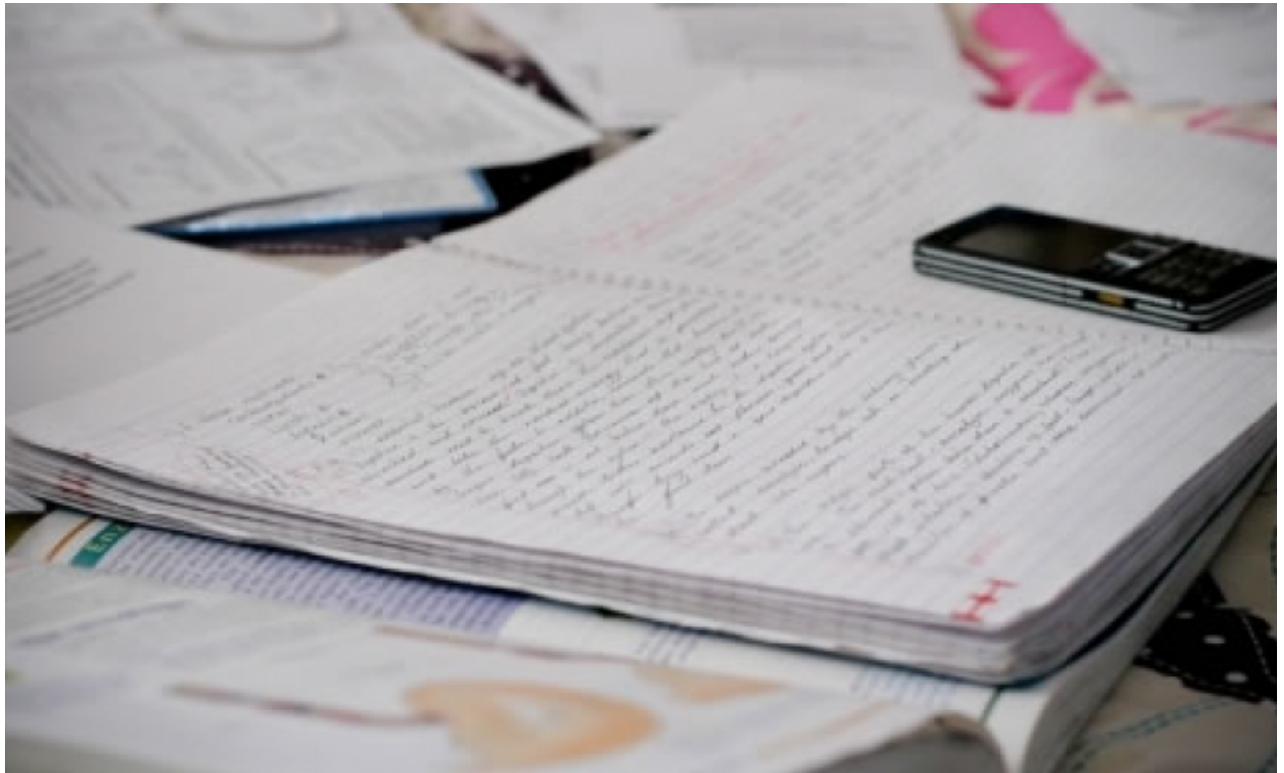


Three tips for leading change



06/03/2016 - 14:47



"We often focus a great deal of our energies on the processes, systems or tasks that need to be changed, and not enough on the attitudes, values and mind-sets", writes Emily Sun in this article posted on Clore Social Leadership blog.

Emily Sun

Submitted by F Pere Tarrés on Fri, 06/03/2016 - 14:35

Description:

Experienced HR and leadership development professional with over 20 years' experience in leading and advising organisations, has worked in multiple non-profit organisations working with NEET young people, including The Private Equity Foundation, on leadership development, organisational effectiveness, strategy and fundraising.

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I'm certainly not the first to write that the UK's social sector is facing significant and disruptive challenges: decreases in public funding sources, increased pressure to deliver measurable outcomes and results, and an unprecedented knock in the public's trust in the sector as a whole. The demands on leaders within the sector are greater than ever, and the **ability to lead change** effectively is becoming an increasingly critical skill.

Here are three things to consider when leading change:

1) 'Yesterday I was clever and tried to change the world; today I am wise and am changing myself.' - Rumi, 13th century Persian poet

We often focus a great deal of our energies on the processes, systems or tasks that need to be changed, and not enough on the **attitudes, values and mind-sets** that underlie these behaviours that need to adapt to the new context. Before we can even begin to influence others' attitudes and behaviours, we need to start with an understanding and **awareness of our own conduct** to understand how it might affect the change we would like to see happen. This is where honest introspection and some candid feedback from those who know us well can be invaluable.

2) Solve problems by focusing on what's going well

It's human nature to zero-in on problems and all the things we feel aren't right or good enough. An approach called **Appreciative Inquiry** developed by [David Cooperrider](#) of Case Western Reserve University, encourages us to look for **success stories** within our own teams and organisations. It is based on a powerful assumption that building on **strengths** brings better results and is much more **motivating** than focusing too much on weaknesses and failures.

3) 'People do not resist change; people resist being changed.' – Richard Beckhard, organisational change pioneer

We often think that if a necessary change makes a lot of sense to us, that all other rational beings will also clearly understand the need and benefits of the change we'd like to make. Leaders can underestimate the degree to which **we react to change through our emotions**, rather than our rational, logical selves. No matter how beneficial a change may be to the future of an organisation, if we perceive it as having a negative impact on our status, sense of control, certainty or fairness, we aren't going to warm to it very quickly. This doesn't mean of course that we shouldn't go ahead with the change; it's just that if we want to bring the rest of the organisation with us in this change, we will need to be very mindful of the impact it will have on people affected and how best to **engage them positively**.

This article was originally published on the [Clore Social Leadership blog](#) on 12 April 2016.

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