



Randel Consulting Associates

Leading Organizations through Change and Growth



Leading Like A Gardener

Moving Through Change With Calm And Confidence

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ARE YOU UNSURE ON HOW BEST TO LEAD YOUR ORGANIZATION ON ITS GROWTH PATH?

You are not alone!

Many leaders, facing the opportunities - and the challenges - of growth, experience mixed feelings of uncertainty and optimism, responsibility and caution.

- Setting goals and making plans is hard because things keep shifting.
- Some team members are resistant to the changes and undermine your efforts.
- The organization needs to continue delivering the current work at the same time as things are being disrupted to prepare for the growth.

What are you to do in situations like this?

Read on to learn how the **RCA Seasons of Growth™** framework can help you develop an approach that allows you to lead with calm and confidence!

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Helping Leaders and their Teams
Move Through Change and Growth
With Calm and Confidence

WHAT CAN GO WRONG WHEN YOU'RE LEADING CHANGE?



AT THE BEGINNING

- The organization's stakeholders are not given sufficient time to understand and enroll in the planned changes.
- A rushed planning process can overlook risks and challenges.
- Team members have limited time to come to terms with what will be ending.

IN THE MIDST

- The team is distracted by other priorities.
- Early efforts don't deliver the expected results.
- Unexpected challenges arise that question the goals or timeline of the plan.
- Experienced team members leave the organization.



NEAR THE END

- The work is not well integrated into the organization, so there is little to no continuity.
- As team members move on to other projects, there is little sense of closure and celebration.
- The team fails to reflect on its experience, lessons for other teams and future change projects are lost.



Lead like a Gardener!

It can be helpful to think of the work of leadership during times of change and growth as akin to the work of a gardener. You need a long-term orientation on what you are doing that guides your early actions. And while you can expect to see benefits before long, you can't allow this to distract you from your long-term goals.

The **RCA Seasons of Growth™** framework introduces the three phases involved in this work of leading change.

Each phase focuses on key issues that need attention, and they lay the foundation for what follows next.

I've been working on organizational change for more than 35 years. Over this time, I've worked with hundreds of organizations from more than 25 countries. Despite the variety of settings, there are some things that show up time and again. This experience has informed the development of the framework about how organizations change and grow.

Change processes rarely proceed in a straight line, following one plan from start to end. Instead, there are phases in this growth and different work takes place during each.

Your approach to the work of change and growth will benefit from paying attention to the three phases of **Preparing**, **Cultivating** and **Harvesting**. This will help you build a strong foundation for your change initiative that is prepared for the familiar challenges, and will allow you to lead in a way that brings about long-term results and impact.

The **RCA Seasons of Growth™** framework can be used in a wide variety of change contexts.

It is an approach that you and your team can use as you work on change – whether preparing and implementing your annual work plan, conducting a restructuring of the organization, or developing and accomplishing your growth strategy.

The value of the framework is that it offers a simple, memorable, way for approaching your work, while also helping you assess your progress and identify where next to focus your attention.

By **Leading Change Like a Gardener**, you will be ready to proactively address each of the three phases.

By appreciating the importance of each phase, you can ensure that the appropriate time and resources are invested in each.

Taken together, you will position your organization and change initiative on a path for success, allowing you to enjoy the fruits of growth!



PREPARING



The first phase that needs attention in any change process is that of **Preparing**. The quality of this foundational phase impacts how changes will unfold and what results you can achieve. Making short-cuts here will eventually show up in stunted or even failed growth.

Thinking like a gardener, this is when you assess the landscape. You want to understand the environment and how it behaves. You need to become familiar with the local climate, the soil quality and the water sources.

Taking stock of what is already present and your vision for the garden, you can consider what to keep and what needs to be removed.

By the end of the phase of **Preparing**, you are making a plan for the garden. There will be some short-term benefits that you can anticipate, along with some work that might not bear fruit for several years.

Once this is done, you'll be ready to move towards action.

PREPARING

Three Moves

Map: Build a shared understanding of the current situation, develop goals for an improved future, and identify options for change.

Mobilize: Identify and engage key stakeholders, build support of the need for change, and foster buy-in.

Move: Develop a plan for the planned changes, secure resources and communicate what is coming to stakeholders.

Practical Tips To Prepare For Change

- Create a [Context Map](#) to better understand what is contributing to the current situation.
- Develop a [Stakeholder Assessment](#) for insights into potential sources of support and resistance.
- [Prepare a plan](#) for the change process, but don't make it too detailed.
- Invest time and effort in [communicating about the change](#).

CULTIVATING

This second phase of **Cultivating** is where you can carry out your plan. Like a gardener, you and your team will now be busy with planting, with tending, with caring for new initiatives.



You can't proceed blindly, however, simply following the initial plan in precise detail. Things change, and assumptions may be found lacking. Perhaps some of your seedlings didn't thrive. What will you do?

Will they do better in a different location or are they not suitable for this environment? Will you try planting something else in their place?

You need to keep an eye on factors that can impact healthy growth. What is the equivalent of pests that can attack your garden? Do you need to spend more time watering and weeding than expected?

Cultivating is an active phase as you care for what's happening across the whole garden.

CULTIVATING

Three Moves

Implement: Carry out planned activities, involving the right people at the right time.

Iterate: Pay attention to how your environment responds to these activities and the progress being made. Make adjustments as necessary.

Innovate: Anticipate that not everything will work as planned. Be ready to develop novel approaches and solutions.

Practical Tips To Cultivate Change

- Establish a Change Monitoring Group to help you stay informed on stakeholder perceptions.
- Monitor your progress using Key Indicators as reference points.
- Watch out for any Fatal Assumptions you've made!.
- Learn from your experience and Adjust the Plan as needed.
- SCAMPER your way to innovative solutions.

HARVESTING

After all the work required during the **Preparing** and **Cultivating** phases, you are finally in **Harvesting**, the third and final phase.

At last, you are able to enjoy the fruits of your effort!

You might observe colorful flowers. You know this is a short-lived display, but it brings satisfaction while it lasts. And you understand that it will be necessary to cut them back, and perhaps even replant them, so that you can enjoy this experience again.

You might be sitting in the shade of a tree, planted several years earlier, enjoying its fruit. You had to be patient to get to this point, but now that the tree is well established, you will enjoy this fruit for a long time to come.

And your mind turns to a new question:

What will we work on next?



HARVESTING

Three Moves

Consolidate: Determine how to sustain the progress that has been made. Identify the individuals and teams who will be responsible for carrying it forward.

Celebrate: Take the time to acknowledge what has been accomplished! Appreciate and celebrate the dedication and hard work of the people who made this all happen.

Close: Formally end the initiative as a focused effort, extract valuable lessons, disband the team, and allocate any remaining resources.

Practical Tips To Harvest Change

- Set up a process ahead of time to Handover responsibility for the ongoing management and maintenance of changed systems and processes.
- Celebrate your success as a team.
- Reflect, learn and share so that other teams can learn from this initiative.



HAVE YOU FOUND THESE TIPS HELPFUL?

Too many leaders get stuck trying to find their way through change. It can be exhausting, even overwhelming. And this is not why they became leaders!

When my clients use the **RCA Seasons of Growth™**, they increase engagement and buy-in from their stakeholders. They have greater confidence in the team's capacity, they get stunning results and they are better prepared for the next change they'll face.

We work with leaders who are facing change and growth.

We support you to bring Calm and Confidence as you move your teams and organizations through change.

**1:1 Support
Leadership Coaching**

**Group Coaching and
Learning Programs**

**Stronger Organizations
through Stronger Teams**

[Learn More](#)

Contact me to learn more about how I can help you!

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5 CRITICAL MISTAKES THAT CAN THREATEN YOUR CHANGE INITIATIVE

Implementing organizational change doesn't have to be challenging. Get our insider tips to overcome these 5 common problems.

Drivers Of Sustained Change

Change Capacity That Lasts

Taking Root

Assessing Your Readiness for Leading Change and Growth

Making the Most of a Windfall

5 Key Actions To Take After Receiving A Gift from Mackenzie Scott

Visit our website to access these and other practical resources for leaders and teams moving through change

RCChangeAdvisors.com