

The Formula for Accelerated Change

How to Become a Visionary Leader, Achieve Success and Sustainable Development

Author: Juvenal Turatsinze

Vision x People² x Action x Time = Change

V x P² x A x T = C

‘Visionary People Together in Action over Time make Change’

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The Formula for Accelerated Change reveals the key factors of change and shows how they are related and combined to produce and manage change. Every factor is explained in detail so that you can understand it fully and how it contributes to making change.

The four factors of change are : **vision, people, action** and **time**. Each factor of change has a multiplier effect on change. That is why if one is missing, the change does not happen, so the change becomes null.

- Where there is no vision (vision=0), there is no change (change=0). Change starts only with a vision of a new image of how things should be.
- Without people (people=0), no change (change=0). Change happens by people, with people and for people.
- No action (action=0), no change (change=0). Change cannot happen if nothing is done.
- If time is zero (time=0), change is zero (change=0). All changes need time, and change comes with time.

Once you understand this formula and work on the factors within the formula, then you can begin to make the change you desire to achieve the results you want.

The formula reveals that any change starts with a vision. Usually, a vision is discovered by a person to be called a visionary leader or initiator. When the discovered vision concerns other people, the initiator should share his/her vision with the people concerned and mobilise them

The Formula for Accelerated Change by Juvenal TURATINZE
(Email: turatsinzejuv@gmail.com; Twitter: @turatsinze_juv)

to take collective action. Action needs time to be planned, implemented and to produce results. When people are committed to a shared vision, synergy is created and this produces an exponential effect on people leading to the vision and so by making the change to happen quickly.

Synergy¹ is “what happens when one plus one equals four, ten or a hundred or even a thousand. The result is overwhelming when two or more respectful human beings determine to go beyond their preconceived and individual ideas to meet a great challenge and achieve a common vision”

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Critical analysis of previous formula for change

The development of the formula for change is not new. A formula for change was created by David Gleicher while he was working with Arthur D. Little in the early 1960s, and refined by Kathie Dannemiller in the 1980s. Their formula provides a model to assess the relative strengths affecting the likely success of organisational change programmes.

The original formula, as created by Gleicher and published by Beckhard,² is: $C = (ABD) > X$, where **C** is change, **A** is the status quo dissatisfaction, **B** is the desired clear state, **D** is the practical steps to the desired state, and **X** is the cost of the change. Richard Beckhard and Rubin Harris first published their change equation in 1977 in *Organizational Transitions: Managing Complex Change*.

Dannemiller³ coined the term, ‘**Formula for Change**’ which is sometimes called *Gleicher's Formula*. Dannemiller’s version of the formula is: $D \times V \times F > R$, where **D** is Dissatisfaction with how things are now; **V** is the Vision of what is possible; **F** is First, the concrete steps that can be taken towards the vision; and **R** is Resistance.

This formula considers three factors to be present for meaningful organisational change to take place. If the product of these three factors is greater than the Resistance, then change is possible. Because D, V, and F are multiplied, if anyone is absent (zero) or low, then the product will be zero or low and therefore not capable of overcoming the resistance.

From the point of view of a new analysis, the formulas for change proposed above by Beckhard, Gleicher and Dannemiller are seen as simplistic and they do not say everything about change. Their analysis of change was limited to organisational change. The new critical

¹ Synergy is defined by Steven Covey in *The 7 habits of the most effective people*.

² Beckhard, R.,(1969), *Organization Development: Strategies and Models*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.

³ Dannemiller, K. D., and Jacobs, R. W., (1992), ‘Changing the way organizations change: A revolution of common sense’, *The Journal Of Applied Behavioral Science*, 28(4), pp.480-498.

analysis proves that the factors of **dissatisfaction** and **resistance** are neither relevant nor necessary for change to be made or happen.

Dissatisfaction

In these old formulas, it is assumed that change can happen only when people are dissatisfied. But the question we can raise here is to know why and when people are satisfied or dissatisfied.

The reality is that people are satisfied (or not dissatisfied) when they lack knowledge or information about a better alternative. People are satisfied when they lack knowledge of a better way or have no vision of how things should be. Dissatisfaction is an automatic result of new knowledge and vision of a better situation. For example, you do not need something when you don't know if it exists or you won't desire a situation you are not aware of. Many people were satisfied with their iPhone 3 or 4 until the iPhone 5, 6 and 7 came along. When it came with its new functions and more capacity, they became dissatisfied with the former. Dissatisfaction in people is created by new knowledge and information on how the new product can make their lives much easier.

Every situation can be improved. People always look for the better as they do not want to settle for the bad or the good only. The main problem is that they often lack the knowledge of a better situation. Dissatisfaction is a result of new thoughts caused by the acquisition of new knowledge or information. Change is created only from new thoughts and driven by a new vision. Dissatisfaction can always be created by providing new knowledge, information or an alternative to the status quo. New knowledge and a new vision automatically make the status quo obsolete, and this inevitably ignites the will of change.

Vision

Vision is a key factor of change. A vision comes from new knowledge that generates new thoughts. So, vision is made by thoughts about how things or a situation should be. Vision makes the status quo obsolete, creates a sense of urgency, motivates change and activates people to make change.

First steps

The first steps start a process of change but there is a need for continuous and long-term actions to achieve the required sustainable change. Change is a long journey of many steps and it takes time to reach the destination. This is why **action** and **time** are key factors in the equation of change. So, change requires continuous action and time.

The resistance

Change and resistance are two sides of the same coin. There is always resistance to change. Like in physics where motion creates friction, change naturally creates resistance. But only the smallest amount of force is required to overcome friction. In the same way, to start change

you need new knowledge and clear vision to overcome the resistance forces supporting the status quo. Despite resistance to change, change will happen when all the factors for change (**vision, people, action and time**) are valued, grown and combined.

Resistance to change is due to a lack of knowledge, information, or skills. It can also be a consequence of negative attitudes and behaviours. Resistance can be addressed through education, training, communication and information or by addressing prejudices, assumptions, and perceptions.

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Developing and mixing the ingredients of change

Making change is like making bread you need ingredients. In bread-making, you need wheat flour, water, sugar, salt and yeast. First, wheat has to be grown and processed to make flour, yeast has to be grown, water has to be treated and purified, sugar cane or sugar beet have to be grown and processed to make sugar, and salt has to be collected from the sea and treated; then these ingredients are gathered and mixed to make dough. The dough is given time for the yeast to work before being put in the oven or on the fire to be cooked and become bread.

Like in bread-making, factors of change need ingredients. These ingredients have to be grown, processed and got ready to be used.

There are ingredients necessary for each factor of change. These ingredients have to be grown and get ready to be used to produce change. These ingredients are presented in the table below:

Vision	People	Actions	Time
Purpose	Self-awareness	Independent will	Time Management
Thoughts	Conscience	Responsibility	Past
Ideas	Character	Initiative	Present
Knowledge	Attitude	Action planning	Future
Imagination	Beliefs and values	Proactivity	
Positive thinking	Self-discipline	Prioritising	
Creativity	Dignity	Organising	
Innovation	Leadership	Speaking	
New mindset	Empowerment	Entrepreneurship	
Paradigm shift	Mentoring		
	Team building		
	Empathy		
	Dialogue		
	Synergy		
	Critical mass		