



Frequently Asked Questions

leading through **transitions**

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Today's organizations face unprecedented changes. Not only are such changes monumental in scope, but they often arrive unexpectedly and with increased frequency. The challenges that face leaders in such times go beyond setting strategy, making plans, and implementing new structures and processes. The real struggle often lies in facilitating the long-term aspects of recovery, revitalization, and recommitment of the people who comprise the organization, while at the same time focusing on the structural and financial demands of managing the business. It is difficult to be effective on both fronts at the same time. More often than not, leaders neglect the people side and set their sights on systems and structure.

To help build and lead a sustainable organization, managers must identify their strengths and shore up their weaknesses on attributes that are critical to leading effectively in the face of change and transition. This program can help managers address a range of attributes — not just the emotional competencies required to connect with people and guide them through turmoil and turbulence, but also the traditional attributes associated with implementing change and assuring that it takes hold. Striking a dynamic balance on these seemingly paradoxical behaviors is a marker of authenticity and trust. Maintaining trust is the core ingredient required to lead others through difficult times. It is a keystone in the leadership capacity all organizations seek when facing uncertainty.

What is the program designed to achieve?

This toolkit provides frameworks and resources to assess and enhance individual and organizational patterns of leadership behavior in the face of change. The key lies in balancing the dynamic tension between six pairs of seemingly paradoxical leadership attributes: being both tough and empathetic; catalyzing change while understanding transition; expressing a sense of urgency while retaining the capacity for realistic patience; being self-reliant yet trusting of others; radiating both optimism and realism; and capitalizing on strengths while fostering the capacity to go against those practices that have served well in the past.

Understanding the competing nature of these essential elements of change leadership allows managers to evaluate what is working, what is not working, and what is missing in the suite of capabilities they draw from when in the midst of change. Leaders can then examine how these patterns of behavior serve to support or undermine their

effectiveness and learn ways to strengthen their capacity for leading with authenticity in times of transition.

What specific skills or knowledge does the program cover?

The program covers essential principles that govern leadership during times of transition:

- The dynamic effect of change and transition on employees and others;
- The power of mental models of leadership to shape, frame, and direct a leader's actions and to influence others' perceptions of those actions during times of change;
- The critical application of emotional intelligence in bringing people through the challenge of turbulent times; and
- The understanding and availability of learning to learn as a source of resilience.

Further, the program's Authentic Leadership Paradox Wheel model blends theory, practical applications, and an assessment into a tool that promotes resiliency as it guides the construction of a personal development plan for creating the capacity for leading change.

What individual components does the program include?

The *Leading Through Transitions* package includes a Facilitator's Guide with accompanying flash drive, two Participant Workbooks, and a Paradox Wheel poster.

The Facilitator's Guide includes background information on the models and concepts related to leading through transitions, preparation guidelines, and scripts for one- and two-day workshops. The flash drive includes copies of the agendas, PowerPoint slides, and the Paradox Wheel Cards to be used during the workshops.

The program's Participant Workbooks are designed to be used by people who attend the workshops. There are separate versions for the one- and two-day workshops. Each workbook includes explanations of key concepts, directions for exercises, and note-taking room.

A poster of the Paradox Wheel is included for use during the workshops.

What components do I need to purchase to get started?

This package contains everything you need to familiarize yourself with the material and to prepare a useful learning experience for your participants. In addition, when you're ready to conduct the workshop, you'll need to order an appropriate Participant Workbook (one- or two-day) for each participant. You can enhance the impact by providing a copy of the authors' book, *Leading with Authenticity in Times of Transition*, to your participants. Beyond gathering valuable background information from the book, workshop attendees can respond to some of the reflective questions in the text and to the probes in the assessment.

Who is the program designed for?

This material is designed for use with leaders and managers who are charged with guiding themselves and their organizations through times of change and transition. In most cases, participants will have direct or indirect responsibility for managing or leading groups or teams of other people. However, some attendees may hold individual contributor roles from which their leadership impacts others through peer or upward relationships or simply through interpersonal influence.

Facilitators can adapt the material for use with participants ranging from lower-level management to senior executive teams. The program's flexibility permits facilitators to conduct sessions with managers who share a common organizational culture or as an open-enrollment style workshop with participants from multiple organizations. While the material is very flexible, it has been the authors' experience that the workshop has the greatest impact when participants fill positions in middle management and above and when they share experiences working in a common organizational culture.

How long does the program take to complete?

The package contains outlines and agendas for one- and two-day sessions.

What is the difference between the one- and two-day workshops?

The design for the two-day workshop provides more time for discussion and interaction, but if pressed for time, the one-day

workshop has proven effective across a wide range of settings. A separate one-day script, Participant Workbook, and slide deck are included in the Facilitator's Guide package. The one-day script retains some elements of the two-day workshop, but other elements are compressed or deleted. Facilitators can make additional changes based on the specific needs of the participants and the organization. For example, circumstances may arise where one of the omitted elements might actually be a perfect fit for a given group. The most significant challenge involved in reducing to a one-day version is time management. The opener for the one-day script (in Part 3 of the Facilitator's Guide) explains in detail the differences between the one- and two-day scripts.

How much preparation time will it take to facilitate?

Prior to conducting the workshop, you should familiarize yourself with the program's Facilitator's Guide and the Participant Workbooks.

You should read the authors' book, *Leading with Authenticity in Times of Transition*, and complete the self-assessment in Chapter 8 to further familiarize yourself with the content. Before conducting the workshop, you'll also need to prepare several flip charts. These tasks may take several hours for the first workshop you conduct, but as you become familiar with the content the preparation time will shrink accordingly.

Do I need any special skills to facilitate the program?

One of the keys to delivering an effective workshop grounded in authenticity, trust, and emotional competence lies in the facilitator's ability to model a genuine level of understanding and self-awareness around those skills and behaviors. We've designed this package to guide you through the mechanics of preparing for and delivering the workshop, but you can deepen and hasten the learning process by investing some time on pre-work of your own.

We strongly recommend that you set aside some time to read and study the book, *Leading with Authenticity in Times of Transition*, as well as the other references listed in the book's Appendix. Completing the self-assessment activity in the last chapter of the book will also greatly

enhance your comfort in facilitating others as they respond to the assessment during the workshop.

What's unique or different about this program or its approach?

A key to building a workforce that is resilient enough to recover and bounce back in the face of constant change and adversity lies in the ability of leadership to (1) understand and commit to working through the emotional dynamics of transition and (2) connect with people in ways that simultaneously challenge and support them as they attempt to learn their way through. Success in this endeavor lies not in the mechanical application of best practices in change management, but rather in the authentic expression of *change leadership*—a task that is much easier said than done.

The materials in both the Facilitator's Guide and in the workshop sessions are designed to teach a few essential principles that govern leadership in times of transition. But the workshop itself is not a simple transfer of knowledge. This program provokes deeper exploration into the patterns of behavior that demonstrate leadership. The learning can be profound in that it can change not just some targeted behaviors, but also lead to changes in perspective that influence many behavior patterns.

About The Authors

Kerry Bunker is founder and president of Mangrove Leadership Solutions, an executive development firm specializing in improving organizational leadership and performance through senior executive learning and coaching. Prior to forming his current organization, Kerry was senior fellow and manager of the Awareness Program for Executive Excellence (APEX) at the Center for Creative Leadership. He has authored, co-authored, or edited more than forty books, chapters, and articles on various aspects of leadership, including an edited book from Jossey-Bass focused on identifying and addressing the gaps in senior executive development (in press), the book *Leading with Authenticity in Times of Transition*, a *Harvard Business Review* article entitled “The Young and the Clueless,” and a chapter in *The CCL Handbook of Coaching: A Guide for the Leader Coach* entitled “Coaching Leaders Through Change and Transition.” Kerry is an industrial/organizational psychologist with a B.A. degree from the University of Montana, an M.A. from Western Michigan University, and a Ph.D. from the University of South Florida.

Michael Wakefield is president of Xander Inc., a consultancy specializing in the practical application of psychology to leadership and performance enhancement. Michael is also a principal with Amazon’s Global Leadership Development group. His primary responsibilities are to design and deliver leadership development initiatives. Michael came to Amazon from the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), where he served as the manager of trainer development and designed and delivered customized, client-specific programs. In 2006 he co-wrote *Leading with Authenticity in Times of Transition* and also authored a chapter on “Brief Solution-Focused Coaching” in *The CCL Handbook of Coaching: A Guide for the Leader Coach*. In 2008, he co-authored *Developing Leadership Talent*, a book about developing sustainable leadership development processes in organizations. Both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees are in psychology. Michael is certified by the Society for Human Resource Management as a Senior Professional in Human Resources. He is also licensed as a professional counselor.