

4 Reasons Your Change Effort Lacks Urgency

Leading change is difficult work. Helping walk an organization through a transformation effort is a complex thing. There are lots of moving parts and a variety of ways the change could go sideways on you as you navigate it. One of those potential potholes on the path toward a desired change is when a leadership team, as well as the rest of the organization, lack a real sense of urgency about the change.

This urgency is really important, because any change effort or organizational shift requires the proactive, passionate, commitment of a lot of people and groups. While the urgency may have its genesis with just one or two folks who are the initial catalysts and proponents of the change, it eventually needs to be felt on a larger scale.

There could be a number of reasons that the urgency just isn't there. Here are a few I've seen or heard about most often.

1. Leadership can underestimate how difficult it's going to be to convince folks to rally around the change. Even though a change may make perfect sense in your mind, and perhaps even the minds of your leadership team, it may not resonate the same way with others across the organization. Others may think things are just fine the way they are, or perhaps they'd agree with you that a change is needed but think your solution is off base. There could be any number of reasons some people aren't convinced (like [lack of trust](#), for example), but it's almost always going to be harder than you think.

2. Leadership thinks they're better off or further along than they really are. Sometimes leaders are under the impression that things "aren't that bad," or that the organization is much closer to the desired state than it actually is. Again, this happens for any number of reasons. One possibility is that it can be difficult for leaders to say something needs to change, because that can feel an awful lot like [you're admitting that you might not have gotten everything right to this point](#). (Why else would you need to change?) It's almost a tacit admission that you're not perfect.

3. Leadership can be impatient. Change can be, and usually is, a lengthy process. Culture doesn't shift overnight, or in a few weeks, or even in a couple of months. If leaders aren't in it for the long haul, and don't have the patient focus necessary, they can become distracted and move on to other things.

4. Leadership becomes overwhelmed by the possibility of failure and freezes up. This is related to the *analysis paralysis* we hear so much about. There are so many things that could potentially go wrong during a shift that it can be easy to feel like [the best thing to do is nothing at all](#).

Do you sense a lack of urgency on your team? Is there a change effort within your organization that just seems to be stalled? Perhaps it's because of one or more of the factors mentioned above.

Have you seen these in action? What happened? How'd you overcome it?