

Sustaining Change. Leadership that works

Deborah Rowland and Malcolm Higgs

Reviews and video

This book, by the Chief Executive and Chairman of Transcend, has been widely acclaimed in the leadership community and has sustained its 5 star rating on Amazon.com. The following are a selection of reviews. You can also view a short video about the book.

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“Change in organisations is the challenge that every leader is facing in a world where the very dynamics of globalisation, hyper-competition and better informed customers and stakeholders simply determine that survival demands change. It is the very essence of survival.

The field is however littered with complexity and paradoxes and few works that the practising leader can turn to for reliable help. For over a decade since Kotter's "Leading Change: why transformation efforts fail" leaders have had little to advance their thinking until now.

In the most readable of books, Rowland and Hicks have written a work which is a true milestone. In three well defined sections they firstly present their soundly researched observations as to why the art of leadership itself is changing. In Part Two the authors lay out a framework for leading change that is masterful on account of its simple logic; it clearly identifies four management practices which if worked together in a simple framework, are the source of real and sustained change. The framework is illustrated with ample examples of what leaders actually do to make change happen - this is soundly based on hard practical advice and the experience of practicing leaders and managers. In the final section the authors draw together the differing practices to guide the reader as to the need to balance these four practices and how they themselves should play their own role in leading change.

This book is a seminal work. Any leader facing the need to change a business or institution should read this - it will open the mind. It is grounded in hard research but avoids labouring it, to instead provide a clear and understandable practical guide as to how to initiate and sustain change. You might be facing a complete organisational restructuring or a single project for which support of the organisation is required for success - if you are leading one of those - then a few hours reading this book and applying its framework to the challenge, could save you and your organisation the immeasurable pain of failing in the task.”

Andrew Manley

“At long last - a book which validates our feelings regarding the type of organisation in which we work. It further tells us that there are different types of changes and different ways of achieving it with different types of people. Then it proceeds to put a scientific, well researched framework over these organisations and tells us how to achieve the changes our organisation needs - and we want. I now understand why so many people are so unhappy about change, and what I and my organisation needs to do to keep us in the forefront of our industry. Congratulations to the authors for their clarity and in producing an easy to read, easy to understand book on such an important area.”

Marilyn Kartopawiro

“70% large-scale organisation initiatives fail to realize the intended benefits. Rowland and Higgs link the current need for complex change with a conceptual and practical approach to leadership. In Sustaining Change, the key elements of vision, multiple and overlapping initiatives and genuine engagement (to name a few) are clarified by both description and examples.

The realities of large-scale change prompt the need for a leadership approach that aligns with the complexity of the changes. The leadership model hits at core approaches and behaviours for leading this type of change. In these economic times, there's a "call" in organisations for a fresh approach to leadership that drives desired outcomes.”

Dr Arlene Scott

“Leadership and change are two of the key words of our time. Here is a book which gets beneath the theories to propose an approach which is realistic, earthed, yet buzzing with suggestions to help leadership at every level to be more effective. The basic message is that leadership can be more than achievement through projects and programmes: good leadership enables change to be owned by the organisation in an ongoing and enduring way. Based on a wide range of experience and academic research, the essential leadership practices identified in this book will make it a key manual for leaders in every kind of organisation”

The Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern, Bishop of Derby

“Whether you are a CEO, an HR Director or a Change practitioner, this is the most valuable book you will read this year. Based on ground-breaking research and brought to life with numerous case studies, this is that rare entity: a business book which is accessible, insightful and thorough.”

Mick Holbrook, Director of Organisation and People Development, PricewaterhouseCoopers

“A leadership guide both practical and research-validated that explains what to do to achieve sustained change and at last a clear insight into why so many change attempts get stuck and fail”

Lynn L. Elsenhans, EVP Global Manufacturing, Royal Dutch Shell