

Change Approach and Framework Selection Guide

Choose between planned, emergent, and dialogic change, then select Lewin, Kotter, or ADKAR

Purpose

This guide helps managers diagnose a change and select an approach and framework grounded in the course concepts. It ends with a clear handoff to a separate framework application guide.

Step 1: Define the change

What will be different?

Who will be affected?

Why is the change needed?

What must people start, stop, or continue doing?

What outcome should improve?

Step 2: Identify the main type of change

Type	Definition	Fit: Low/Medium/High	Evidence
Strategic change	A change in direction,		

	market, business model, or long-term positioning.		
Operational change	A change in processes, procedures, roles, or day-to-day execution.		
Cultural change	A change in shared values, norms, assumptions, and expected behaviours.		
Technological change	A change involving tools, platforms, automation, data, or digital capability.		

Step 3: Determine the scale of change

Question	Your assessment
Is the change improving an existing model or replacing how the organization works?	Incremental / Transformational
Is the future state clear?	Clear / Partly clear / Unclear
How many functions are affected?	One / Several / Enterprise-wide
Does the change affect culture or identity?	Low / Medium / High
Does the change require new technology or data?	Low / Medium / High
Does success depend on individual adoption?	Low / Medium / High

Step 4: Select the change approach

Diagnostic question	Yes suggests
Is the destination clear and the path mostly known?	Planned change
Must the solution evolve through pilots, feedback, and learning?	Emergent change

Is the main barrier about meaning, trust, identity, beliefs, or competing interpretations?	Dialogic change
Do several of these conditions apply?	Use a hybrid approach and define the purpose of each part

Step 5: Identify the main implementation risk

Risk	Priority 1-5	Evidence
The current state is deeply established and difficult to loosen.		
The organization lacks urgency or shared direction.		
Leadership and functions are not aligned.		
People do not understand why the change is needed.		
People do not want to participate.		
People lack knowledge or ability.		
Culture, systems, or incentives support the old way.		
The organization may declare success too early.		
The environment is too complex for a fixed plan.		
Trust, identity, or meaning is blocking progress.		

Step 6: Select the framework

Framework	Choose it when	Do not rely on it alone for
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Lewin	You need to unfreeze the current state, move toward a new practice, and stabilize it.	Detailed enterprise mobilization or individual adoption diagnosis.
Kotter	You need urgency, a coalition, vision, barrier removal, wins, momentum, and cultural anchoring.	Detailed individual adoption diagnosis.
ADKAR	You need to diagnose and support awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement.	Organization-wide strategy, governance, and coalition building.

Selected approach: _____

Selected framework: _____

Reason for selection: _____

Step 7: Choose the application guide

- Lewin Application Guide: for unfreezing, moving, and refreezing.
- Kotter Application Guide: for broad, cross-functional, or transformational change.
- ADKAR Application Guide: for individual or group adoption.

Decision summary

Change statement

Main type of change

Incremental or transformational

Planned, emergent, dialogic, or hybrid

Main implementation risk

Selected framework

Why it fits

Application guide selected