

Lecture 8

Managing Organizational Change, Resistance, and Conflict

Learning Objectives

- Describe the discipline of organizational change management and its role in assessing the organization's readiness and capability to support and assimilate a change initiative.
- Describe how change can be viewed as a process and identify the emotional responses people might have when faced with change.
- Describe the framework for managing change that will be introduced.
- Apply the concepts and ideas in this chapter in order to develop a change management plan. This plan should focus on assessing the organization's willingness and ability to change, developing a change strategy, implementing and tracking the progress toward achieving the change and then evaluating whether the change was successful, and documenting the lessons learned from those experiences.
- Discuss the nature of resistance and conflict and apply several techniques for dealing with conflict and resistance in an efficient and effective way.

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IT Systems can be a
technical success but an
organizational failure.

False Beliefs...

- “People want this change.”
- “Monday morning we’ll turn on the new system and they’ll use it.”
- “A good training program will answer all of their questions and then they’ll love it.”
- “Our people have been through a lot of change—what’s one more change going to matter?”
- “We see the need for helping our people adjust, but we had to cut something...”
- “They have two choices: they can change or they can leave.”

However, the results may be quite different...

- The change may not occur.
- People will comply for a time and then do things to get around the change.
- Users will accept only a portion of the change.
- The full benefits of the project are never realized or are realized only after a great deal of time and resources have been expended.

Change Management

"The transforming of the organization so it is aligned with the execution of a chosen corporate business strategy. It is the management of the human element in a large-scale change project...."

Gartner Group

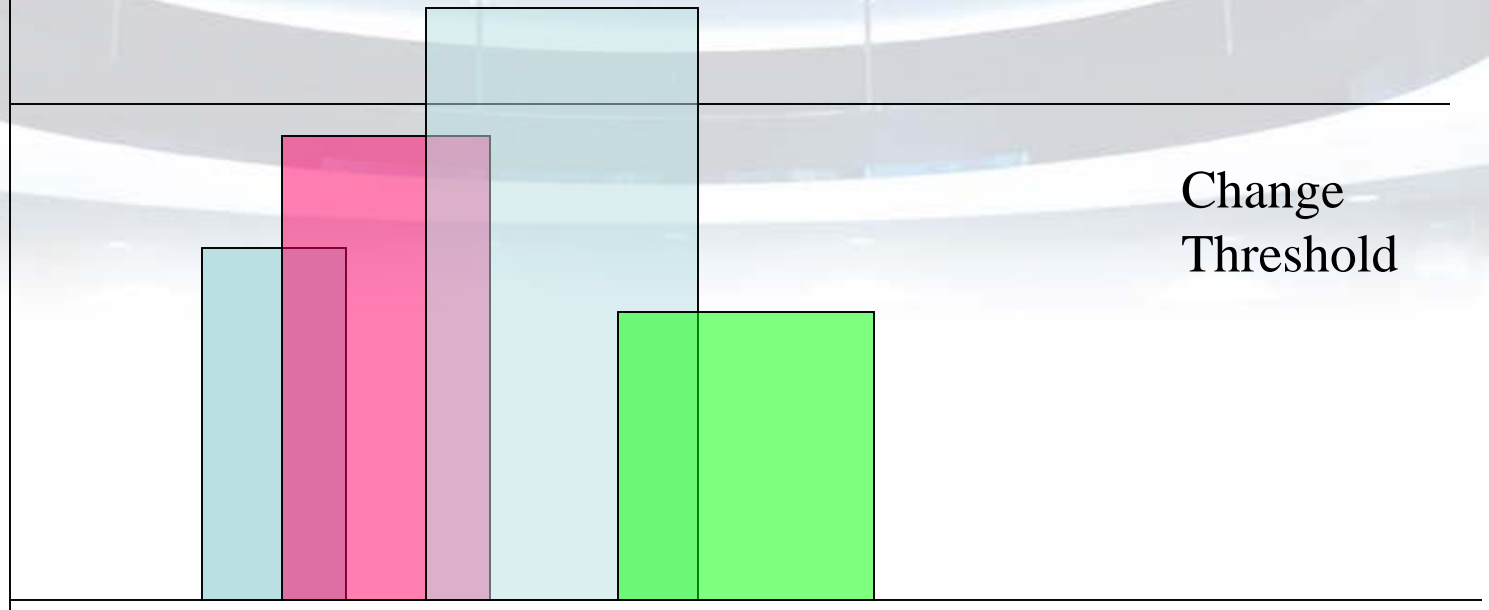
Reactions to Change

- What changes are you currently experiencing?
 - School
 - Family
 - Personal
- We have all been through change - but how do we think about and manage it?

Future Shock

Assimilation is the process we use to adjust to positive or negative changes.

Assimilation Points Used

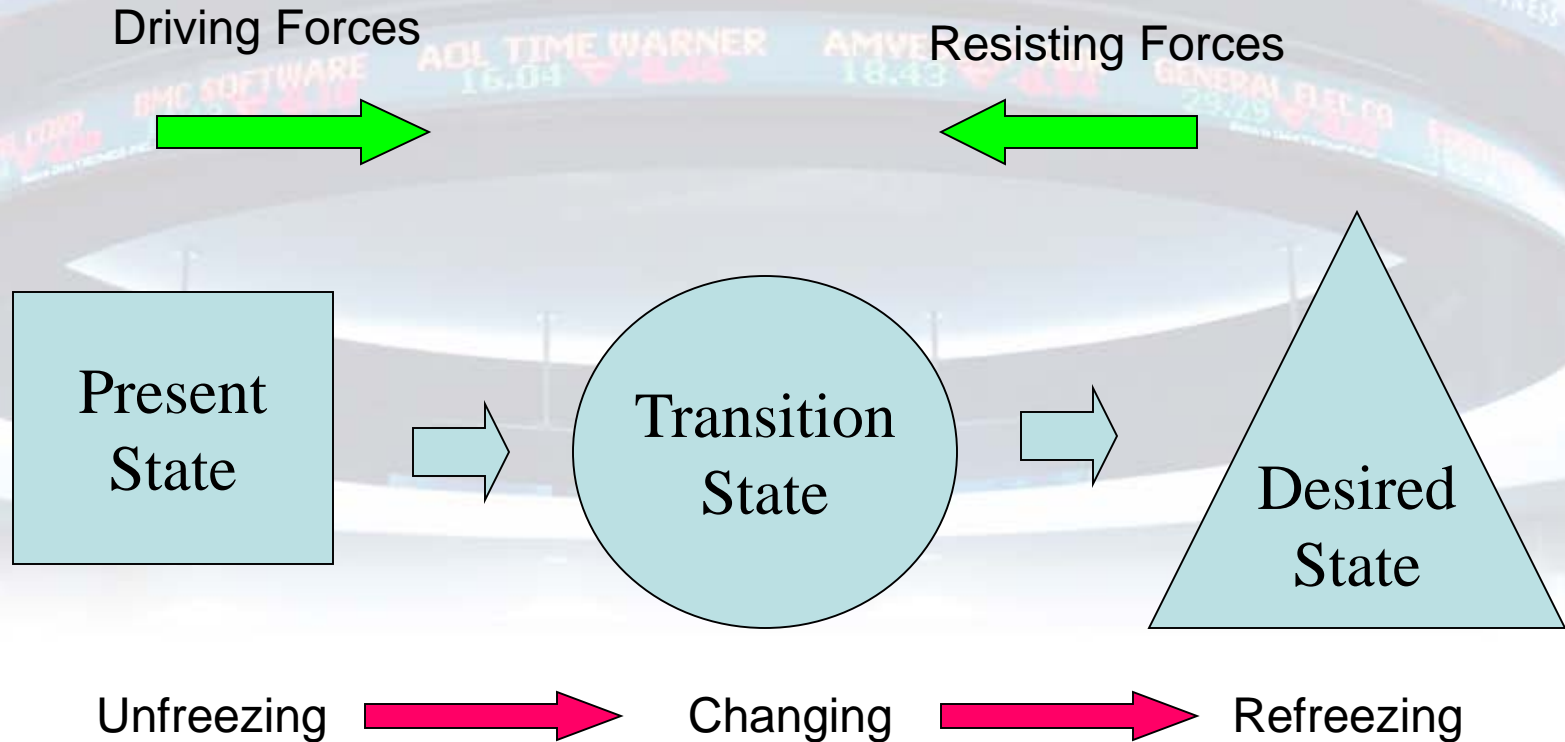


Change
Threshold

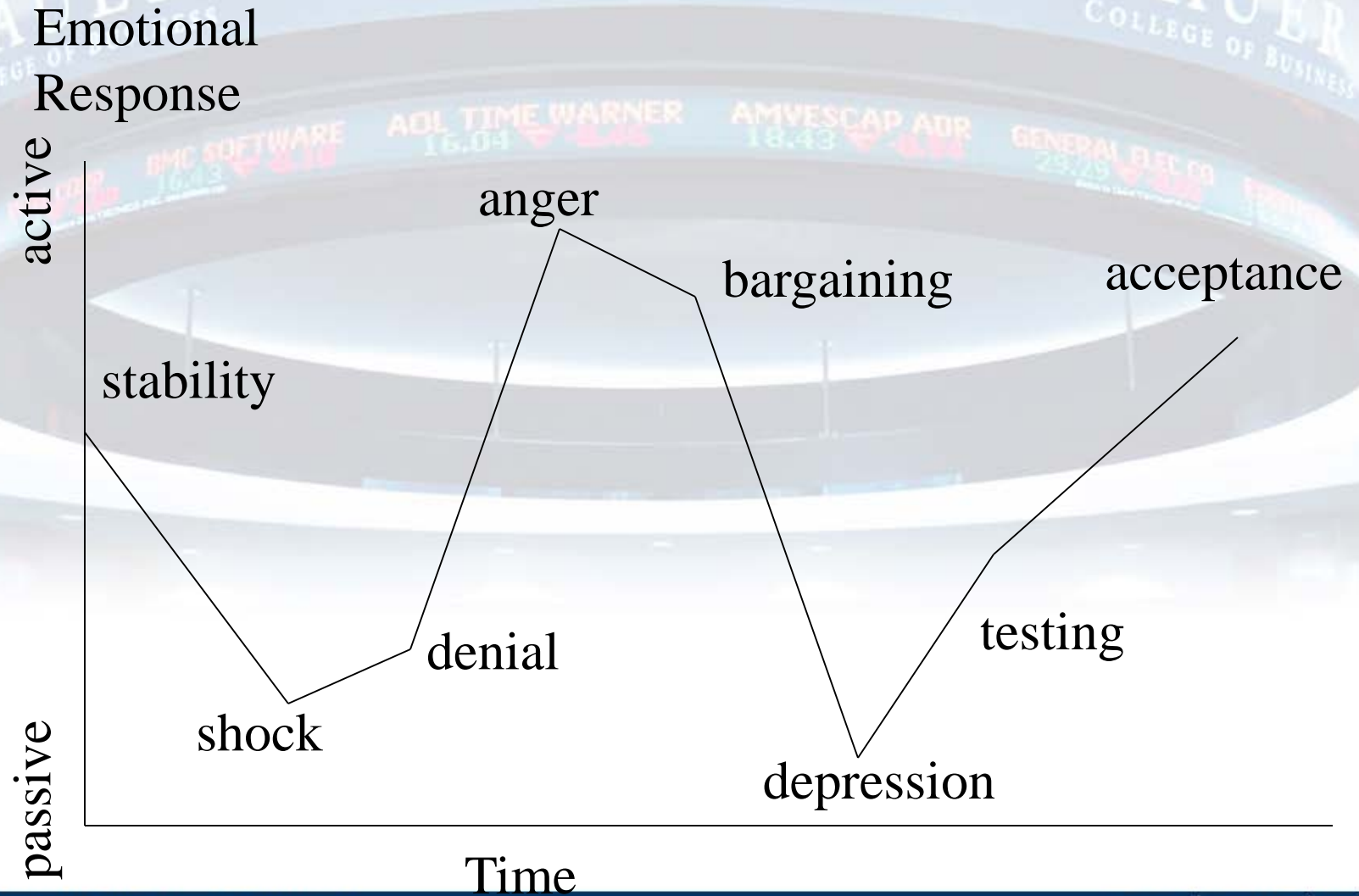
The Nature of Change

- Whether we view change as positive (anticipation) or negative (dread), there is a certain amount of stress that accompanies each change.
 - Change is a Process
 - Change is Emotional
 - Change has an Impact

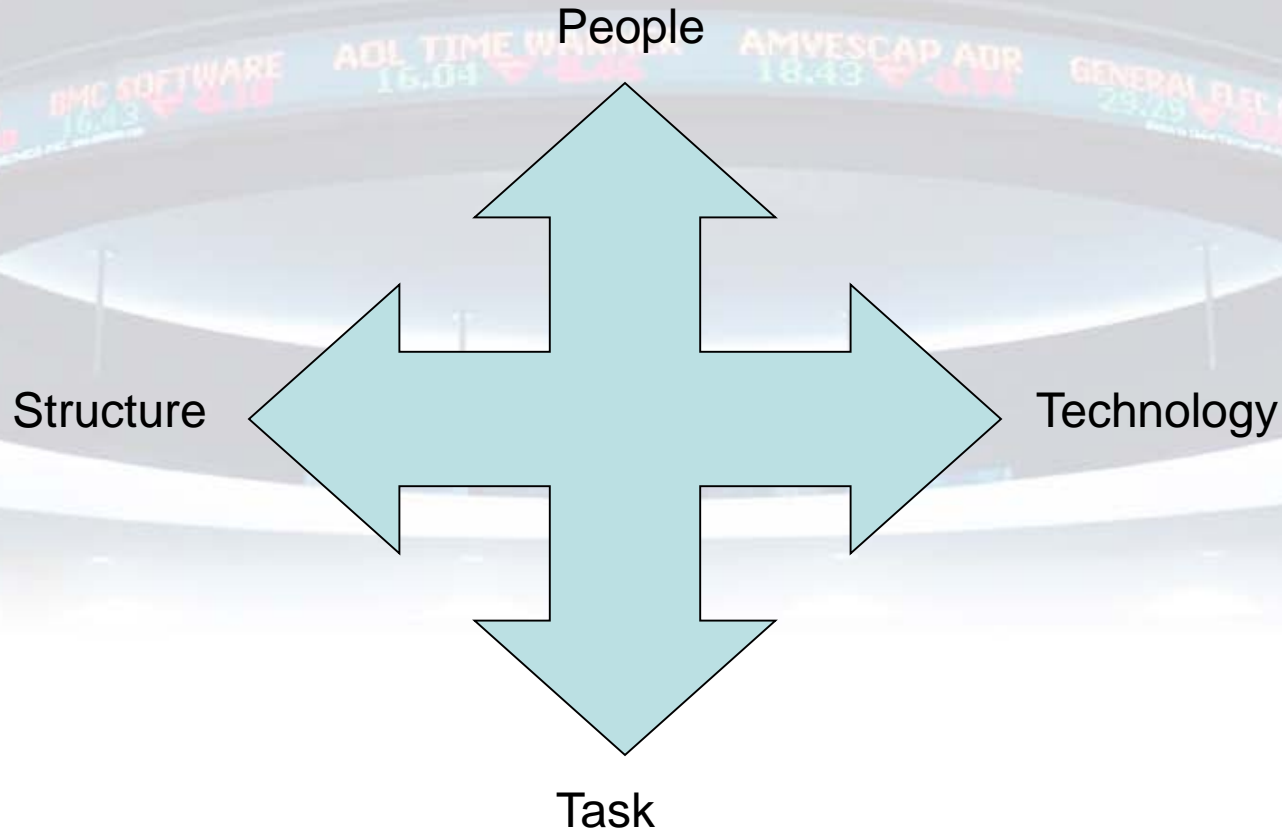
Change is a Process



Change Can be Emotional



Change Has an Impact On Different Areas of the Organization



Reactions to Change

- Change may
 - be an ending
 - mean giving something up
 - be stressful
 - be easier for those initiating the change
 - provide a basis for resistance and conflict
 - change the “rules for success”

The Change Management Plan

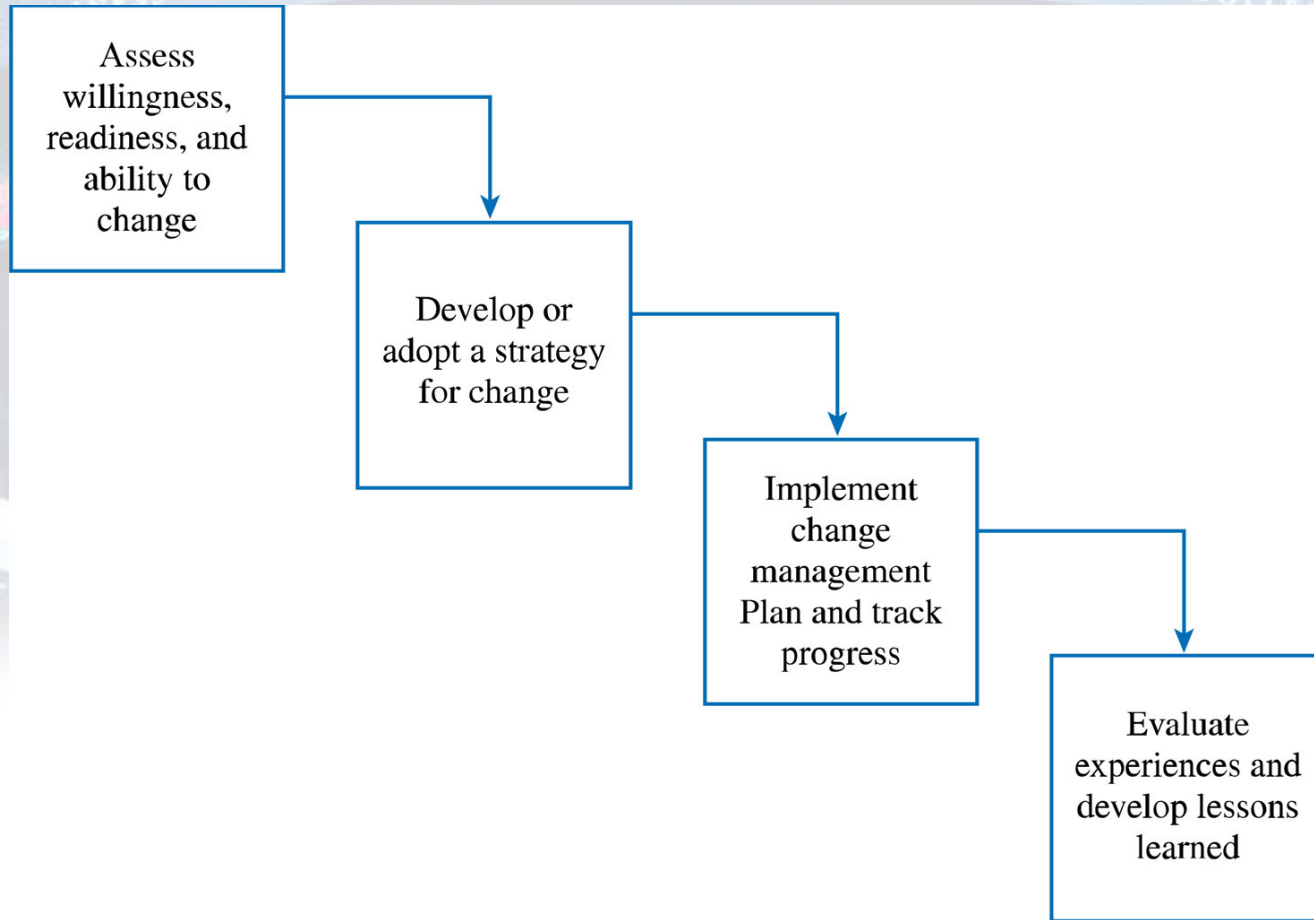


Figure 11.3

Assess Willingness, Readiness, and Ability to Change

- Sponsor
 - Initiating vs. sustaining sponsor
- Change Agents
 - The project manager and team
- Targets of Change
 - The users
 - Must understand
 - The real impacts of the change
 - The breadth of change
 - What's over and what's not
 - Whether the rules for success have changed

Develop or Adopt a Strategy for Change

- ***Rational-Empirical Approach***
 - Picture, Purpose, Part to Play
- ***Normative-Reeducation Approach***
 - Focus on the core values, beliefs, and established relationships that make up the culture of the group.
- ***Power-Coercive Approach***
 - Compliance through the exercise of power
- ***Environmental-Adaptive Approach***
 - Although people may avoid disruption and loss, they can still adapt to change

Implement the Change Management Plan and Track Progress

- Communication

- Watch out for the rumor mill!
- Media is important
- Must flow in both directions
- What you *don't say* is as important as what you *do say*!
- Hit the circle!

Evaluate Experience and Develop Lessons Learned

- Experiences should be documented and made available to other project teams
- Lessons learned provide a foundation for knowledge management and can be used to create new best practices

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DEALING WITH RESISTANCE AND CONFLICT

Resistance should be anticipated from the outset of the project. Rumors and gossip will add fuel to the fire and the change effort can easily run out of steam if those affected by the change begin to resist. Resistance can be either overt, in the form of memos, meetings, etc., or covert, in the form of sabotage, foot dragging, politicking, etc. Once the change is compromised, management and the project team will lose credibility, and the organization may become resistant to all future changes.

Although conflict is one of the things most of us dislike intensely, it is inevitable. Most often when we try to avoid conflict, it will nevertheless seek us out. Some people wrongly hope that conflict will go away if it is ignored. In fact, conflict ignored is more likely to get worse, which can significantly reduce project performance. The best way to reduce conflict is to confront it.

(Verma, 1998, p. 367)

Types of Conflict

- *Traditional View*
 - All conflict should be avoided
 - “why can’t we all just get along?”
- *Contemporary View*
 - Conflict is inevitable and natural
 - Positive conflict stimulates ideas
 - “Let’s agree to disagree!”
 - Negative Conflict can be damaging
- *Interactionist View*
 - Conflict is necessary for performance
 - “Devil’s advocate”

Approaches to Conflict

- Avoidance
 - Retreat, withdraw, or ignore conflict
- Accommodation
 - Appease the parties in conflict
- Forcing
 - Dominant authority resolves conflict
- Compromise
 - Bargaining
- Collaboration
 - Confronting and attempting to solve the problem by incorporating different ideas, viewpoints, and perspectives.

Choosing the Best Approach

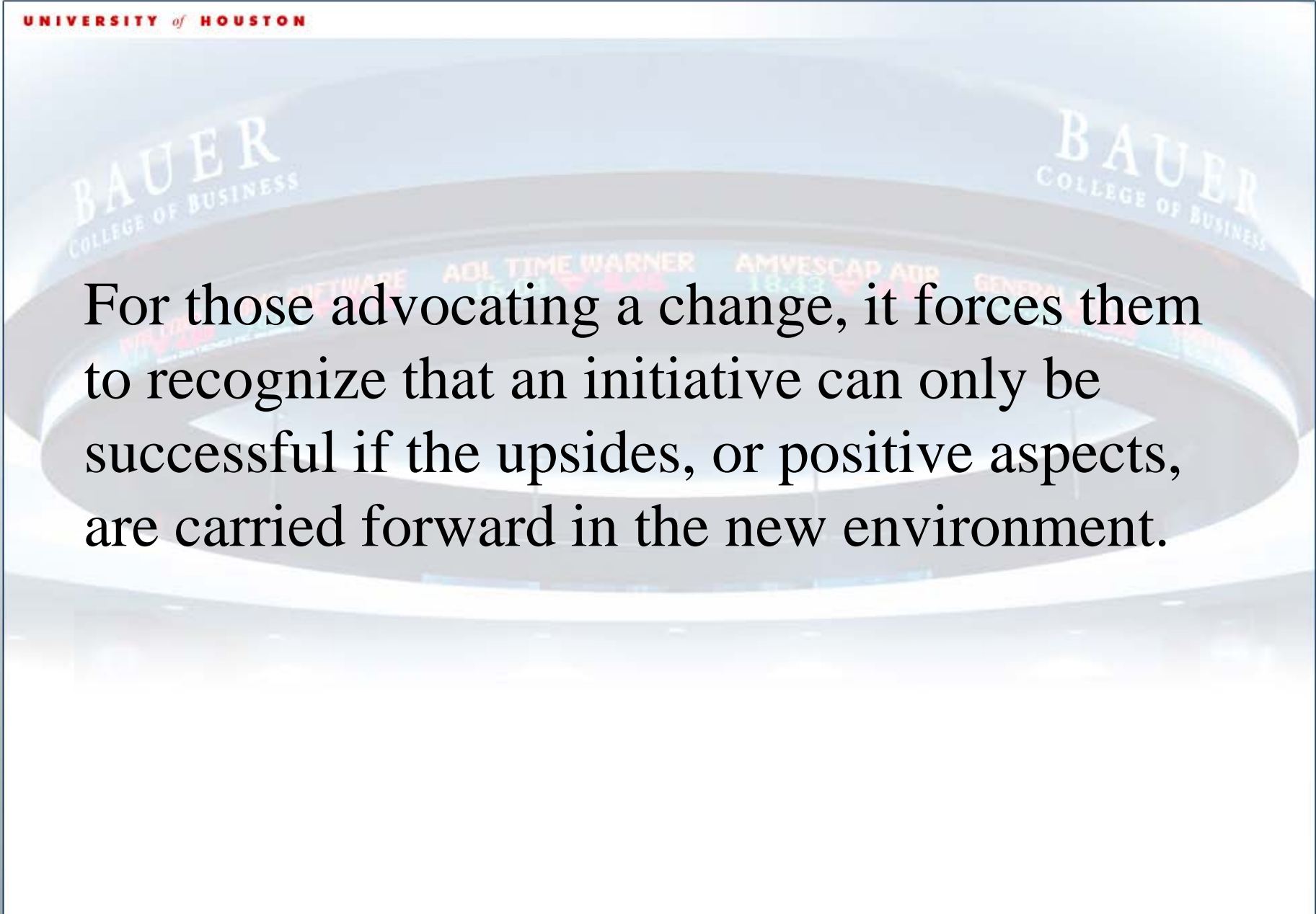
- Each conflict situation is unique and the choice of an approach to resolve conflict depends on:
 - Type of conflict and its relative importance to the project.
 - Time pressure to resolve the conflict.
 - Position of power or authority of the parties involved.
 - Whether the emphasis is on maintaining the goals or objectives of the project or maintaining relationships.

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A dilemma seeks to obtain both goals simultaneously, not eschew either.

Robert McLaren
Organizational Dilemmas



For those advocating a change, it forces them to recognize that an initiative can only be successful if the upsides, or positive aspects, are carried forward in the new environment.

Successful change management means understanding that change is difficult, treating people humanely, allowing time for them to turn the corner, and trading your control for their individual self-direction and ingenuity.

Hamilton Strategic Management Group, Inc.