# HEART OF CHANGE

Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations



# JOHN P. KOTTER

Author of International Bestseller Leading Change

DANS. COHEN

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW PRESS

#### Advance praise from the field

#### The Heart of Change

"A fantastic piece of work."

Carl Frattini, Business Manager, Electric Systems,
 United Illuminating Company, Shelton, CT

"A powerful message, communicated with great effectiveness."

Ho-il Kim, Vice President and General Counsel,
 Cabot Corporation, Boston, MA

"A new message, a rare case where a book offers something that has not been said before."

Alan Frohman, Founder and Executive Partner,
 Lexington Leadership Partners, Lexington, MA

"By and large, there is no lack of analytics, decision trees, financial models, process maps, and other forms of logical intercourse within corporate America. Our days are saturated with rational, left-brain thought patterns. This book does an excellent job of helping us where we need it most—on the emotional or passionate side of the equation for driving change."

Gjon Nivica Jr., Vice President and General Counsel, Engines
 Systems, Honeywell International, Inc., Phoenix, AZ

"A lovely book. The use of stories makes [the authors'] ideas about the change process so real and so tangible."

-Scott Jamieson, President, The Care of Trees, Wheeling, IL

"The presentation is most compelling. The emotional content, the stories with heart, will win over even the most skeptical reader."

−Bo Thomas, Company Leader and Owner, The Thomas Consulting Group, Little Rock, AR

"The heart-emotions theme blends effectively with the otherwise hard mechanics of some of the eight steps of leading change. The stories provide strong examples of the concepts and best practices. The 'What Works' and 'What Does Not Work' segments throughout the book summarize each section well. The overall results are excellent."

Robert Bender, Senior Operations Coordinator,
 Northrop Grumman, Newport News, VA

"Entertaining, highly readable, and very useful."

Peter Wood, State Manager, Walter Construction Group Ltd.,
 Brisbane, Australia

"The illustrations, metaphors, and analogies provide mental pictures that clarify the concepts. Using the right-brain and left-brain approach, the book assists readers to understand both intellectually and emotionally. I am left feeling that if I become stuck in the change process, I can refer to a specific chapter and reread the conceptual information as well as the illustrative stories. Overall, this strikes me as a sort of right-brain field manual for implementing Kotter's left-brain *Leading Change*."

–Jim Williams, High School Principal, Paxon School for Advanced Studies, Jacksonville, FL "A joy to read and to learn from."

Sidharth Birla, Chairman, Xpro India, Limited, New Delhi,
 India

"The Heart of Change is extremely well done. It has all of the elements necessary to be a highly useful tool for those who wish to make change happen."

 Paul Daulerio, President, Founder, and CEO, Organization Plus, Inc., Weston, CT

"It's a great book. I have already successfully used the storytelling approach right in the middle of a major restructuring when people were asking 'Remind me again why we are doing this?"

David Bening, VP and General Manager, General Polymers,
 Ashland Distribution Co., Dublin, OH

"More pragmatic than other change books. It offers clear advice. I have already made it required reading for my direct reports."

 Dan Sajkowski, Optimization Manager, BP Amoco PLC, Whiting, NH

"The individual case histories contain many pragmatic suggestions that can be readily applied to a reader's organization. For the action-oriented manager, it's excellent reading."

Doug Reid, Senior Vice President, Human Resources,
 PanAm Satellite, Wilton, CT

"The concept is brilliant. I found myself highlighting all kinds of ideas that I can put to use in my job now."

-Mary Thomas, Program Manager, U.S. Army, Alexandria, VA

# THE HEART OF CHANGE

Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations



JOHN P. KOTTER

GIFT OF THE ASIA FOLK NOT FOR HE-SALL QUÀ TĂNG CỦA QUÝ CHI KHÔNG ĐƯỢC HÀ

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW PRESS

Boston, Massachusetts

#### Contents

Preface xi Acknowledgments xv

### Introduction The Heart of Change 1

Why people succeed and why they fail at large scale-change. The eight-step path to success. The primary challenge at each stage in the process. How people meet the challenge. The critical distinction between see-feel-change and analysis-think-change.



#### Increase Urgency 15

Raising a feeling of urgency so that people start telling each other "we must do something" about the problems and opportunities. Reducing the complacency, fear, and anger that prevent change from starting.



#### Build the Guiding Team 37

Helping pull together the right group of people with the right characteristics and sufficient power to drive the change effort. Helping them to behave with trust and emotional commitment to one another.



#### Get the Vision Right 61

Facilitating the movement beyond traditional analytical and financial plans and budgets. Creating the right compelling vision to direct the effort. Helping the guiding team develop bold strategies for making bold visions a reality.



#### Communicate for Buy-In 83

Sending clear, credible, and heartfelt messages about the direction of change. Establishing genuine gut-level buy-in that shows up in how people act. Using words, deeds, and new technologies to unclog communication channels and overcome confusion and distrust.



#### Empower Action 101

Removing barriers that block those who have genuinely embraced the vision and strategies. Taking away sufficient obstacles in their organizations and in their hearts so that they behave differently.



#### Create Short-Term Wins 123

Generating sufficient wins fast enough to diffuse cynicism, pessimism, and skepticism. Building momentum. Making sure successes are visible, unambiguous, and speak to what people deeply care about.



#### Don't Let Up 141

Helping people create wave after wave of change until the vision is a reality. Not allowing urgency to sag. Not ducking the more difficult parts of the transformation, especially the bigger emotional barriers. Eliminating needless work so you don't exhaust yourself along the way.



#### Make Change Stick 159

Ensuring that people continue to act in new ways, despite the pull of tradition, by rooting behavior in reshaped organizational culture. Using the employee orientation process, the promotions process, and the power of emotion to enhance new group norms and shared values.

## Conclusion We See, We Feel, We Change 177

Feeling and thinking. The need for more than a few heroes in a turbulent world.

Story Index 185
About the Authors 187