WORKSHEET + WORKED EXAMPLE

Give a Change a Way to Take Hold

An eight-part change plan that makes barriers and participation visible.

40 minutes | Kotter informed · Eight change lenses

Use it in three moves

1. Explain the real reason to act and bring together people with authority, relevant knowledge, and lived experience of the work.

2. Use the eight prompts to check the direction, participation, barriers, and early evidence. Address what is missing before pushing for more activity.

3. Use results to adapt the change, then update ordinary routines and support. Keep checking whether it remains useful.

1 · Establish a real reason to act

Use evidence and a meaningful opportunity; do not manufacture fear.

2 · Build a guiding group

Include authority, credibility, and people affected across shifts and boundaries.

3 · Make the direction understandable

Describe a better experience and what will change in the work.

4 · Invite broad participation

Make routes and decision boundaries clear. Voluntary participation should be genuinely voluntary.

Give a Change a Way to Take Hold

YOUR WORKING NOTES / CONTINUED

5 · Remove barriers to action

Check access, workload, incentives, permissions, and conflicting routines.

6 · Notice useful early results

Choose evidence of benefit, not a staged celebration or usage target alone.

7 · Keep learning and adapting

Use the first results to adjust and extend; avoid declaring victory too early.

8 · Make the change part of ordinary work

Update onboarding, ownership, measures, and support. Review whether it remains useful.

A question for me

What are we asking people to do differently without changing what makes it difficult?

See one way through

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE / NOT THE ANSWER TO YOUR SITUATION

1 · Establish a real reason to act

Missed handoffs are creating repeat customer calls. Share the evidence and invite corrections.

2 · Build a guiding group

A coordinator, late-shift colleague, service owner, and customer representative shape the trial.

3 · Make the direction understandable

One clear handoff with the information and authority needed to act.

4 · Invite broad participation

Offer a short trial, written feedback, and a private question route. Required process changes are stated plainly.

5 · Remove barriers to action

Provide queue access and remove duplicate entry before asking late shift to use the new route.

6 · Notice useful early results

Check whether a requester received a correct response without repeating information.

7 · Keep learning and adapting

Revise the form and backup route before adding a second request type.

8 · Make the change part of ordinary work

Add the route to onboarding, name its maintainer, and review quality and workload monthly.

The thinking behind it

People learn whether a change is credible from the conditions supplied for it. Remove the old conflicting demand as well as explaining the new one.

John Kotter's eight-step change approach includes urgency, a guiding coalition, vision, participation, removing barriers, early wins, sustained progress, and institutionalizing change. His later work presents these as accelerators. This original Lab uses all eight lenses with explicit participation and workload checks; it is not an official Kotter program.

Kotter · Eight steps

Read You Have a Culture Problem by Nic Payne