

# Accelerating Strategic Change

*Application of the Whole-Scale Approach to Leading and Managing Change*

By Albert B. Blixt and Sylvia L. James

Partners, Dannemiller Tyson Associates

Published in “Learnende Organisation” January/February 2004 issue,

Institut für Systemisches Coaching und Training, Vienna, Austria

Around the world, leaders want answers they can use to the “Who, What, Where, When and How” of making rapid strategic change happen in their organizations. Our challenge as consultants is to uncover new ways to help our clients accelerate that change process.

This article is based on the principles and practices of *Whole-Scale™ Change*, the methodology pioneered and used around the world by Dannemiller Tyson Associates consultants since 1982. Below we share what we have learned are seven accelerators of change. We work in partnership with our clients to push common practice and to design change processes that will move clients as fast and as extensively as they need. These change accelerators, however, apply to any change intervention strategy.

## Leaders Feel the Need for Speed

Leaders are experiencing the need for rapid and effective organizational changes to respond to the demands placed upon them. Leaders at a recent North American Food Manufacturing Summit were asked to identify the five “most essential challenges” facing their organizations from a list of 17 possibilities. The leaders came from predominantly large companies (over \$1 billion annual revenue) but their answers could have come from any business organization.

The challenges they identified as the most pressing were:

- Increasingly competitive, complex markets 87%
- New product development 73%
- Operational excellence 60%
- Implementing strategy 43%

Challenges identified less often included

- Strong leadership/succession 30%
- Information management 30%
- Managing growth 30%
- Merger/acquisition integration 27%
- Talented, engaged workforce 27%
- Talent management 27%
- Increasing regulation 17%
- The economy 10%
- Globalization 10%
- Corporate ethics and governance 7%
- Rapid technology changes 7%
- Other – “moving from commodity to brand” 3%

When these same leaders were asked what skills their organizations needed to improve on most to respond to these challenges, the highest priorities included:

- Getting Leadership Concepts To The Front Line
- Communication
- Team Skills
- Managing Conflict
- Collaboration

It was clear from both the nature of the challenges and the skills identified to meet those challenges that solutions will require working across traditional organizational boundaries to engage the whole system. Organizations must address with both cultural and structural barriers in a way that involves the whole system if they are going to be successful in the complex world they operate in.

### **Why go fast?**

- Organizations and communities can no longer wait for results. The window for showing improvement is now months rather than years.
- Change is happening anyway and fast. It's the nature of living systems. Organizations must choose to change or have change thrust upon them.
- Problems are systemic with symptoms appearing everywhere. Traditional strategy often seems removed from action.
- Speed is needed to integrate the numerous "initiatives" which compete for attention rather than lead to systematic results.
- Speed helps heal cynicism from delayed or disconnected change efforts. Cynicism is a corrosive and destructive force that saps energy and destroys morale. The people feel like their leaders "talk, talk, talk." Meanwhile, leaders yearn for their workforce to "buy-in" to their change vision and "get 'on board'."

### **What Accelerates Change?**

While there are many factors involved in system change, there are a few that determine the speed at which that change takes place. From our experience, we believe acceleration lies in:

1. **Purpose:** Linking all change to a compelling shared purpose, driven by strategy and a way to measure success.
2. **Shared Strategy:** Thinking whole system at every moment.
3. **Leadership:** Aligning and building leadership for change
4. **Critical Mass:** Engaging People to Accelerate Change.
5. **Roadmap:** Creating a common change journey that is visible to all who are taking it and that reflects whole system every step, and integrates all change/strategic initiatives
6. **Infrastructure:** Creating an infrastructure to Lead, Manage, and Sustain the Change
7. **Sustaining Momentum:** Sustaining momentum by connecting the change to organizational culture and values

## Accelerator #1 - Purpose

### Linking all change to a compelling purpose, driven by strategy and a way to measure success

Purpose is the "why" of change. It tells people that what is happening is important to position the organization for success in the future in some way. If a change initiative is not connected with a widely supported vision of the future, it will seem like an arbitrary "flavor of the month" that, if ignored, will die a slow death so we can get back to business as usual. To prevent this, it is essential that the leader sponsoring the change can articulate the link to purpose.

#### Getting to Purpose. See The World Your Client Sees.

As a consultant, you must discover the link to purpose for this change initiative. The leaders may not have fully articulated it, even to him/herself. Have a real conversation with the leader. See the world that leader sees. Really listen, stay curious, suspend the temptation to diagnose, avoid the urge to create solutions. One of the best processes we know for this is "Telling our Stories". As a practice, it is simply asking questions to see the world through someone else's eyes. It is based on our change formula that we refer to as DVF described in Figure 1.

Fig. 1.

$$D \times V \times F > R$$

**The Change Formula** says that to overcome the natural resistance (R) to change, three things must be present:

**D = Dissatisfaction** with the current state that is public and shared. The more information people have, the more likely they are to be dissatisfied with the status quo.

**V = Vision:** There must be a compelling and ennobling picture of the future that is also public and shared.

**F = First Steps** in the direction of the change that will produce immediate evidence of progress

The formula multiplies these factors. Therefore if any is missing or very small, there will not be enough energy to overcome the resistance.

When all of the elements (D and V and F) are in place, in the individual and/or in the organization, the paradigm will have shifted and changes will be a given.

DxVxF>R Model is a great deal more than simply a model for change. It is, in fact, an important model that enables the necessary paradigm shift to occur. When you help an organization to combine **D**, **V**, and **F**, when each member sees the multiple realities in the room, the wisdom of the whole will be in place and a paradigm shift occurs. When the shift occurs, everyone can feel a higher level of excitement and energy in the room. The paradigm shift lasts beyond the initial euphoria. Once an organization has made a real shift, for it to go back to seeing the world in the old ways is impossible.

Sylvia James describes how she works with a leader using this process:

*When I first meet with a leader or representative of the client, I construct a few questions, based on the flow of DxVxF. I interview in a way that my client will uncover their own dissatisfactions, what they are yearning to create in the future, and ways to move forward. And, once I can see their world, I move the conversation to creating ideas together. I ask, "what's working here? What's not working?" I inquire about what their vision of success would look like if it were here today. What would be different? Why would it matter? I build on their ideas and how we might make something happen. I say "what if" instead of "you/we should." What I know is that when I interview anyone in this way, I take their story into myself. We are forming a relationship to figure all this out together. We are formulating the purpose, the roadmap, and leading engagement. I describe the DxVxF>R model for change. Leaders quickly grasp it and move to first steps thinking (what needs to happen, who needs to be involved, what needs to be different as a result).*

Of course, purpose must not only be uncovered, it must be shared. When everyone in the organization has had their own DVF exploration and decided that the outcomes of this change effort matter to them and that they are worth fighting for, then everyone will have a sense of urgency to get to the future state they desire.

## **Accelerator #2 - Shared Strategy: Thinking Whole System at Every Moment**

Two models are central to the Whole-Scale™ Approach and guide whole system thinking and the process map for any change journey. They are The Star of Success and The Strategic Planning Model.

**The Star of Success** describes the relationship between five parts of an organization's pattern of success. (see fig. 2) It is used both for planning and for diagnosing problems. When things are going well, all the parts are in balance and support one another. When things get out of balance, the pattern of success is disrupted and change is needed. A problem at one point of the Star often has its root cause at another point.

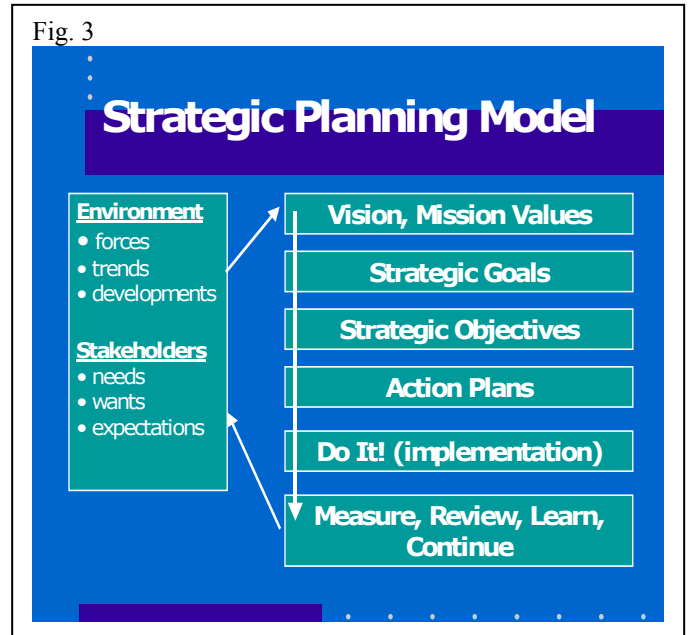
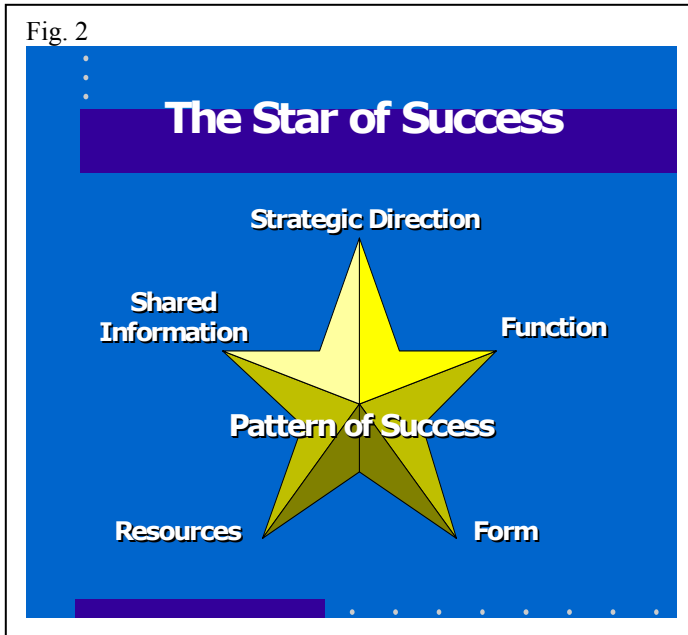
**Strategic Direction:** Strategy drives everything in this model. This point of the star answers the questions of organizational identity, purpose and direction. It includes Mission, Vision, Values, Goals and Objectives.

**Function:** Function refers to the systems and processes used to accomplish the work required by our strategy. Are we doing the right work? Is it being done in the best way? Do we have the right systems (e.g., information, rewards, hiring, training systems) to support the work?

**Form:** Form, as the saying goes, should follow function. Organization charts and job descriptions are part of form but so is the way decisions are made and the informal relationships that are used to get work done. The distribution and use of power resides here. Form also includes culture: the norms and behaviors that rule relationships.

**Resources:** Resources are what is needed to achieve the strategy. This includes motivated people who understand and are committed to the strategy; people who have the skills, equipment, facilities and technology to get the work done that will achieve the strategy.

**Shared Information:** Shared information means creating and sharing information that lets everyone have the big-picture view they need to act promptly and effectively to support the strategy. Measure the right things; communicate the right things as close to real time as possible. The Star of Success can be used both as a diagnostic and a planning model. When planning a change effort, one must be thinking about how the change will impact all points of the star in pursuit of the strategic vision. Changing the organizational chart (form) in isolation, for instance, may have unintended negative consequences elsewhere in the system.



### The Strategic Planning Model

The Strategic Planning Model describes in detail the first point of the Star of Success. The model is seen as a continuous action learning project in which the system is sensitive and responds to changes over time. It provides a clear and simple format for communicating strategy across the organization and is often used as a "Plan on a Page" during change engagements. The elements of the strategy are defined as the responses to a set of questions.

**Stakeholders:** Who has a stake in our organization? Who is counting on us for something? Includes customers, employees, owners, suppliers, communities, unions and others.

**Environment:** What is happening in the world that we need to take account of in our planning? What are the forces, trends and developments that impact our ability to succeed?

**Vision:** What is our future picture of success? How would we describe, in detail, the world that we are seeking to create where we are living our mission magnificently?

**Mission:** Why do we exist? What is our fundamental purpose for being as an organization? What "business" are we in? How do we create value for our stakeholders?

**Values:** What are the guiding principles that we stick to even when the going gets tough? What are the behaviors that really define who we are as members of this organization?

**Strategic Goals:** Where are we going? What are the few areas we need to focus on over the next 3-5 years? Where do we need to concentrate our energy now? What are our strategic priorities?

**Strategic Objectives:** What are the measurable, attainable outcomes we will achieve in the next year? How will we know we are making progress on our goals in pursuit of our vision?

**Action Plans:** How will the work get done? Who will be responsible? By when?

**Do It!** Take action. Deployment of strategy means first steps in the direction of our vision. Not everything will go as planned. Deployment is seen as a time of "road testing" the strategy to see what works and what doesn't.

**Measure, Review, Learn, Continue:** Come together from time to time to ask: "What did we say we would do?" "What did we actually do?" "What are we learning?" "What do we need to do next?" The continuous improvement cycle ends and begins again.

### **Accelerator #3 - Leadership: Aligning And Building Leadership For Change**

Without good and committed leadership, change efforts have little or no chance of success. The leadership team plays a critical role in the change process. Special attention needs to be paid to how leaders can focus both on long-term vision and short-term operational excellence through the chartering and operation of a leadership team.

Leadership, of course, plays an essential role in the change process because:

- Leaders are ultimately accountable
- Leaders have the authority to convene the change process
- Leaders manage the process
- Leaders empower others

Leading a significant organizational change effort requires a shift in thinking for many executives. The change effort requires a significant time commitment. Often 50-60% of a leader's time is spent working on issues related to the change. For each member of the leadership team, it must be clear that change **is** the work and not a distraction from the work.

In order to engage leaders beyond their functional role, it is necessary to convene and maintain a true leadership team. The roles and responsibilities of the leadership team define its charter.

Among the things the leadership team does:

- Lead and Guide the Change Effort
- Provide the Strategic Direction for the Business and define the Case for Change
- Define Outcomes, Boundaries and Measurement for Change Process
- Set the Values and Behaviors of the New Culture
- Decide on the Structure for the Change Process
- Approve and Enable Recommendations for Change
- Oversee, Monitor and Guide Employee Participation
- Identify and Attack Underlying Organizational Issues
- Model the New Behaviors of the New Culture
- Review Progress toward Outcomes
- Coordinate All Major Activities across Change Initiatives
- Ensure that all Change Initiatives Support the Strategy

### **Building the Leadership Team**

In the Whole-Scale™ Approach, teams are constantly in a state of formation, going repeatedly through three stages as they work together. Leadership teams are no different. We are

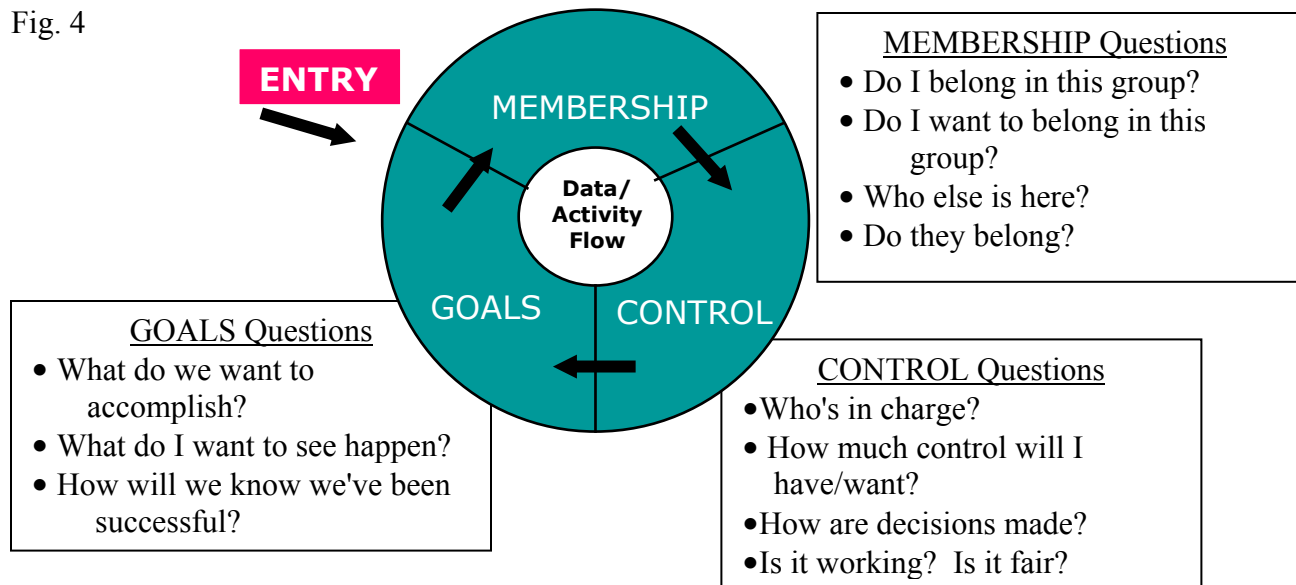
constantly aware that teams repeatedly cycle through three team stages as they work together. These stages are called Membership, Control and Goals as in the illustration below. (See Fig. 4)

## MCG Model of Team Formation

The process begins with ENTRY, the reason for coming together. In this case, the point of entry may be a leadership retreat or other launch meeting.

At each stage, members of the group ask different questions. The answers to those questions determine whether they will decide to continue to participate

Fig. 4



With the completion of each project or task, the members of the team evaluate how things are going. If there is positive energy, trust builds and membership goes deeper. If not, things start to unravel.

In building the Leadership Team, the focus is on building a sense of membership around the strategy. If everyone on the team feels heard and commits to the strategic direction, the team will have a firm foundation for working. The team will also need to work out its own norms and mechanics for operating. To successfully lead strategic change, a Leadership Team must also be aligned around Membership (who we are and our role in leading change), Control (how decisions will be made and by whom along the change journey), and Goals (what results we must achieve).

MCG model is both a tool which the consultant can use with any team to diagnose itself, and a framework for designing the conversation that any team must have to work together, to lead and sustain change.

Think about how you could work to align a leadership team around its shared strategy and to prepare it to lead the rest of the organization using the MCG model. Note that MCG can help you guide the process of working with the team while the other theories and models  $DxVxF>R$ , The Star Model and The Strategic Planning Model, can be used to inform the content and make the strategy a

reality and achieve the desired results. The team will also need to agree and commit to its role in leading the change.

#### **Accelerator #4 - Critical Mass: Engaging People to Accelerate Change.**

The heart of the effectiveness of the Whole-Scale Change methodology is the idea of engaging a critical mass of the organization in the change effort. We say "People support what they help to create." Genuine engagement means that people must have a voice in the change whether that is in the formation of the strategy or how it will be implemented. Critical mass can be achieved in a number of ways through a single large meeting or a series of smaller meetings. We have worked for more than two decades perfecting and evolving processes for bringing together large groups of people for the purpose of accelerating change. Many of our clients cannot initially imagine 100 or 1,000 people coming together to do useful work but soon come to understand that it is in talking with each other as well as in listening to the leaders that the wisdom and power of the organization can be unleashed. We say that critical mass is achieved when the change effort becomes unstoppable because the people of the organization support it.

The design and facilitation of a large group meeting also makes use of the DVF and other models. We convene small microcosm teams to plan these event made up of a cross section of the people who will be attending. In the process of coming up with a purpose statement and an agenda for the meeting, the event planning team will go on the same journey of discovery that the larger group will experience later on. Critical mass events can be used to "launch" a strategy initiative, to accelerate a specific change step such as redesigning work processes or to evaluate deployment efforts and plan what should happen next.



**Large group meetings** like the one pictured here engage a critical mass of the organization to accelerate change at a critical moment in the process. In meetings that may include 50 to 1,000 people or more, work is done at microcosm tables of eight. At each table, people from all levels and functions in the organization work together to create a shared picture of reality and solutions that reflect the knowledge of the whole system.

#### **Accelerator #5 - Roadmap: Creating a common change journey**

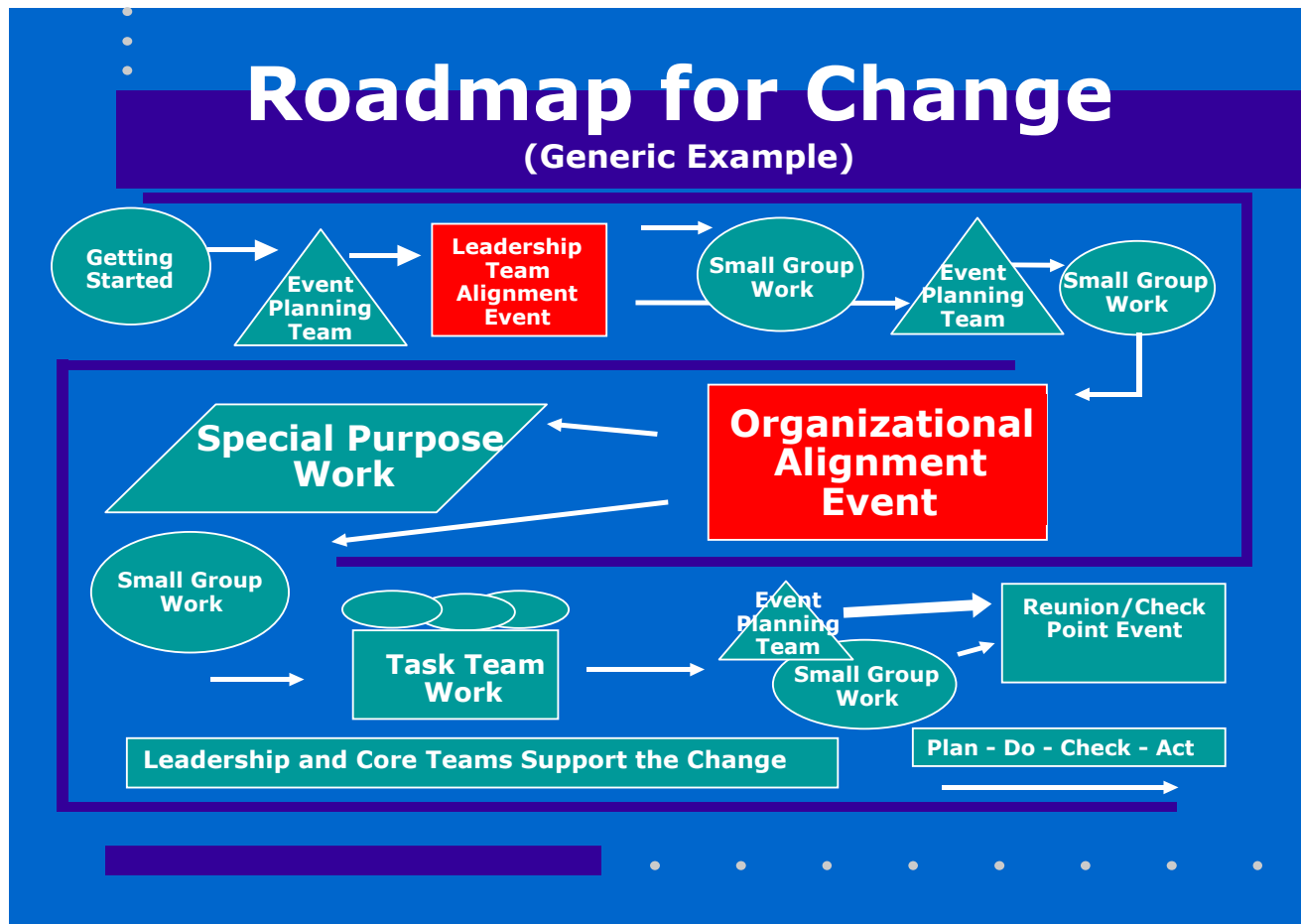
Creating a Roadmap for Change means seeing the change effort as a journey that all the people of the organization must travel if the goal is to be achieved. Too often, change initiatives are seen as single events or episodes that come and go without connection to everything else that is going on in the organization. Drawing a roadmap with your client will help the leaders take this work as seriously as any other major project that they undertake. And, it will make clear that the work of leading the change cannot be delegated. The roadmap serves also as a wonderful communication tool so that people will both understand the change initiative and their role in it. Broadly speaking, most change roadmaps can be divided into four phases:



- Strategy development and leadership alignment
- Organizational Alignment (Launch)
- Deployment (Action Learning)
- Evaluation and Renewal

While every change engagement is different, the generic Change Roadmap below illustrates the flow of the work through the various stages. (Fig. 5)

**Fig. 5**



**Two key moments on the change roadmap** for strategy development are the Leadership Alignment event, when the leaders agree on a draft strategy and the Organizational Alignment Event when a critical mass of the organization reviews, enriches and adopts the strategy and begins action planning. Large and small group work alternates throughout the process in a converge-diverge pattern. Small group meetings prepare for or follow through on actions decided on in large group meetings.

This process map serves as a guide for the change effort. It is continually revised as the work evolves to take account of new developments. Through creating a change roadmap, participants also gain an understanding of key principles and processes of a whole system approach to change and how to apply these ideas to accelerating positive change in their own organizations.

Development of the Change Roadmap is not just the work of the leaders, however. It is advisable to pull together a team that is more of a microcosm of the organization to create the Change Roadmap.

The design of the road map takes account of the need for small group work and large group work that lets the system diverge and converge as needed. Small group work (diverge) can include anything that prepares for large group work (converge) when decisions are made and actions are planned. It is a good idea to establish a staff team that supports the leadership and manages much of the detail of the change work. This group, which we often call a Core Team, brings important information from the organizational level to complement the information available at the leadership level when planning the change journey.

Things to keep in mind when designing a Change Roadmap:

1. What is the data?
2. Given that What is the Purpose?
3. What is the Plan? (create a picture roadmap) Remember
  - CONVERGE** (When is it important to bring people together?)
    - Accelerators
    - Alignment
    - Communication
    - Decision-making
  - DIVERGE** (What is the work that needs to happen between the “Accelerators”.)  
These events could occur before or after “convergences”:
    - Event Planning Team (EPT)
    - Data Gathering
    - Benchmarking
    - Task Teams
4. Now, for each intervention (large or small) consider the following:
  - What is the **purpose** for this specific event? How does it support the overall initiative
  - What are the **conversations** that need to take place? Work to be done?
  - Given all that **who** needs to be in the room?
5. Using Microcosms as a best practice:
  - Microcosms** are used in the Whole-Scale™ approach to engage the whole system in a non-linear fashion. Microcosms are:
    - Representative of the larger system
    - Reflects all key stakeholder groups and diverse perspectives
    - Represents all functions, levels, geography
    - Provide linkages to all change initiatives
    - Become change advocates. Create effects disproportionate to their numbers when they return to the system with new information and ideas

Microcosms are used routinely in the change process. Over time, many people have the experience of working with people from across the organization on important work. From this experience they begin to develop a new understanding of the organization and the interconnections and relationships that make for organizational success.

***A true microcosm will be able to tell the consultant group what work needs to happen, and provide guidelines on how it can be done within the organization culture.***

## **Accelerator #6 - Infrastructure: Creating an Infrastructure to Lead, Manage, and Sustain the Change**

The best strategy in the world is useless unless it is actualized. Structures and systems are needed to accelerate strategic performance.

Best Practice: Work with the Leadership Team to build teams and infrastructure to ensure that change efforts are understood and supported by the people who are doing the work. Leaders can engage in active dialogue about how to accelerate implementation and specific ideas for action.

### **Change Teams**

Four kinds of teams and three infrastructure systems they could consider:

#### Teams

- Leadership Teams
- Core Teams
- Task Teams
- Event Planning Teams

#### Systems

- Measurement Systems
- Communication Systems
- Rewards & Recognition Systems

Two teams that are needed throughout the change process are the Leadership Team and the Core Team. Other special purpose teams are formed and disbanded as needed at different points in the process.

### Core Teams

The Core Team is a continuing staff support team working for the Leadership Team. It is a microcosm of organization or system with representatives from all levels and functions. The Core Team charters and supervises Task Teams and Event Planning Teams as needed, gathers decision support information. It does benchmarking and creates possibilities (draft solutions) or delegates that work.

### Task Teams

Task Teams are short-term teams with a specific assignment. These teams are usually volunteers or persons with special knowledge needed by the team. The Core Team charters Task with clear boundaries, authority and deliverables. The work is project-based and results driven. Team leaders from the task teams may be included as members of the Core Team while their teams are active to ensure seamless communication.

### Event Planning Teams

Large group meetings are always designed using an Event Planning Team. A new team composed of a microcosm of the group that will be meeting is convened for each meeting. The Event Planning Team is convened by the Leadership Team, which defines the outcomes the leadership is seeking from the meeting. The team designs the meeting to achieve both leadership's needs and the needs and wants of the participants.

The Event Planning Team follows preparations for the event and its members then become participants in the event itself. The Event Planning Team process guarantees that the meeting will succeed because a microcosm of the system has created and validated the design and because leadership has been involved in and approved the work.

### **Supporting Systems**

All organizational systems contribute to supporting the change effort. This includes finance, human resources, training and information technology (IT). Some systems may need to be created or significantly modified to enable the change process.

#### Measurement Systems

What gets measured, gets done and in many cases, some very important things may be unmeasured. New systems may be needed to measure activities and then results of new ways of working. Measurement is feedback and that feedback is only useful if it is relevant, current and actionable.

#### Communication Systems

Information flow is critical in times of change. In the absence of facts, gossip will flourish. Communication of what is happening and what is being accomplished can be done in high tech and low-tech ways. Web sites, Intranet, workplace kiosks and video conferencing are all good. Low-tech channels such as bulletin boards, newsletters, banners and memos dropped on a desk can also deliver information effectively. Town Hall meetings, brown bag lunch briefings and one-on-one conversations serve the added function of allowing information to be collected as well as disseminated.

#### Rewards & Recognition System

Measurement systems must be effectively linked to the Rewards & Recognition system. The annual goals of managers, for instance, need to be linked to measures related to achieving results needed to achieve the strategy. Some rewards may need to be based on team rather than individual performance. Rewards don't have to be monetary. Look for what people are doing right and reward it. Surprising people with praise or a reward is a great motivator. Sometimes a simple "Good Job!" spoken in private is the most valuable reward you can give. What is important is that the Rewards and Recognition system be linked to strategic performance.

### **Accelerator #7 - Sustaining Momentum: Sustaining Momentum**

Look at ways to sustain strategic implementation of change initiatives. Many initiatives start well but lose steam over time as the exigencies of day-to-day operations compete for the time and energy of everyone involved in the change. Discuss how leaders can make sure that change initiatives are sustained over time throughout the organization.

Some of the ways leaders might consider:

#### Include Sustaining Thinking in Initial Planning

Conversations about sustaining momentum begin on the first day. Leaders need to understand that the change effort will need their time and attention on a continuing basis.

### Link The Change to Culture and Values

Change can be seen as a betrayal of loyalty to organizational heritage and values. Make a credible and sincere case for change as a way to ensure to preserve what is best in our heritage and to ensure that values will be sustained. Frame the change in language that resonates with organizational culture. For instance, a non-profit organization might bristle as a change framed in business language such as "improving return on investment" but would warm to a change described as "meeting our obligation of stewardship". Leaders who recognize and honor the culture and deeply held values of the people will be better able to accelerate the change.

### Keep the System Whole

It's easy to get caught up in the daily work, fighting fires and handling crises. Without a steady flow of information about what is happening across the organization, the change effort will soon fade from awareness. To avoid this, it is a good idea to create a "Change Report Card" that tracks progress and lets everyone know that good things are happening. The report card is most effective if it is published so everyone has a sense of the momentum and excitement that progress creates.

### Engage Many Microcosms

Microcosms are a key mechanism for creating change in a non-linear way. Every time a microcosm meets and gets new ideas or sees the world differently, those people return to their functional work groups with new perspectives that are transmitted to others. A group of ten can influence 100 or 1,000.

When forming cross-functional teams, it is a good idea to ask, "Who else needs to be part of this conversation?" Multiple perspectives enrich conversations and improve the results. When making decisions, consider asking, "Who has information or a perspective that could affect this decision?" Rotate Action Team members periodically to keep their microcosm "eyes" fresh and in touch with the organization.

### Keep Leaders In Touch

Keep leaders in touch by encouraging them to meet with microcosm groups. Just sitting down for lunch in the cafeteria with five or six people from across the organization can help the leaders keep "a finger on the pulse" of the organization.

### Renew Critical Mass for Change

The change effort reaches "critical mass" when enough people are committed to seeing it work that it can't be stopped. Getting to critical mass requires continuously seeing new people to include in the process. At each stage in the roadmap, the circle of involvement should widen to include people not previously involved. They need to interact with people who have been involved to learn from them. Consider convening "deep dive" events on special topics or "think tanks" on issues where new ideas are needed and inviting new people to join them.

Checkpoints and Reunion meetings to evaluate and celebrate are another opportunity to get people involved. New hires should be folded into the process at every opportunity.

### Keys to Sustaining Momentum

Among the keys to sustaining momentum are visible commitment from leaders, measuring what really matters to the strategy, communicating progress (and failure), and treating this process as an action research or continuous improvement project. We learn as we go along.

## **Workshop Participants Reactions and Insights**

The executive Food Summit Workshop participants described at the beginning of this article were comprised of leaders and internal support staff. At the summit they learned about accelerating change using the Whole-Scale Methodology. Participant reactions and insights can be grouped generally in the following themes:

### *“Same Circus, Different Performers”*

Participants saw the same issues coming up in their conversations regardless of whether the company was a manufacturer, a supplier or a distributor.

### *“Roadmaps Make A Big Difference”*

The idea of seeing change as a journey and the process roadmap as the guide was a new and useful one for some participants. The idea of seeing change as a process or a journey connected well with what participants know about manufacturing processes and how they are managed and improved. Some stated that they had been thinking about change as something to get through rather than a continuing process.

### *“It’s All About Leadership”*

Many participants identified the lack of a fully committed and united leadership team as the factor that had caused previous change efforts to fail in their home organizations.

### *“Who Is Minding the Store?”*

Not making sustaining current operations part of the strategy can be devastating to those who still have to keep product moving out the door during a big change effort. Several managers said they had been left out of the planning and deployment of the change. They felt their role in meeting customers’ needs today had been discounted.

### *“We Need A Little More M-C-G”*

The Membership – Control – Goals Model of team formation was very useful for many participants who saw the lack of capacity to build and sustain teams, especially leadership teams, as a central reason why change efforts fail.

### *“People Support What They Help To Create”*

Many participants who had experienced failed change efforts said it was a revelation that there was an approach that did not require “selling” a solution to the people who must implement it. Their experience was that creating “buy-in” almost never works. One participant described the idea that it is possible to engage large numbers of people constructively and in a systematic as a “big paradigm shift”.

## **Final Thoughts**

Executives around the world are facing issues that are both common and unique. The common issues have to do with what we call “working the Star” meaning creating a system based on strategy that optimizes work functions and organizational form and then deploys people and resources in a working environment that creates shared information that is the basis of action. Awareness of these

system dynamics and a commitment to addressing them can solve the unique technical and operational problems of any industry.

Despite the similarities and common issues, no two organizations are alike. Each needs to work out strategies and solutions for itself. What the Whole-Scale™ Approach provides is both theoretical and practical tools to guide executives as they lead and manage change in the uncertain and demanding world we live in.

### **Additional Readings About Whole-Scale™ Change:**

- Blixt, A., "Launching a Team-Based Renewal Effort Using Whole-Scale Methodology – The Ferranti-Packard Story." For International Conference on Work Teams, 1997 (available for download at [www.dannemillertyson.com](http://www.dannemillertyson.com))
- Block, P., "Consulting that Unleashes the Spirit" in *Flawless Consulting Fieldbook and Companion*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1998
- Breish, R., "A Conversation with Kathleen Dannemiller." *Entre Nous*, vol. 2, no. 1. The Midwest Organizational Development Network, 1998.
- Bunker, B. and B. Alban, *Large Group Interventions: Engaging the Whole System for Rapid Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.
- Chase, T., ed. *Large Group Interventions for Organizational Change: Concepts, Methods, and Cases*. Readings for the OD Network Conference, March 19-22, 1995. Call Conference Support Systems 603-942-8189. Tapes available for Audio Cassette Service 800-642-2287
- Cook, J. "Tackling Large-Scale Change." *Human Resource Executive*, 44-46, (May, 1997)
- Daft, R. and R.H. Lengel. *Fusion Leadership*, Publishers Group, 1998
- Dannemiller Tyson Associates, *Whole-Scale Change: Unleashing the Magic in Organizations*, San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler, 2000.
- Dannemiller Tyson Associates, *The Whole-Scale Change Toolkit*, San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler, 2000
- Filipczak, B. "Critical Mass: Putting Whole-Systems Thinking into Practice." *Training*, September 1995. Minneapolis: Lakewood Publications
- Holman, P., and T. Devane, eds. *The Change Handbook*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1999.
- Loup, R. "Real-Time Strategic Change Technology: Speeding Up System-Wide Change." In *Practicing Organizational Development*. W.J. Rothwell, R. Sullivan, and G. McLean, eds. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer and Company. Appendix IV, 595-607, 1995
- Maurer, R. *Beyond the Wall of Resistance: Unconventional Strategies that Build Support for Change*. Austin: Bard Press, 1996.
- Modic, L. "Changing the Process, Improving the Productivity." *Engineer's Digest*, (April, 1995)
- "Richmond Savings Follows Unified Vision." *Credit Union News* (June, 1995)

## About the Authors:

**Albert B. Blixt** is a senior partner in Dannemiller Tyson Associates and one of the developers of the firm's Whole-Scale Change methodology. Al's organizational change practice focuses primarily on strategic planning and deployment, leadership development, culture change and work redesign. His clients have included Pfizer Corporation, The JFK Presidential Library, Chrysler, the Michigan Humane Society and the American Federation of Government Employees. He has 30 years experience as a professor, attorney, business owner, consultant, coach and mentor. Al has a passion for helping people uncover and combine their wisdom to achieve their full potential and create organizations and communities they can be proud of.

Al Blixt is the author of numerous articles on organizational change and other business topics. He is co-author of [Navigating in a Sea of Change](#) (1996). Al can be reached by e-mail at [alblixt@aol.com](mailto:alblixt@aol.com).

**Sylvia L. James** is a senior partner in Dannemiller Tyson Associates. She has twenty years of experience as an internal and external consultant working with organizations using whole system, large-scale change methods. She pioneered what today we call "Whole-Scale™ Change" in aerospace in the mid-1980's. Today, she works globally with communities and organizations to bring about a variety of rapid, whole system changes in strategy, mergers, culture change, and organizational design. She has extensive experience with high tech, service, manufacturing, government and education systems. She is a presenter at conferences and workshops around the world. She is a chapter contributor to *Flawless Consulting Fieldbook* (Peter Block) and *The Change Handbook* (Holman & Devane). Her articles include: "The Heart of our Work: Disturbing the Universe for Positive Change" ("Learnende Organisation" May/June 2001 issue, Institut für Systemisches Coaching und Training, Vienna, Austria), "Unleashing and Combining the Wisdom: Rapid, Whole-Systems Change in Public Organizations (*Public Organization Review*), and "Innovation in Whole-Scale Change: Past, Present and Future" (March 2002 in "Profile" for Trias Institute, Switzerland). Sylvia can be reached by e-mail at [sylvia@dannemillertyson.com](mailto:sylvia@dannemillertyson.com).

Sylvia and Al are two of the co-authors of **Whole-Scale Change: Unleashing the Magic in Organizations and The Whole-Scale Change Toolkit**, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler (2000).

**To learn more about Dannemiller Tyson Associates and the Whole-Scale Change approach, go to [www.dannemillertyson.com](http://www.dannemillertyson.com).**