Leading Campus Change Initiatives

Vice Presidents of Research Roundtable
April 14, 2022

Understand the need for and **importance of change management,** especially in higher ed

Learn EAB's **framework for leading change** initiatives on campus

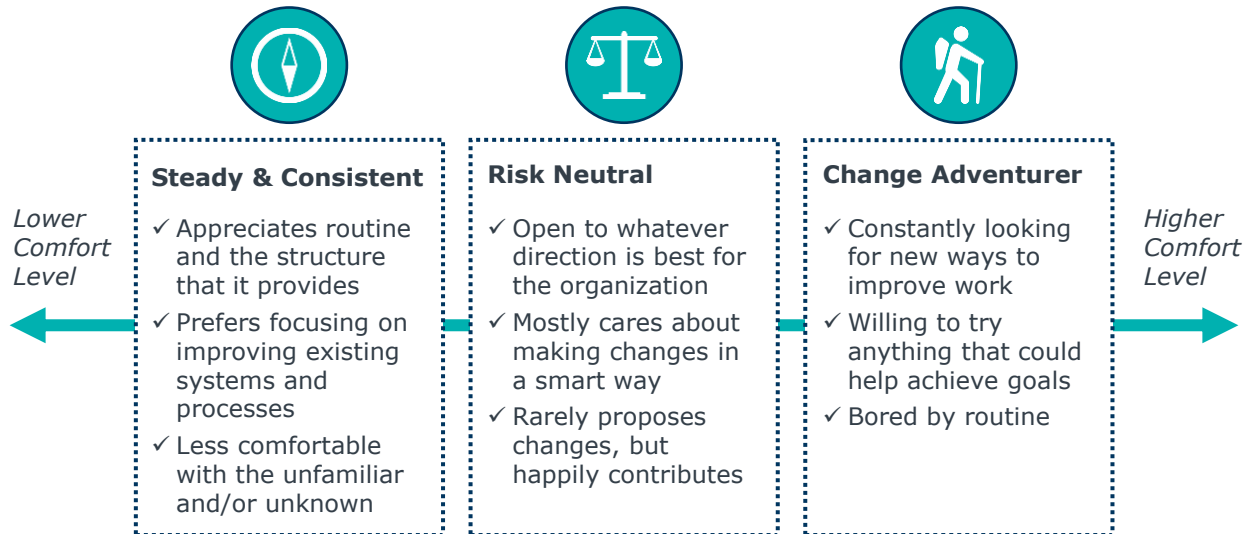Practice **applying the framework** using higher education scenario exercises

Reflect on lessons learned and **identify initiatives on your campus** that will require change leadership
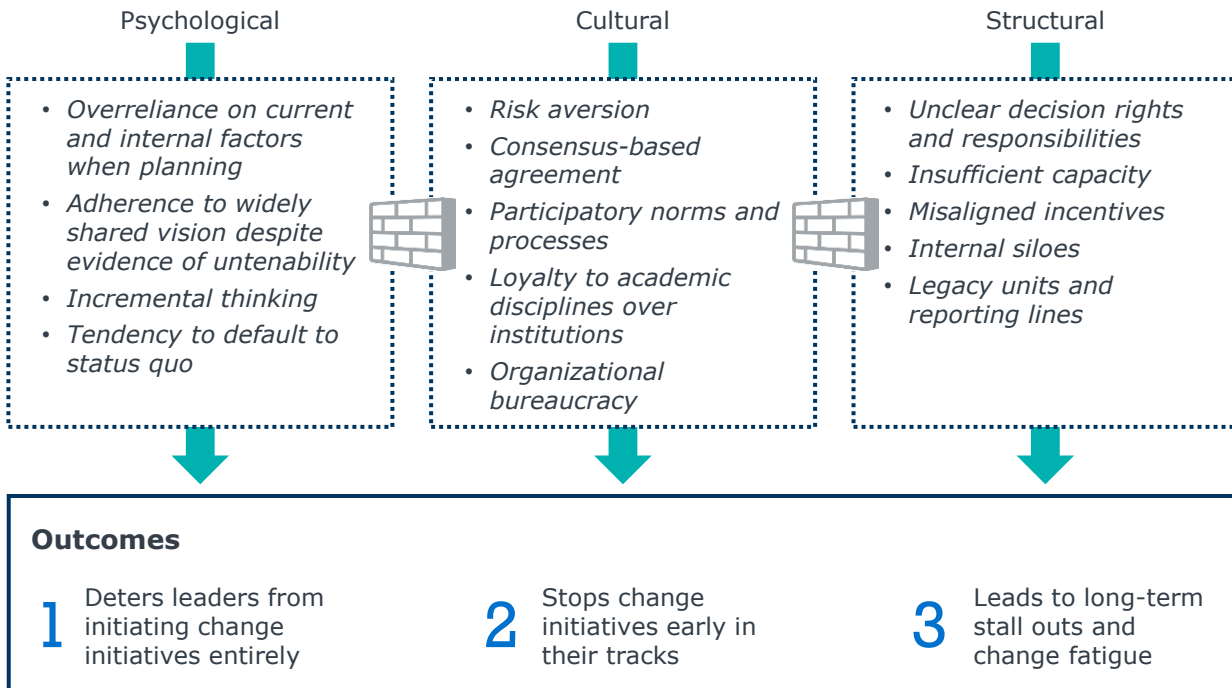
Consider this:
- How comfortable are you with change, in general?
- What variables make you more or less comfortable with change?

Lower Comfort Level

Steady & Consistent

✓ Appreciates routine and the structure that it provides

✓ Prefers focusing on improving existing systems and processes

✓ Less comfortable with the unfamiliar and/or unknown

Risk Neutral

✓ Open to whatever direction is best for the organization

✓ Mostly cares about making changes in a smart way

✓ Rarely proposes changes, but happily contributes

Change Adventurer

✓ Constantly looking for new ways to improve work

✓ Willing to try anything that could help achieve goals

✓ Bored by routine

Higher Comfort Level

Source: Heller Consulting, Change Management is People; EAB interviews and analysis.

Campus Leaders Face Strong Aversion, Stakeholder Resistance

Types of Barriers to Change

Psychological	Cultural	Structural

Psychological
- *Overreliance on current and internal factors when planning*
- *Adherence to widely shared vision despite evidence of untenability*
- *Incremental thinking*
- *Tendency to default to status quo*

Cultural
- *Risk aversion*
- *Consensus-based agreement*
- *Participatory norms and processes*
- *Loyalty to academic disciplines over institutions*
- *Organizational bureaucracy*

Structural
- *Unclear decision rights and responsibilities*
- *Insufficient capacity*
- *Misaligned incentives*
- *Internal siloes*
- *Legacy units and reporting lines*

Outcomes

1 Deters leaders from initiating change initiatives entirely

2 Stops change initiatives early in their tracks

3 Leads to long-term stall outs and change fatigue

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

People-Centric Approach Improves Likelihood of Success for Change Initiatives

Low Success Rates for Change Initiatives Across Industries

50%

of change initiatives are clear failures

16%

of change initiatives yield mixed results

59%

of organizational changes fail due to insufficient communications

Deploying Change Management

- **Definition:**
  A set of practices and processes for garnering buy-in and moving stakeholder groups toward a collective goal and/or changed behavior

- **Key Concepts:**
  – Focuses on the human and cultural aspects of organizational change
  – Entails building awareness and understanding among people affected by change

Improved Outcomes for Change Initiatives Across Industries

93%

of projects effectively applying change management met or exceeded project objectives

78%

of projects effectively applying change management were at or under budget

69%

of projects effectively applying change management were on or ahead of schedule

Source: Gartner, Managing Organizational Change; Project Management Institute, Enabling Organizational Change Through Strategic Initiatives; Prosci, The Correlation Between Change Management and Project Success; EAB interviews and analysis.

Leaders Struggle to Effectively Deploy Change Management on Campus
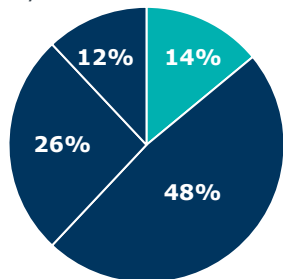
Many Institutions Lack Sufficient Change Management Capability

Percent of institutions with change management capability integrated in planning and strategy

n=495 (presidents, provosts, cabinet members)

We currently have no plans to develop this capability — **12%**

This capability is playing an integrated role across the institution — **14%**

26%

48%

We are planning to develop this capability

This capability is present in some areas of the institution

Common Change Management Mistakes Higher Ed Leaders Make

View change management as a one-time event

Take too narrow of an approach (e.g., focus exclusively on communications or incentives)

Fail to anticipate and assess the real-world impact of changes, especially on key stakeholders
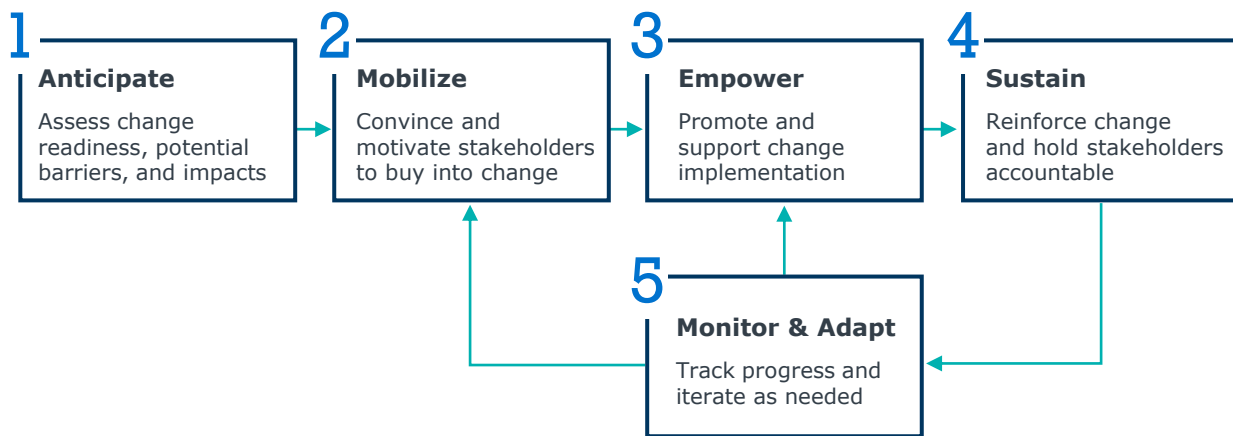
Delegate responsibilities to deputies instead of playing an active role in ongoing efforts

EAB's Change Management Framework for Higher Ed Leaders

1 — **Anticipate**

Assess change readiness, potential barriers, and impacts

2 — **Mobilize**

Convince and motivate stakeholders to buy into change

3 — **Empower**

Promote and support change implementation

4 — **Sustain**

Reinforce change and hold stakeholders accountable

5 — **Monitor & Adapt**

Track progress and iterate as needed