

*Promoting Consumer Empowerment through Professional VR Counseling*  
*Teaching Orientation and Mobility: Non-Traditional Approaches to Meeting Critical Staffing Shortages*

—30<sup>TH</sup> IRI—

*Innovative Methods for Providing VR Services to Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities*  
*A New Paradigm for Vocational Evaluation: Empowering the VR Consumer through Vocational Information*

—31<sup>ST</sup> IRI—

*Consumer Organizations: Important Resources for Vocational Rehabilitation*  
*Leading and Managing Change in Public Vocational Rehabilitation*

—32<sup>ND</sup> IRI—

*The VR-Business Network: Charting Your Course*  
*Rehabilitation of Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders*