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The Change Toolkit for Sussex Leaders, Managers & Teams

Contents Page

The Change Toolkit is broken down into 3 sections and 9 phases. Each step is concurrent, so please follow through each step in order.

Introducing the Change Framework & Toolkit

The following pages outline a change framework and a set of resources which are offered to support you and your team(s) as you begin to plan new ways of working over the coming months.

The change framework is made up of three sections:

- Own the problem

- Own the solution

- Own the outcome

Within each of the sections above there are three phases. When planning for change it is helpful to use a structured approach to provide a smoother transition to new ways of working.

When we are planning a change, it's critical to consider both the functional change itself and the engagement of people in making the change happen successfully - one cannot happen without the other. For each phase of your planning and implementation, we have provided a range of resources to support you with engaging staff and with implementation. You can decide which resources you want to use and which feel appropriate to your change project(s).

Each of the following pages explains the "phase" and if you click on the "Change Toolkit" icon in the top right-hand corner, it will take you to a spreadsheet of associated resources. Use the toggle buttons at the top of the spreadsheet to choose activities to support the phase you are working on.
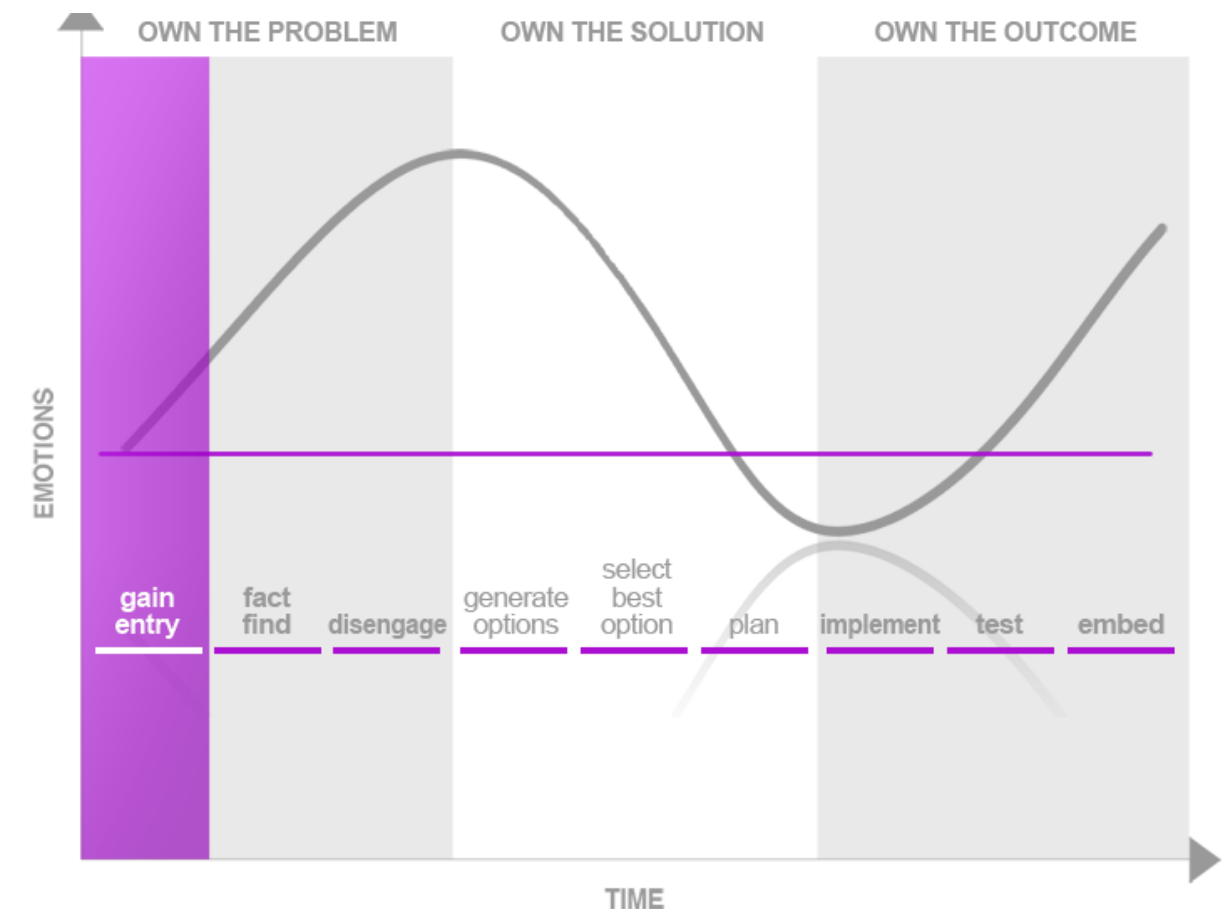
First...own the problem

1. Gain Entry

Introduce the idea of change

In order to gain trust and establish rapport, you need to demonstrate an open mind, an interest in the individuals affected by the change, and active listening skills. The key to this is good preparation. This includes finding out as much as you can in advance from your contacts and desk-based research to learn what's important to them and what's affecting their day-to-day lives at work. You can use the tools from this section to prepare and reflect on how your stakeholders will be feeling, and use them to inform how you will communicate.

We can't avoid Gaining Entry. You're always going to have to do the initial preparation to plan for your approach. This is about handling it properly, as getting it wrong will slow things down. Sometimes project leaders forget that other stakeholders haven't been through the same thought processes and emotions that they have. They expect people to get up to pace quickly and understand everything as they do, but without the time and space to do so, this risks alienating people from the outset.

OWN THE PROBLEM   OWN THE SOLUTION   OWN THE OUTCOME

EMOTIONS

gain entry | fact find | disengage | generate options | select best option | plan | implement | test | embed

TIME

2. Fact Find

Gather relevant information

Fact Find involves gathering lots of information about the current situation, future aspirations, people's views and what others are doing. As the name suggests, it is an exercise that you undertake together with your staff. The evidence that you gather here will be crucial in determining whether there is a need to change and what that change will look like.

The quality of the information will be affected by how people feel. Some people may be defensive and see an implied criticism in being asked questions about what they do and how they do it. They may not want to reveal too much information, believing this is a way to keep things as they are. Others might have a very fixed view of what the problem is or what needs to change. Your work may uncover evidence to the contrary that challenges long-held perceptions.

In this phase, you can draw on the research you have done as part of Gaining Entry to demonstrate your interest in people. The tools in Fact Find will help you create neutral, confidential and fun environments to gather the evidence you need. Overall, you should be clear with your stakeholders what different sources of evidence you are using, who you are talking to and when. You also need to explain what you will do with the information as well as when and how people will find out the results of your work.

If you miss out this phase, the change will feel like something that is happening behind closed doors. Without an opportunity to provide their input, your staff will not trust the evidence you offer and therefore will find it hard to understand the need to change.

You will not understand people's views and so will not be able to target your change and communications activities appropriately. Moreover, you will often find in this phase that the original diagnosis made by senior managers or leaders needs to be modified in the light of evidence you gather. Without this stage you might provide a solution to a problem that doesn't exist!
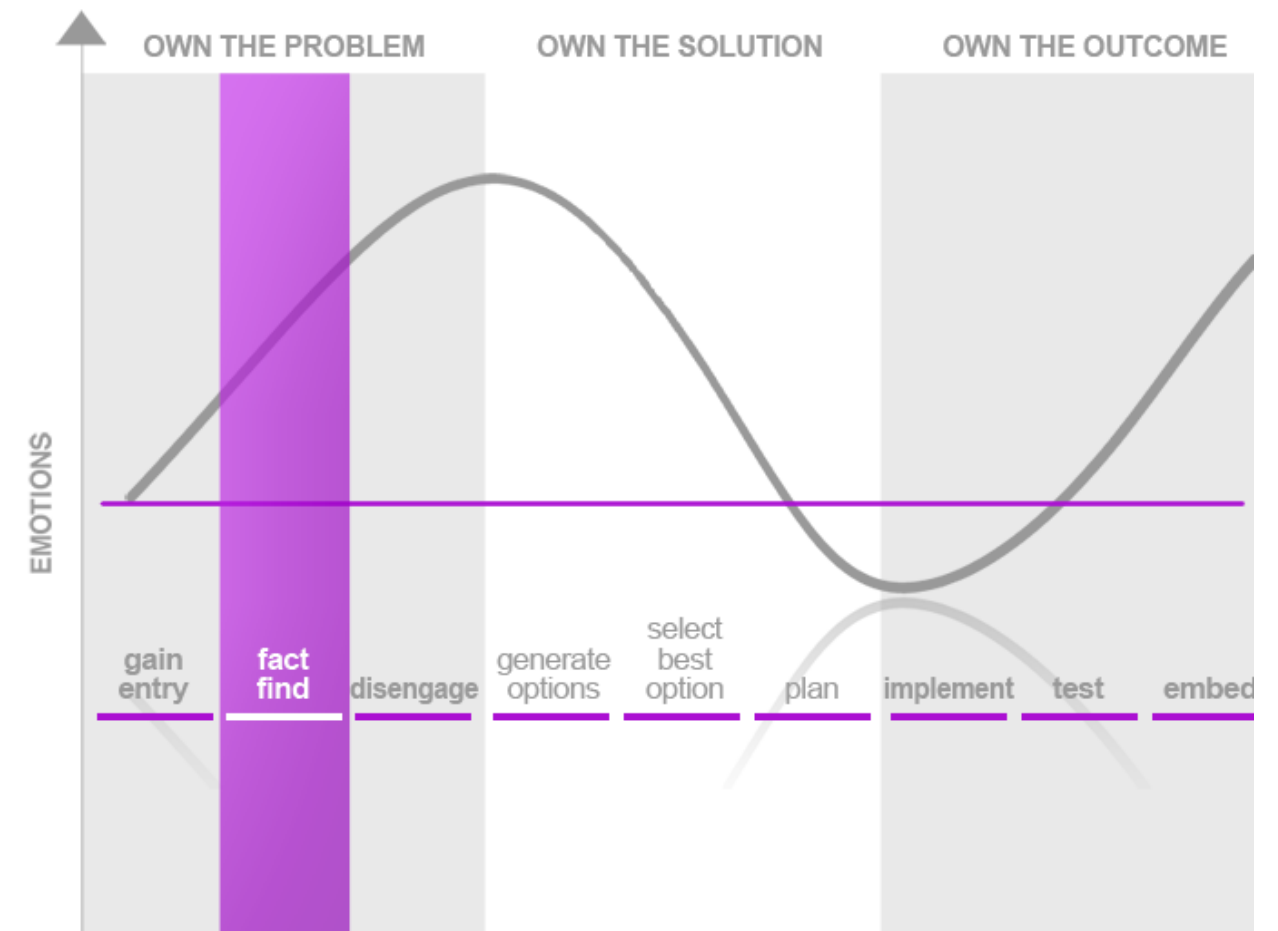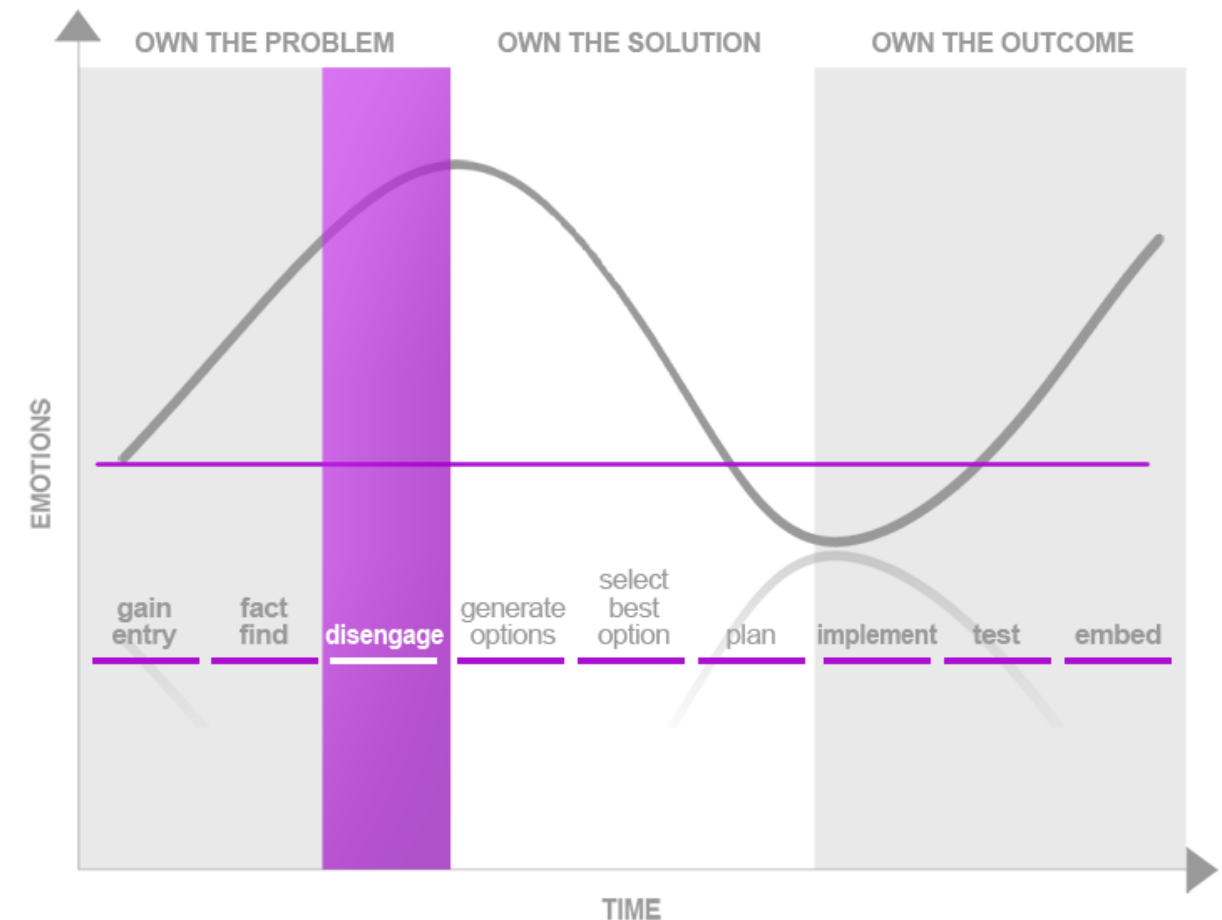
3. Disengage

Help your staff to let go

During Disengage, you will be helping your staff to let go of the current situation and believe that things can be done in a different way. You have probably helped some of your staff to start disengaging as part of the questions and exercises you have carried out during Fact Find. You may have established that some people are already disengaged with the current situation and excited about the prospect of change. Alternatively, some may be disillusioned and struggling to believe anything will happen. Others may be anxious about losing a strong or safe position or concerned they will be blamed for problems.

In this phase, you can use the evidence you have gathered in Fact Find to present the case for change – or, in some circumstances, to highlight that there is no need for change. Encourage people to think about the consequences if we don't change. Having done research into people's views and how they like to find things out in the previous stages, you will also know the best way to present this information back to individuals and to groups. The tools in this section will give you strategies to help convince these different stakeholders.

You may find that people resist and continually try to go back to the old ways of doing things. People may raise questions about the point of making a change rather than focussing their energies on delivering it.

The Disengage stage is critical in getting people to own the change. Without a conviction that the current situation can improve dramatically, people will not feel motivated to go through the upheaval and effort involved in a change.

4. Generate Options

Exploring the art of the possible for future states

Once people are agreed on the need to change, your next task is to help them to think about how they could do things differently. This stage is all about being creative, having fun and exploring possible future states in a safe environment. Following the decision to change in the Disengage phase, many of your staff may be feeling quite excited and enthusiastic at this stage. If they have been actively involved in the work during Fact Find and Disengage, they should also feel empowered. Some people may be keen to start making changes straight away, others may still feel concerned about what the future holds or keen to lobby for a particular solution from the start.

Your activity in this phase will focus on establishing creative and non-judgemental situations in which lots of new ideas are generated. You need to ensure that everyone's voice is heard and that people feel confident and comfortable in expressing their thoughts. Many suggestions may have been put forward during Fact Find, so check that these feed into any work within this stage. You are more likely to come across conflict in this stage as people set out what could be competing alternatives and you can use the tools in this section to ensure you manage that conflict in a positive and constructive way.

If you omit this phase, you might miss out on some amazing ideas and not make the change in the best way. If staff are not given this chance to put their ideas forward, you will probably find that people put their ideas forward later, after another option has been chosen. It can be disruptive to have competing versions of the future in circulation.
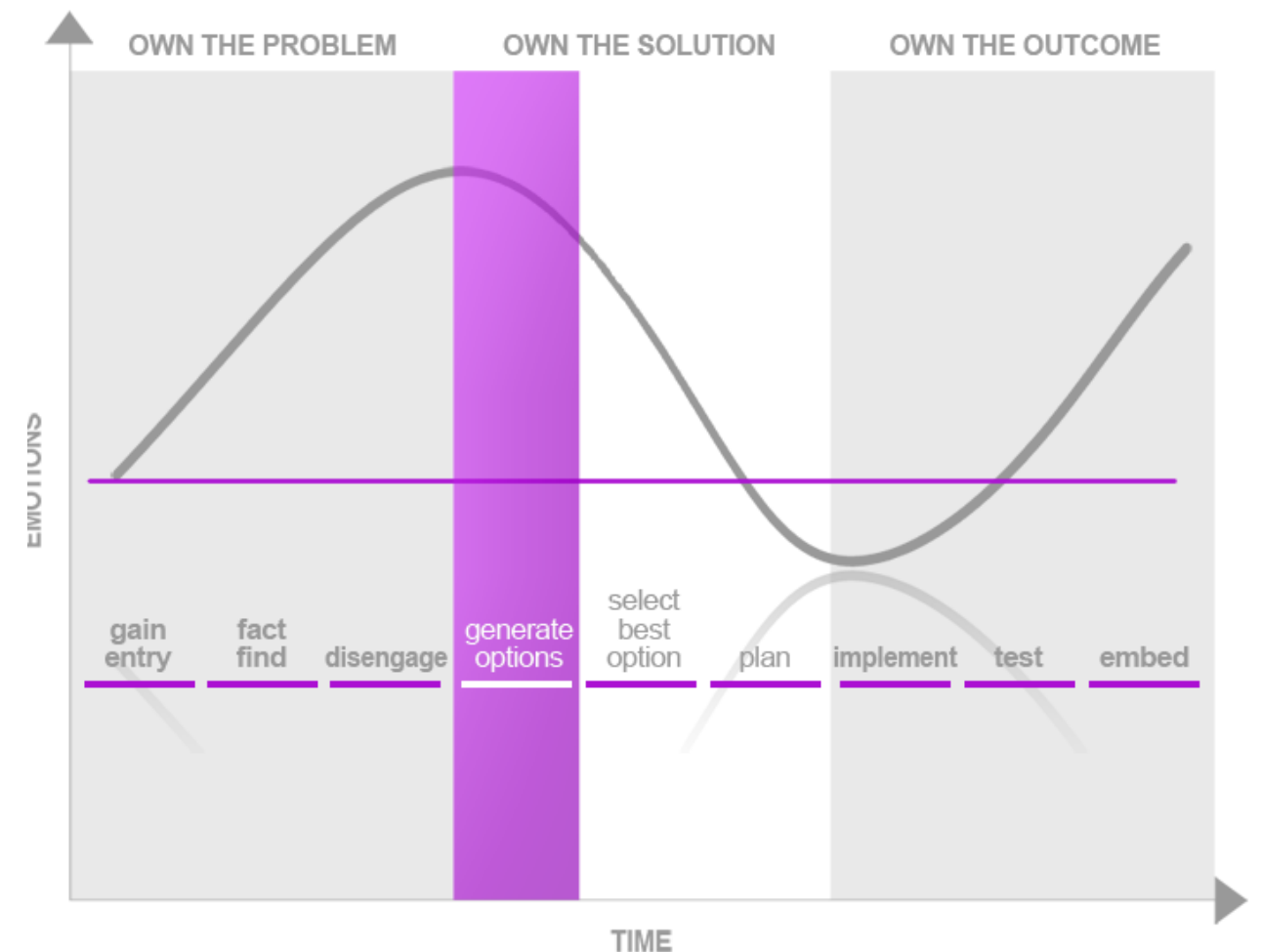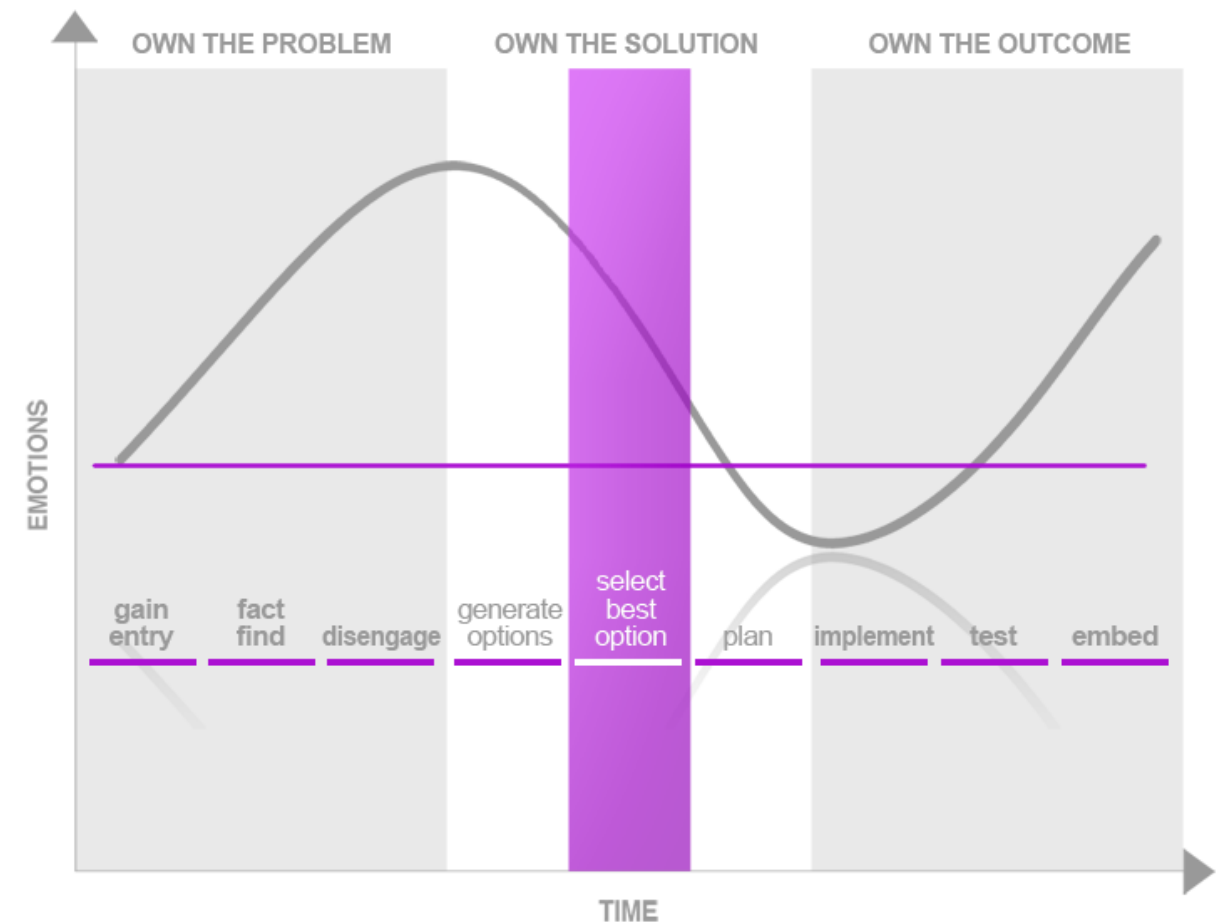
5. Select Best Option

Focus on helping people make a decision

This phase is about picking the option that best helps to solve the issues you've identified back in Fact Find. During Select the Best Option, you'll be focusing on helping people to make a decision. You may find that people are reluctant to abandon some of the different options they have identified during Generate Options. They could try to backtrack to previous stages, asking for more information, because they are concerned about committing to a particular course of action. The thoroughness of the work you have done in Fact Find will pay dividends at this point.

The tools to support you in this phase are concentrated on decision-making and collaborative outcomes. As a change leader, you will need to display quite a high level of challenge, energy and persistence during this phase. You can draw on past work, reaffirming the need for change identified during Disengage and revisiting the outputs of any workshops at that stage. If there is a request for additional information, you need to encourage people to be very specific about exactly what they require to make a decision and agree a date for a decision.

It is essential to discuss all concerns and resolve disagreements before making a collective decision that everyone will support. If not, individuals may undermine the Plan and Implement phases. This can also happen if people are not appropriately involved in Select the Best Option phase. If they have not had the opportunity to discuss their view with others or to hear the reasons why others don't think it's viable, they may keep reverting to this and suggesting it should have been chosen during the rest of the change.

6. Plan

## Support people through a detailed planning phase

Having made the decision about how to proceed, you will now be supporting people through a detailed planning phase. In this stage, you can find that people start to feel a little overwhelmed by the scale of the task. During the planning phase, you will go into detail about exactly which tasks need to be done when and by whom. Your stakeholders will start to realise how much work is involved. Frequently, they will be doing this work at the same time as other duties. People often now start to feel demotivated and feel that the change is tough.

During the Plan phase, you will be drawing on the strength of the relationships and trust that you have established in the early stages of the change. You will need to display patience, resilience and often drive and tenacity in this phase.

You can use the tools in this stage to help people break down tasks and to help them assign responsibility for those tasks. You will also find tools here to assist with delegation, involvement in planning, conflict resolution and agreeing quality requirements.

In addition, it is important to maintain a sense of fun during this phase, celebrate small achievements and to remind people of the end goal. You should seek to ensure that there are deadlines for this phase and that people are able to move to action as soon as possible.

At one end of the scale, failure to plan properly means that the Implement stage may be delayed or not happen at all. At the other end of the scale, the risk is that people move back to previous stages; most commonly, they seek to choose another option or ask for another review.
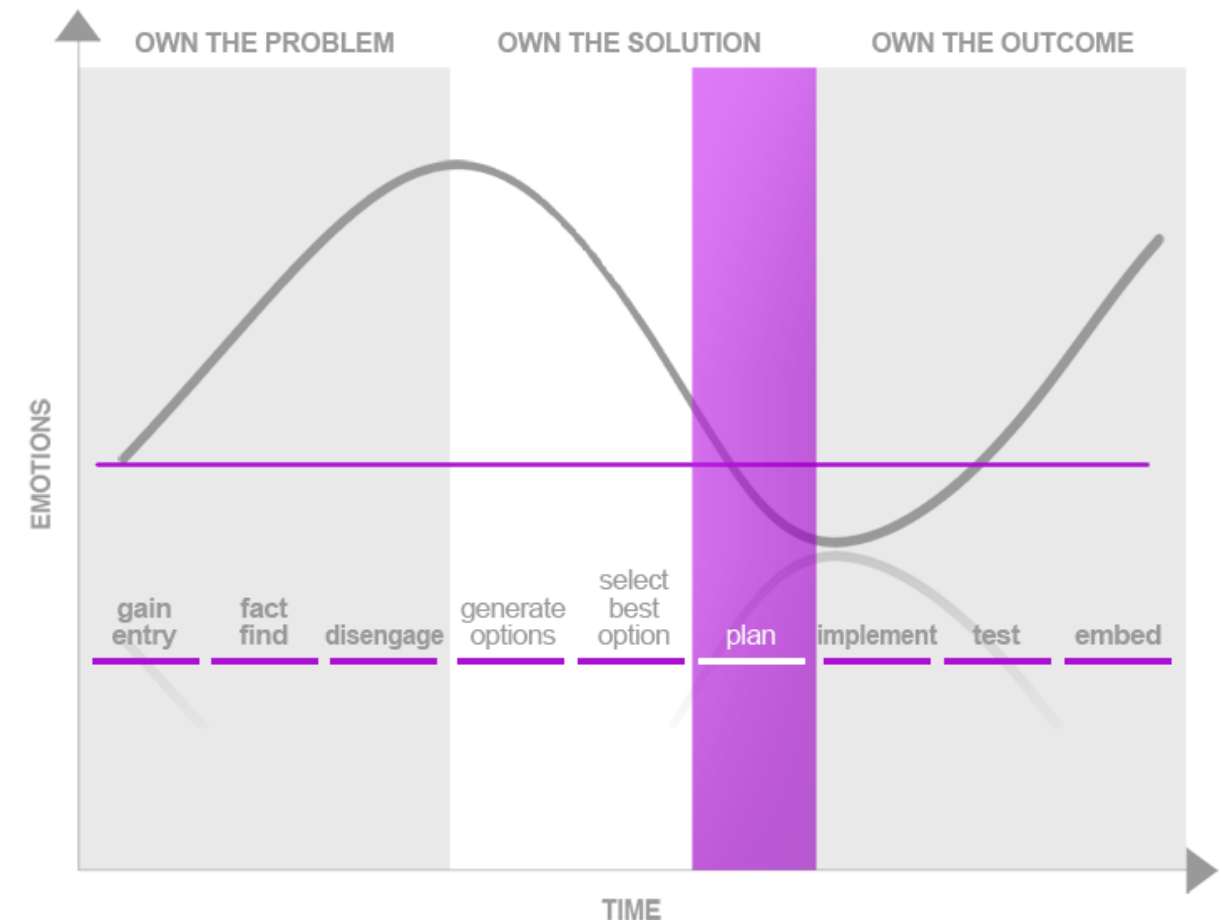
7. Implement

Support people to deliver the change

In the Implement phase, you are supporting people to deliver the change. This phase is where the change starts to happen and people will begin to work in a new way. As people see the change happening around them, they generally start to feel motivated again, because they can see that some progress is taking place. As a high level of learning takes place during this stage, some people can be nervous about being exposed or about their ability to pick up the new way of doing things. You may also find some individuals, not yet convinced, anticipate things will fail.

The change support could be quite intensive during this phase and the tools focus on ensuring that people have the required knowledge and skills to make the change. There are also a lot of techniques here to reinforce and apply learning, such as floor walking and visual management. You need to foster a positive and pragmatic attitude, encouraging people to manage their expectations of themselves and others. Ensure that people have plenty of opportunity to provide feedback on the change and are clear about where to go for support. It is also important to protect people from the change.

Without appropriate change support at this stage, people will often revert to their old way of doing things when they come across a problem. In the early phases, it is often faster to do things the way you know rather than the new way, because you need to think more about that new way until it has become a new habit.
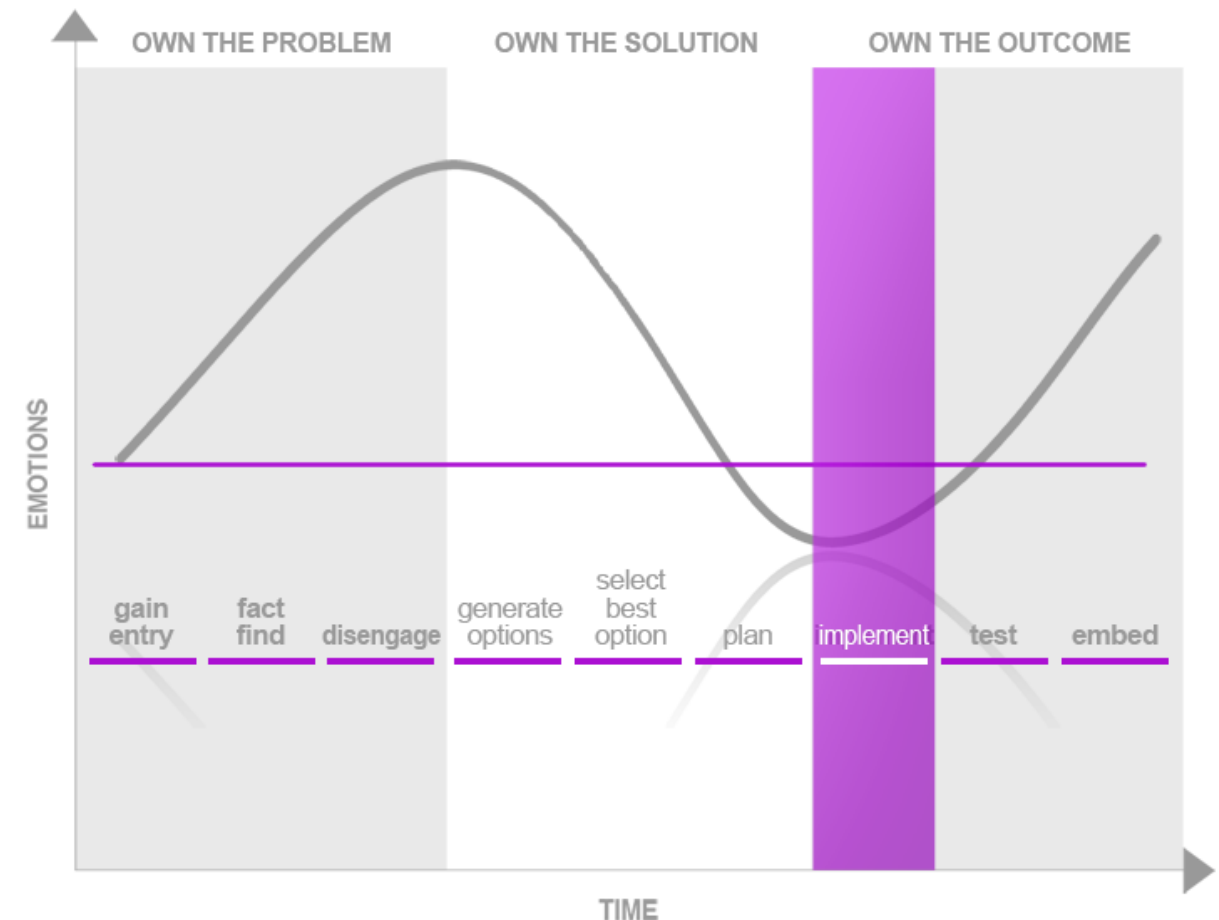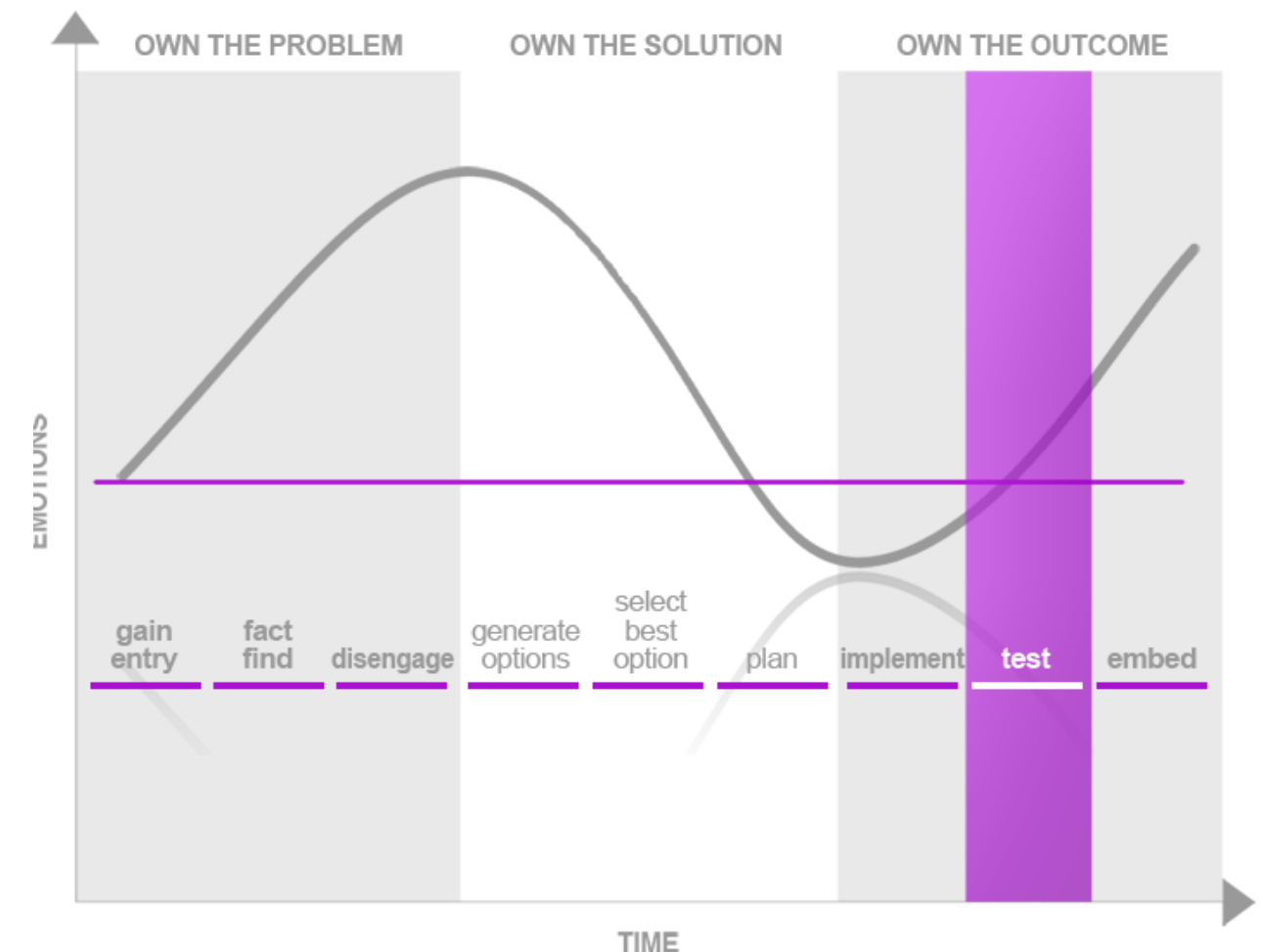
8. Test

Apply evaluation and feedback so the change is sustainable

During the Test phase, you will be supporting people to make small adjustments to the change in the light of practical experience. This phase is all about ensuring that the change is sustainable and that people will not slip back into their old habits. People should feel quite confident now about the change. There is often a sense that the change is completed and a strong feeling that people want to 'get back to normal'. This can often be a honeymoon period or create a false sense of security. On the other hand, if there are still issues to resolve or things that aren't working as expected, it can be a time when people revert back to the old ways of doing things as they seem more reliable.

The qualities you need to display at this stage are trust, openness and tenacity. A large amount of evaluation and feedback should take place during this phase, so the tools focus on that. You will also be empowering others, so resources and techniques to promote self-reliance such as coaching and problem-solving are included here.

This phase can be difficult for a change manager. The feeling that the change has been accomplished can generate pressure for change support to be withdrawn entirely at this stage. However, this can often be a false sense of security. In addition, it can be hard for the change manager to detach themselves from something in which they have been intensely involved. Conversely, if there are still issues to resolve and improvements to make, people will need to be supported to find those solutions in the face of pressure to disengage or abandon the change.

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9. Embed

Ensure the change is sustainable and your exit strategy is planned

During the Embed phase, you will encourage and support your area to make sure the change is sustainable and has become 'business as usual'. Your staff should feel entirely comfortable with the change at this point and confident in their new skills, knowledge and behaviour. They should feel that your support and involvement is increasingly unnecessary.

Your involvement in this stage should be minimal and light touch and will involve implementing your exit strategy from the change. You will be supporting activities such as the development of standard operating procedures and agreeing mechanisms for ongoing improvement and review, such as change initiation forums. Final evaluations and reviews will take place during this phase – and don't forget a big celebration of success. Remember to spend time reviewing your own change work and ask for feedback on your input from your staff.

The risk of not implementing these ongoing processes and agreeing responsibilities are that the change may not become sustainable or that people stop refining and improving the change.
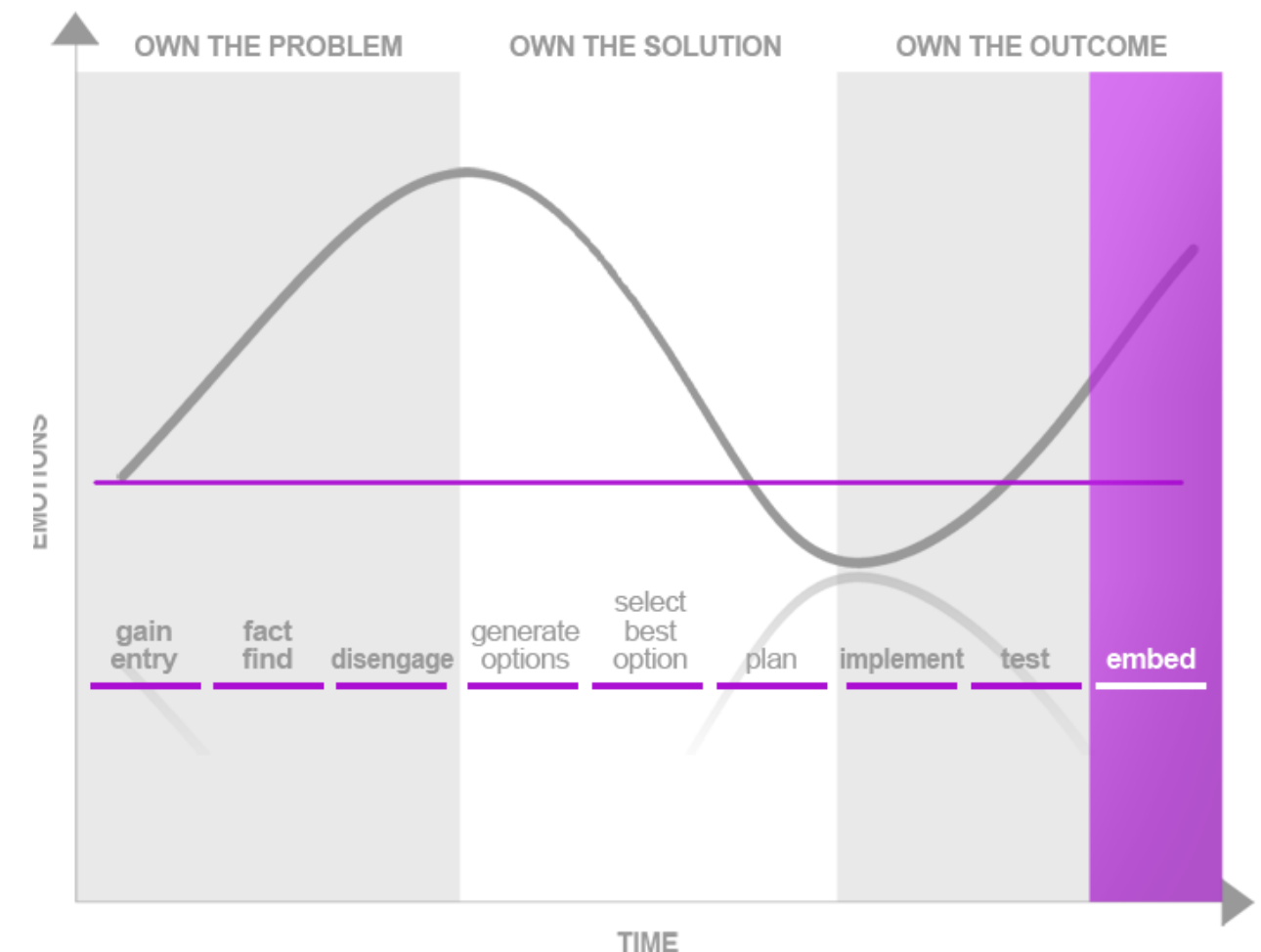
Change as a curve!

If a change happens in your life, it will affect how you feel. At various stages in the change, you might feel curious or bored, angry, in control or overwhelmed, excited, relieved, nervous or strong. Much of this depends on what's changing, on how much you can control it and on what's in it for you.

The Process of Transition - John Fisher, 2012
(Fisher's Personal Transition Curve)
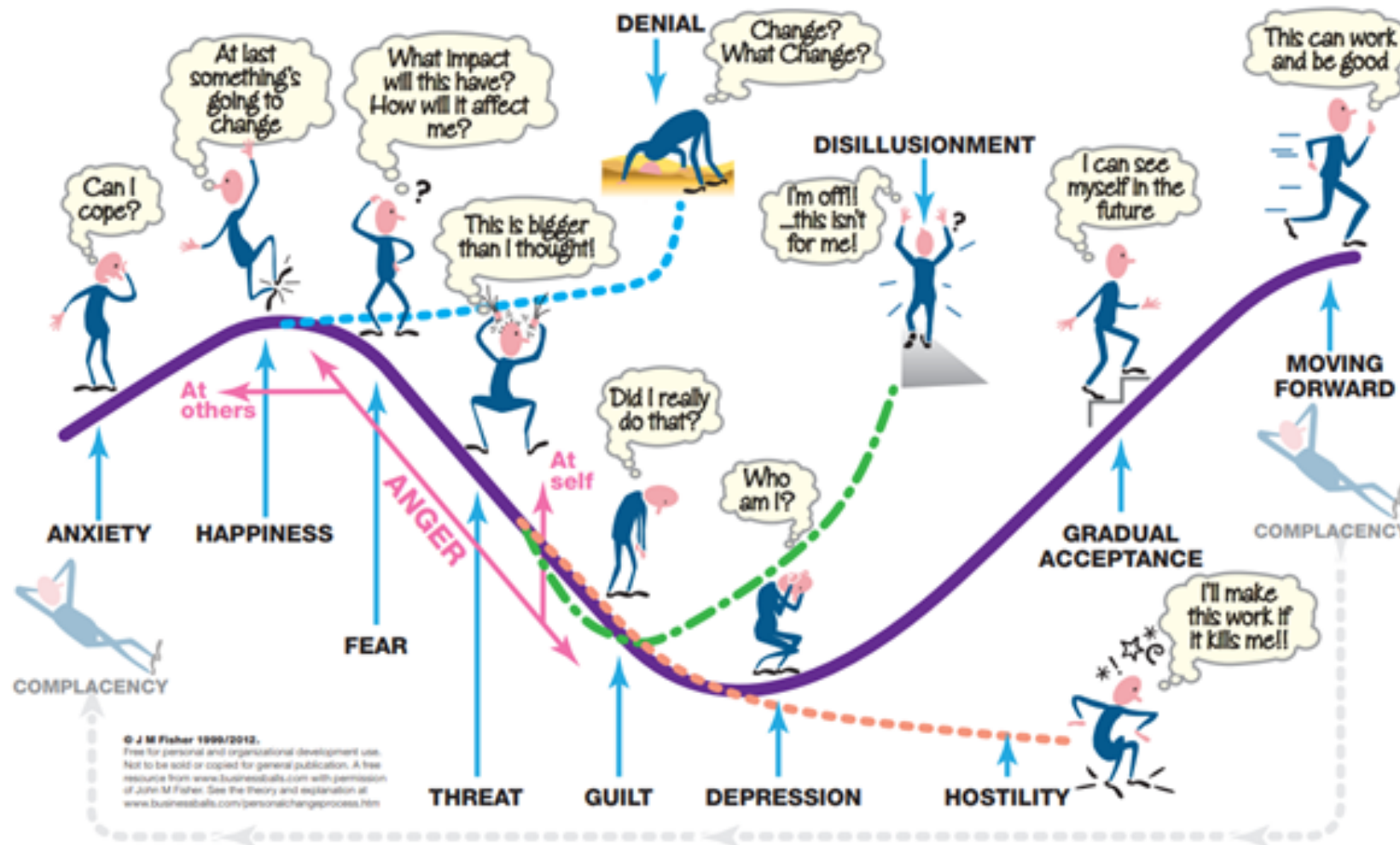
A lot of academic and psychological research has been done into how people respond to change. Although different researchers present it in different ways, most agree that change is a curve. If you plot emotions against time, you find that as any change unfolds you go through a predictable series of positive and negative emotions, which form the peaks and troughs on the journey of change. We've based our shared approach to business change on John Fisher's personal transition curve.
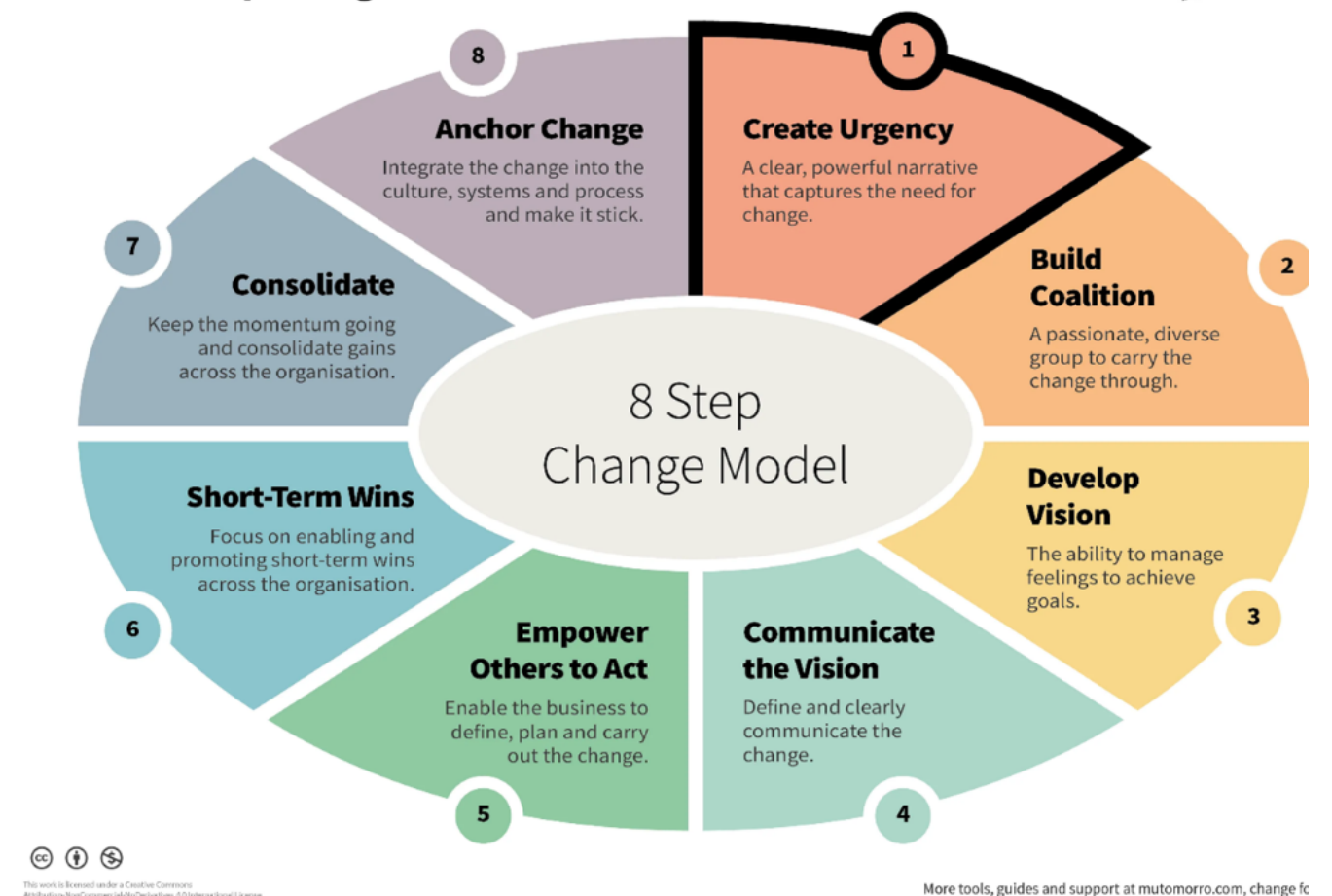
Change as a process

We've also considered Kotter's 8 Step Change Model. They work because change is change – and people are people – whether they are at work or not. This toolkit can support leaders to manage significant change. It's a model that can be used for many types of change and could be used specifically to support your areas in adapting to the change the voluntary leavers scheme will inevitably create.

If this change toolkit is used in a consistent and systematic way across teams and departments, it could contribute to a smoother change process because it considers both the functional elements of change **and** how people adapt to change. It also means that everyone will be using and speaking a common language. In this document we summarise each section of the toolkit and provide guidance on how to apply it.

When working with the Change Toolkit, a key action for leaders will be to identify who will be the lead **"change agent"**, who commits to doing the work and who will follow through on the change model from start to finish.

Kotter's 8 Step Change Model

8 — Anchor Change — Integrate the change into the culture, systems and process and make it stick.

1 — Create Urgency — A clear, powerful narrative that captures the need for change.

2 — Build Coalition — A passionate, diverse group to carry the change through.

7 — Consolidate — Keep the momentum going and consolidate gains across the organisation.

3 — Develop Vision — The ability to manage feelings to achieve goals.

6 — Short-Term Wins — Focus on enabling and promoting short-term wins across the organisation.

5 — Empower Others to Act — Enable the business to define, plan and carry out the change.

4 — Communicate the Vision — Define and clearly communicate the change.

8 Step Change Model

More tools, guides and support at mutomorro.com, change fo

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Finally...

Remember it's really important to look after yourself through change and think about how you can support your wellbeing and build resilience. More information is available on the Staff Wellbeing Hub.
We hope these resources will support you with your planning over the coming months and years.

Staff Wellbeing Hub   ❯