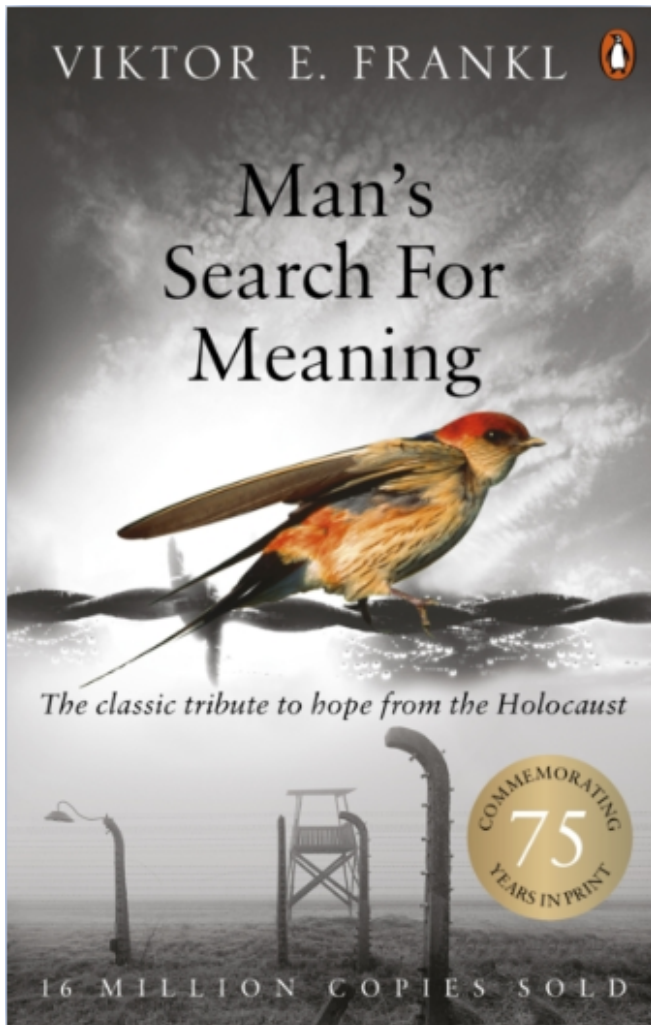




THE POWER OF VISION



One of my greatest inspirations has been reading the iconic Victor Frankl Book 'Man's search for meaning'.

It was reading this book that helped me see that the only real driver of change can be a positive vision of the future.

I came to understand that this applies to business processes, personal achievement and even human endeavour. One of Frankl's quotes was "Those who have a 'why' to live can bear with almost any 'how'". When I read this it reminds me of how I have for years believed that change is driven by the why and not the how. As those who have worked with me or seen me present, I have always been a 'story teller' and one of those stories that illustrates this point has been:

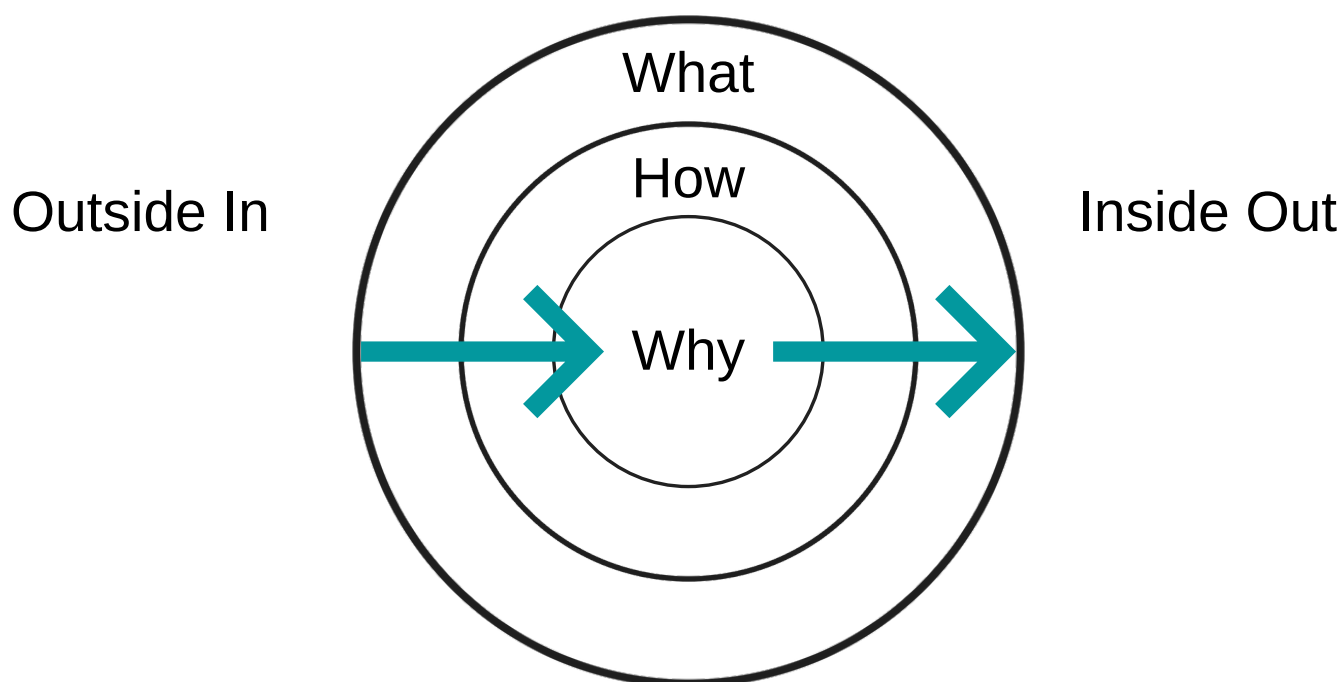
'I live in the UK near a city called Chester. In Chester there is a park called Grosvenor Park which is filled with gardens, flower beds and lawns. On the edge of the lawns you will see signs that say 'No ball games on the grass' but what do you see – parents sat on park benches watching their kids playing football using the sign as a goal post. I ask you what is wrong with these parents – can't they read and why are they heard to say "stupid rule, kids have got to play somewhere".'

I don't think it's a reading problem because those parents were 'trained' how to read many years ago. The issue is not that they don't know how to read, the issue is that they don't know why. If the sign had said 'no ball games on the grass because there are poisonous snakes in it' then I don't think that those parents would let their kids play ball on the grass, at least their kids! Of course it is true that kids need to play somewhere but when they understood the why then I believe that those parents would direct their kids to play somewhere else. In this example the change of behaviour has been created not through being able to know how to read but knowing why.'

It is important to understand that the focus of education is 'why to' and the focus of training is 'how to'.

In any change management programme both education and training are necessary, but that's the point both are required, and most change programmes do not distinguish between education and training.

More recently I have listened to the Simon Sinek 'Ted Talks' which I see as a solid reinforcement of the 'why' message. Simon explains that people understand and respond when they understand the answer to the question 'why' not 'what'. He codifies this in what he refers to as **the 'Golden Circle'**:



Most communication is from the 'outside in' starting with the what and moving to the why but this is not engaging and doesn't inspire change. However if communication is from the inside out then you will engage with people in the need for change. As Simon says "people buy into why you do what you do and not what you do", another illustration of the 'power of mission and mission'.

The interesting thing about the Golden Circle is that it is directly aligned with the structure of the human brain. Activities are controlled by the cerebral cortex section of the brain while the limbic system in the brain is responsible of feelings, behaviour and emotions, how and why. Therefore when you communicate through the why then you are winning the hearts and minds of people which of course is a key factor in change management.

It is also interesting to relate the Golden Circle to the principals of equine assisted learning. Working with horses is an excellent metaphor for working on the why. The reason for this is that when we communicate with horses we are connecting through the limbic system, in fact when Monty Roberts the world famous natural horseman talks about "join up", this is in fact when we communicate directly with the limbic system and hence directly engage with the why! I have in fact observed this process many times during my work with Horses 4 Change Leadership and Change Management programme.

I think that Simon Sinek puts forward a fantastic 'the power of why' message as a key driver of change, but I do have to admit a level of jealousy because Simon receives enormous recognition and financial rewards for a message that I have pioneered for years, but so be it!

The third influencer on my thinking about change, why and vision has been Joel Barker and his promotion of 'The Power of Vision' which again fully supports Frankl's, Sinek's and my own beliefs. Joel's belief is that all significant changes and success have always been preceded by a positive vision of the future, his claim is that this has been demonstrated by Nations, families, children and of course companies. He also points out that vision should be not expressed in financial terms, financial performance should be the result of a vision achieved and not the vision itself.

Vision in Action

Peter Drucker story – classic illustration – **POWER** of Vision

3 stonecutters – **why** are you cutting stones?

1st one:
“because I need the money”

2nd one:
“because I’m a good stonecutter”

3rd one – hardest working: *“because I’m building a cathedral”*



LEADERSHIP through **INTEGRATION**

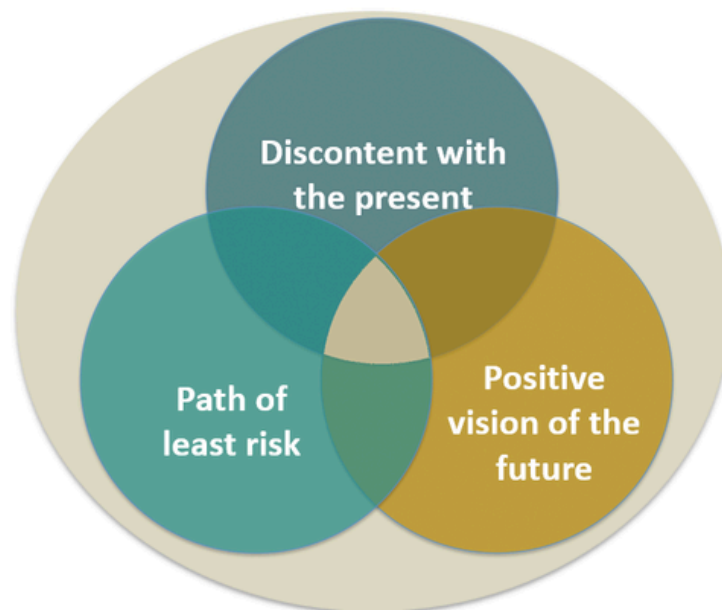
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If we can inspire our people to be cathedral builders then change can lead to amazing achievements.

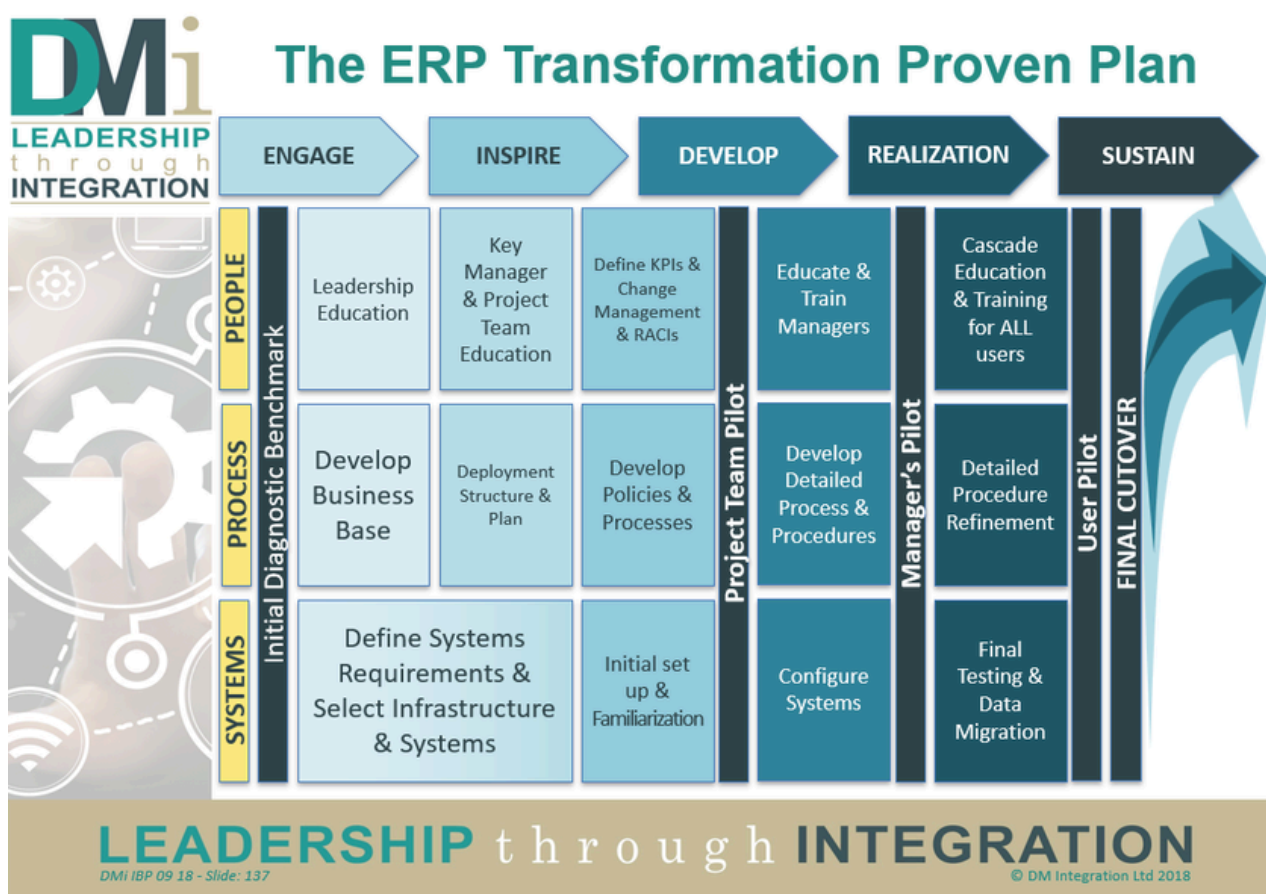
My own concept is this, change can only happen when three elements are simultaneously present:

Change Management Elements



LEADERSHIP through **INTEGRATION**

If any of these elements are not present then change will simply not happen. Discontent and a vision of the future are driven by the education process and 'path of least risk' is best Supported by following the proven path. The key factor of least risk is the true business piloting process and not simply system testing and user acceptance.



Dave Manning
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