

Six Tactics for Creating Conversations of Change

Some change programs can be really challenging to work with. CSR programs come to mind. Here are six tactics that change agents can use to create compelling conversations of change.

1. Listen more, talk less

A lot of times change agents think they have to sell better, talk louder, just give better information. Uh-uh. Good change agents listen, and listen lots. When you listen your audience feels valued and respected, and you find out the change levers and triggers for that person.

2. Suspend judgement, seek to understand

Passionate change evangelists often forget humility. They become highly judgemental of those they seek to influence. This judgement creates an exclusive audience of 1 (the evangelist). Focus more on understanding and create an inclusive and safe space to test ideas.

3. Establish commonalities

People are more easily influenced by People Like Them. It's a tribal association thing hard-wired in the brain. When you are listening and seeking to understand you can find areas of commonality. This establishes that you are Like Them and can have influence.

4. Baby steps before great leaps

It is basic nature to reject what overwhelms (cognitive overload and bounded rationality). When introducing new ideas make the complex simple. Start with a small notion, anchor that in understanding and then step up to the next level.

5. Heart, mind and credibility

Aristotle knew it all – persuasive speakers have pathos (an appeal to the emotions), logos (an appeal to the logic by facts and figures) and ethos (an appeal from a credible speaker). Are you relying too much on only one of those areas?

6. Persevere with patience & grace

Productive conversations take time and perseverance is required. Be patient with the time it takes to sustain and energise, and appreciate the small wins you achieve as your audience stays in the conversation.

