

Managing Personal Change

Moving Through Personal Transition

Revised Edition

**Cynthia D. Scott, Ph.D., M.P.H. and
Dennis T. Jaffe, Ph.D.**

A Crisp Fifty-Minute™ Series Book

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Moving Thru Personal Transition *Moving Through Personal Transition*

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Learning Objectives for

MANAGING PERSONAL CHANGE

The learning objectives for *Managing Personal Change* are listed below. They have been developed to guide the user to the core issues covered in this book.

The objectives of this book are:

- 1) Understand the impact of personal change
- 2) Obtain new skills for navigating change successfully
- 3) Build and maintain positive attitudes toward change

Assessing Progress

A Crisp Series **assessment** is available for this book. The 25-item, multiple-choice and true/false questionnaire allows the reader to evaluate his or her comprehension of the subject matter.

To download the assessment and answer key, go to www.courseilt.com and search on the book title.

Assessments should not be used in any employee-selection process.

About the Authors

Cynthia D. Scott, Ph.D., M.P.H., is a founding partner of Changeworks Global. She is a recognized leader in the fields of change leadership, executive development, and knowledge mobilization. She consults with organizations on managing organizational change, building resilient cultures, and executive team development. She earned her M.P.H. in health planning at the University of Michigan and her Ph.D. in psychology at The Fielding Institute. She is a licensed clinical psychologist.

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Drs. Jaffe and Scott have written 10 books including *Getting Your Organization to Change*, *Rekindling Commitment*, *Take This Work and Love It*, *Empowerment*, *Organizational Mission, Vision, and Values*, and the *Mastering the Change Curve Assessment*. Cynthia's high content keynotes on *Change Leadership*, *Navigating the Global Work Environment*, and *Building Career Readiness* have provided an exciting and stimulating foundation for employees to engage in change. They have co-designed training and assessment tools, including *Organizational Readiness Assessment* and *Leading for Results*. Their video, *Managing People Through Change*, was selected as one of the best of 1990 by *Human Resource Executive*.

Changeworks Global (www.changeworksglobal.com) is a San Francisco-based consulting firm where Dr. Scott and Dr. Jaffe design and provide consultation to implement outcome-oriented change-management solutions with leadership teams. They have worked with a wide range of clients worldwide on mergers, technology implementations, cultural transformations, and organizational redesign.

Leading Change at WorkSM and Change MasterySM are two interactive workshops that have assisted thousands of managers and employees to learn the skills they need to manage change. Changeworks Global offers train-the-trainer, online, and customized tool kits for large group applications.

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Preface

Our lives are changing at a faster rate than at any other time in human history. The amount of information in a single issue of *The New York Times* is about equal to the amount of information that people in the 16th century would have assimilated in their entire life! This is creating an environment rich in stimulation and challenging our ability to prioritize and focus.

We are all trying to understand and respond to the changes occurring in our work lives and in our personal lives. Most of us try to react to these changes in a positive and productive manner, but sometimes we feel overwhelmed and confused. The skills and strategies in this book will help you through the changes you face.

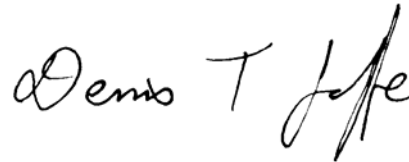
By reading this book and completing the exercises, you will learn to:

- Understand how change affects you
- Move beyond your resistance to change
- Move through transition periods more easily
- Increase your support to make change easier
- Enhance your personal power
- Renegotiate new roles and challenges during change
- Build and maintain positive attitudes toward change

This book takes you step-by-step through active practice exercises to build your skills as a change master. These skills have helped others manage change. They will help you too.



Cynthia D. Scott



Dennis T. Jaffe

Introduction

You may open this book for many reasons. Perhaps you have been part of an organizational change—a reorganization, merger, or downsizing—or you are facing a personal transition, such as retirement, a return to work, a change of career, or a change of lifestyle. Think of this book as a smorgasbord of ideas, techniques, and strategies—and then create the mixture that will be most helpful to your situation.

The following are four keys for succeeding through personal change:

1. Listen to yourself.

Pay attention to your hunches about what you need to do. Don't let a good idea get away. Record your thoughts, responses, and action ideas in the action planning section in the back.

2. Focus on a few actions at a time.

Do not overwhelm yourself—it is a good way to go nowhere. Focus on one or two actions at a time. Build success in small steps.

3. Give yourself time.

Apply the 21-day rule of changing behavior. It takes about 21 days to establish a habit—and about 21 days to get rid of one.

4. Review your action plan daily.

Put your list of action steps where you can see them regularly. Staying focused on what you want will help you.

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P A R T

1

The Need for Mastering Personal Change

“*The world doesn't fear a new idea. What it fears is a new experience.*”

—D. H. Lawrence

PREVIEW

Change Is a Constant

The experience of change can cover a broad spectrum. It can be unexpected, sudden, and unsettling; or it can be welcomed and planned. External global forces, as well as internal economic and social pressures, contribute to accelerating change—in our personal and our work worlds. Change is a way of life today.

Moreover, change today happens quickly. No longer are there short periods of change, followed by long plateaus of stability. Most of our lives today are a continual, never-ending series of changes with ever-shorter rest periods. So we must learn to live with and thrive in a world of constantly changing demands.

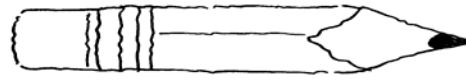
Consider:

- More than 61 million Americans will retire in the next 30 years
- Nearly one-third (32%) of workers say they will likely change jobs within the next five years
- White males are a minority in the U.S. workplace
- Women make up 60% of the U.S. workforce and the percentage is growing
- Huge productivity gains are needed to remain abreast of non-U.S. competitors
- Forty years ago, 40% of the U.S. workforce was unionized—now it is less than 5%

Like it or not, you are affected by most of the changes occurring in society. These broad shifts affect your values as well as the structure of your organization. You must learn to respond to each of these changes as they affect you. In response to change, you need to:

- Be change capable
- Meet the challenge by staying effective and productive

Keeping yourself afloat in the face of change demands new skills—beyond what you learned in school or learned at work. You need to assess the skills of *change mastery*—the ability to respond quickly and flexibly to new demands. As life becomes more complex, adapting and embracing new ideas, behaviors, and thought patterns will become increasingly important.



CHANGE CHECKLIST

Take a moment and check (✓) any change listed on this and the next page that you have gone through in the last year.

Work

- Change in type of work
- Change of work hours or conditions
- Increased or decreased work responsibilities
- Trouble with co-workers
- Retirement
- Lay off or termination
- Work-related courses/need to upgrade your skills
- Merger, acquisition, or reorganization
- Introduction of new technology

Health

- Major illness or injury
- Change in eating habits
- Change in sleeping habits
- Change in amount or type of recreation

Financial

- Major purchase or new mortgage
- Business reversal or financial loss
- Change in personal finances (good or bad)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Home and Family

- Change of residence
- Home improvements or other household changes
- Marriage
- Change in the way family got together (holiday celebrations, etc.)
- New family member (birth, adoption, or relative who moved in)
- Spouse started or stopped working outside the home
- Serious argument with spouse
- In-law problems
- Separation or reconciliation with spouse
- Divorce
- A family member's change in health or behavior
- Death of a close friend
- Death of a spouse or family member

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Personal and Social

- Major personal achievement
- Major decision about the future
- Sexual difficulties
- Beginning or end of school or college
- Vacation
- Change in religious beliefs
- Change in social activity
- Legal difficulties
- Change in political beliefs
- A new, close personal relationship
- A falling-out in a close personal relationship
- Personal property loss, theft, or damage
- Accident

Total the number of changes you checked. If your score is:

1-15 You are having an easy year.

16-25 Your year has been challenging.

26-37 You may need to find someone to help you through change.

38+ Hold on to your hat; slow things down! You're moving really fast.

Impact of Change

Everyone adapts to life changes differently. For example, some of us find that adjusting to a new home takes enormous effort, while others say very little adjustment is necessary. When you are a *change master*, it is possible to move through change easily. Other people with the same changes may experience them in a stressful way.

Researchers Holmes and Rahe studied 43 common life changes, such as the ones listed in the preceding exercise. They found that people who suffered serious illness of any kind or were involved in accidents had experienced a significant increase in life changes the previous years.

Other research shows that how you experience and prepare for the changes in your life has a lot to do with how difficult the event is for you. People who practice change management skills have learned to reduce the stress of change.

“*Diseases always attack people when they are exposed to change.*”

—Herodotus, *Histories*, fifth century B.C.

Responses to Change

Change is like a rock thrown into a pond. It ripples through your life causing disruption, excitement, distress, and sometimes crisis. Your usual ways of doing things and your plans for the future can come into question. In place of clarity, change brings uncertainty and transition. This disruption is not only in your mind. It can affect you physically and even make you ill. It can also affect your emotions, especially your feelings about yourself.

When you go through a change, you should be alert to the possibilities of signals from your body, mind, and feelings.

BODY



Body Signals:

Headaches, rashes, feelings of exhaustion, stomach problems, minor pains, and colds

MIND



Mind Signals:

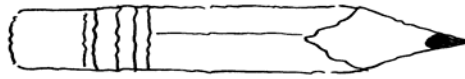
Negative thoughts, confusion, difficulty concentrating, lower productivity, sleeplessness, forgetfulness.

FEELINGS



Feelings Signals:

Anxiety, anger, fear, frustration, depression, excitement, or withdrawal



NOTICING YOUR OWN RESPONSES TO CHANGE

Think about recent major changes you have experienced. Write down any signals of change you have noticed.

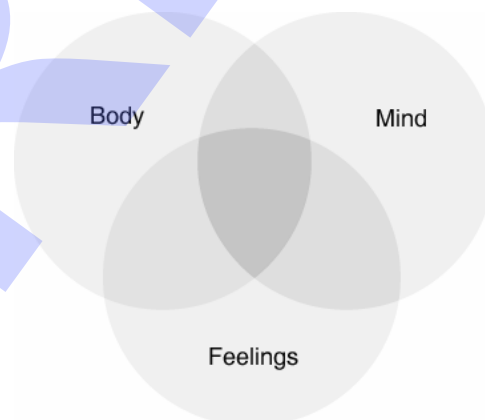
Body signals:

Mind signals:

Feelings signals:

Although change produces signals in your body, mind, and feelings, it is common for people to be more aware of the signals in one area. This is why some people may show different responses to change than you do. For example, some people eat less while others eat more.

Your goal is to learn to notice the signals from all three areas so you can respond to them sooner. The sooner you notice them, the sooner you can take action to support your transitions. Mental and emotional signals are often harder for people to identify. We have less of a “language” for noticing these signals. But do not ignore them. They are all important. One set influences the others like overlapping circles.



Practicing Self-Renewal

Change demands energy. Your energy begins with how well you take care of your body. A schedule of 16-hour days, seven days a week—with fast-food snacks and too much caffeine—depletes the body of energy. You must eat regular, nutritious meals, get a good night's sleep, exercise regularly, and take time off for personal renewal. Recharging your inner batteries can make a huge difference as you sort through complex transitions.

Check (✓) below those self-care habits you practice regularly.* The more you do, the more resilient you will be. During the crisis of change, you will be tempted to cut back, saying, “I don't have the time.” But this is precisely when you need these regular self-renewal practices the most.

Diet

- Eat a wholesome breakfast
- Maintain a healthful diet
- Limit alcohol intake

Rest

- Arrange a quiet time each day
- Engage in relaxation exercises before bed
- Get a good night's sleep

Exercise

- Engage in 20 minutes of aerobic exercise at least three times a week
- Participate in a game or sport regularly
- Walk as much as possible

Recharging

- Schedule regular time with friends or family members
- Establish personal and professional goals
- Assess accomplishments from time to time

* For more information on this topic, read *Self-Renewal*, by Dennis Jaffe and Cynthia Scott, a *Crisp Series* book.