



ADKAR Tool

The ADKAR Model (Hiatt, 2006)

The ADKAR tool is a results-oriented change management tool. It can be utilised in a mentoring process, to pin-point the type of information or support that your mentee needs, whilst going through personal and/or professional change.

The five stages of ADKAR:

1. Awareness of the need for change
2. Desire to make the change happen
3. Knowledge about how to change
4. Ability for new skills and behaviours
5. Reinforcement to retain the change once it has been made

The table below illustrates the 5 stages of ADKAR and enablers to move through each stage:

A	Awareness of the need for change	ENABLERS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management communications • Customer input • Marketplace changes • Access to information
D	Desire to participate and support the change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of job loss • Discontent with current state • Imminent negative consequence • Enhanced job security • Affiliation and sense of belonging • Career advancement • Acquisition of power or position • Incentive or compensation • Trust and respect for leadership • Hope in future state
K	Knowledge on how to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and education • Information access • Examples and role models
A	Ability to implement required skills and behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice applying new skills or using new processes and tools • Coaching • Mentoring • Removal of barriers
R	Reinforcement to sustain the change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives and rewards • Compensation changes • Celebrations • Personal recognition

Power of ADKAR for managing change

The power of the ADKAR model is that it creates focus on the first stages that is the root cause of stuckness. When you approach change using this model, you can immediately identify where the process is breaking down and which stages are being overlooked. This avoids generic conversations about the change that rarely produce actionable steps. This results-oriented approach helps focus energy on the area that will produce the highest probability for success.

ADKAR can help you plan effectively for a new change or diagnose why a current change is failing. In some cases, corrective action can be taken and the change successfully implemented.

A work scenario

If you are an employee in an organization undergoing change, your reaction to the change and how you are viewed by the organization will be directly affected by each of the five stages in the ADKAR model.

eg. The implementation of a new software tool. If the change is implemented and you believe it was not needed (ie. you were not aware that any changes were required), then your reaction might be:

“This is a waste of time.”

“Why change if it was working just fine before?”

“If it isn't broke, don't fix it.”

“They never tell us what's going on!”

Our natural reaction to change, even in the best circumstances, is to resist. Awareness of the business need to change is a critical ingredient of any change and must come first.

If someone had taken the time to explain that the old software would no longer be supported by the vendor, and that new software was necessary to meet the needs of your customers, then your reaction (based on this awareness) would likely be very different:

“How soon will this happen?”

“How will this impact me?”

“Will I receive new training?”

Take this same example one step further. Assume you were made aware that a change was required, but you had no desire to participate or support the change.

“What's in it for me.”

“I doubt they are really serious about this.”

Now the tables are turned, and you may become the target of an emotional response from individuals within the organization. You may be labelled as difficult, inflexible or unsupportive. Some may say you lack initiative or vision. You may be called a cynic or pessimist.

Awareness and desire are two critical components of the change model.

Reflection Exercise:

Begin by identifying a change you are having difficulty making with your mentee. Complete the worksheet, rating each area on a scale of 1-5. Be sure you select a change you or your mentee have been trying to implement, that is not working regardless of your continued efforts. Answer and assign a score for in the exercise below:

The Change: Briefly describe the change you are trying to implement with your mentee

1. Awareness: List the reasons you believe the change is necessary. Review these reasons and rate the degree to which the person you are trying to 'get onboard' is aware of the reasons or need to change.

Rating: 1 – 5, where 1 is no awareness and 5 is total awareness

--	--

2. Desire: List the factors or consequences (good and bad) for this person that create a desire to support the change. Consider these motivating factors, including the person's conviction in these factors and the associated consequences. Rate his/her desire to change on a 1 - 5 scale.

Rating: 1 – 5, where 1 is no desire and 5 is full desire to change

--	--

3. **Knowledge:** List the skills and knowledge needed to support the change, including if the person has a clear picture of what the change looks like. Rate this person's knowledge or level of training in these areas on a 1 to 5 scale.

Rating: 1 – 5, where 1 is no knowledge/skill and 5 is complete knowledge/skill	
---	--

4. **Ability:** Considering the skills and knowledge identified in the previous question, evaluate the person's ability to perform these skills or act on this knowledge. Rate this person's ability to implement the new skills, knowledge and behaviours to support the change on a 1 - 5 scale.

Rating: 1 – 5, where 1 is no ability and 5 is complete ability	
---	--

5. **Reinforcement:** List the reinforcements that will help to retain the change. Are incentives in place to reinforce the change and make it stick? Rate the reinforcements as helping support the change on a 1 to 5 scale.

Rating: 1 – 5, where 1 is no reinforcement and 5 is complete reinforcement	
---	--

Highlight those areas that scored a 3 or below, and identify the first area to score less than 3. You must address this area before anything else is done.

If you identified **awareness** as the area with a low score, then working on desire, knowledge or skill development will not help you make the change happen.

On the other hand, if you identified **desire**, then continually repeating your reasons for change is not adequate to move this person forward. Once they know these reasons, you must address their inherent desire to change. Desire may stem from negative or positive consequences. The negative consequences have to be great enough to overcome their personal threshold to resist change (same for the positive consequences). Their values will also be relevant here.

If **knowledge** was the area you identified, then you want to be careful not to dwell on the reasons for change and the motivating factors. This could be discouraging for someone already at this phase. What is needed is education and training for the skills and behaviours that are needed for change.

If **ability** was the area selected with the low score, then several steps are required to move forward. The person will need time to develop new skills and behaviours. Just like learning a new sport or any new skill, time is required to develop new abilities. The person will need ongoing support. No one-time training event or educational program will substitute for ongoing mentoring. Outside intervention or support may be required.

Finally, if **reinforcement** was the area identified, then you will need to investigate if the necessary elements are present to keep the person from reverting to old behaviours. Address the incentives or consequences for not continuing to act in the new way.

This process should give you insight as to where your mentee is in the change process, and what steps you can take to assist them to survive change, and advance professionally in a changing business environment.

Personal context for change

The positive and negative motivating factors are evaluated by people within the following personal context:

- Their personal and family situation (health, financial position, stability, mobility, relationships, etc.)
- A person's professional career history and plans (successes, failures, promotions, aspirations, years left before retirement, 2nd career potential, etc.)
- The degree that this change will affect them personally (in some cases even large changes can have only a minimal impact on some people).

Organizational context for change

People also evaluate these positive and negative motivating factors based on:

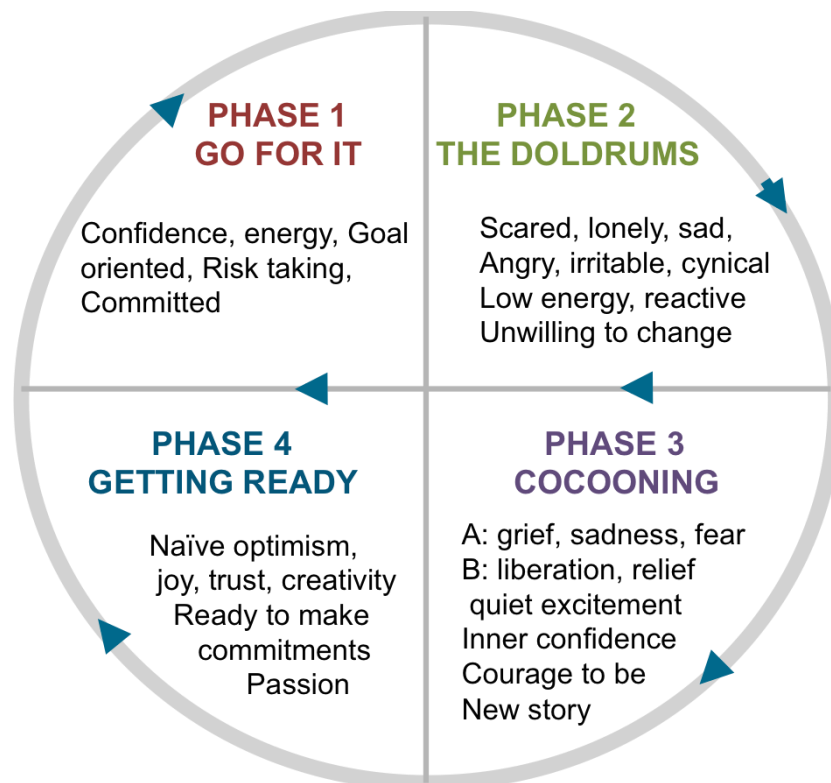
- an organization's history with change (past change success or failure, the likelihood that this change will really happen, consequences for people that have resisted change in the past)
- an organization's values and culture (how the organization treats people and how people treat one another)

Hudson's Cycle of Renewal

(Adapted from Hudson & McLean, 2000)

Do you sometimes think you 'should' join the gym or 'could' read that book? Instead you feel like doing something else, maybe you are having fun exploring something new, or just want some 'me time'. This hints at your life phase, in your growth and development.

According to Frederic Hudson, we go through cycles of change and growth, characterised by four phases in the "Adult Cycle of Renewal". There are two life chapters - Go For It and Doldrums, which are stages of relative stability, characterized by routine, goals and external accomplishments. Cocooning and Getting Ready are life transition phases which are periods of profound change. These phases are characterized by instability, uncertainty, and offer the opportunity to rediscover ourselves.



In **Go For It**, you have the energy and the confidence to implement your goals and have fun in the process. It is a sustainable plateau of success and wellbeing.

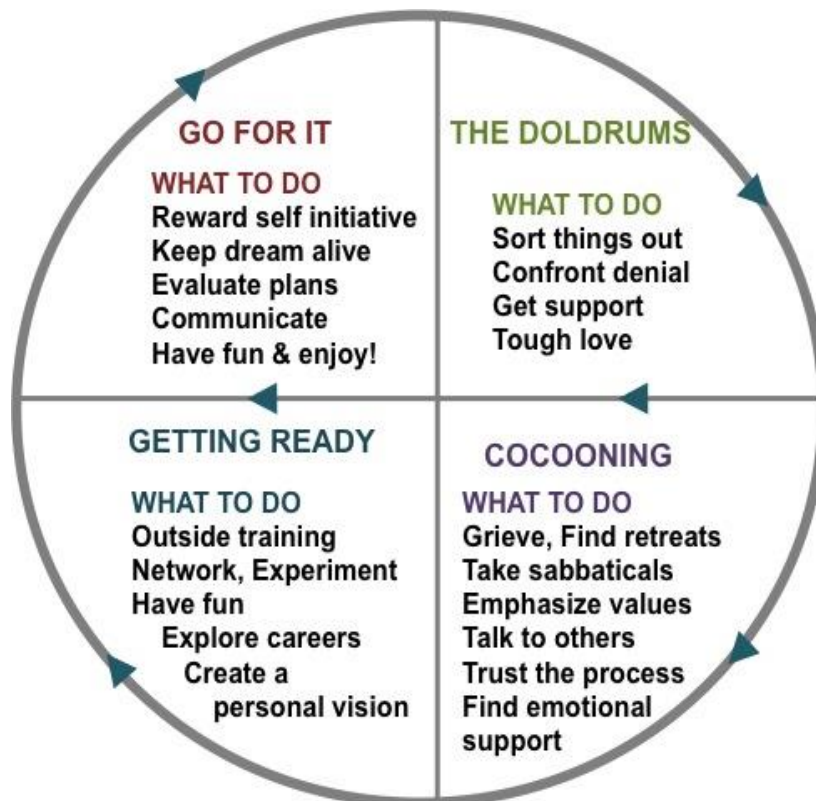
The **Doldrums** occur when you feel doubt or resentment about the way things are going. It is a good time to sort out priorities and reflect on your current life chapter. Sometimes you have a 'mini transition' back to Go For It, through making small and significant changes. When that isn't sufficient to sustain you, Cocooning offers a deeper path of change.

In **Cocooning** you may grieve the loss of a previous way of being, and feel liberated to allow something new to emerge. It provides the opportunity to renew yourself, avoid burnout, and go through a conscious process of searching for new meaning.

Getting Ready takes that evolvment into feeling excited about new prospects. You start to experiment with new ways, maybe do a course, network, and create a personal vision. Then you are ready to Go For It again!

Hudson found that we go through this cycle repeatedly in our lives, through normal, healthy adult growth and development. Do you ever feel that you are going around in circles, or solving the same problems? Just the acknowledgement and acceptance of where you are in the cycle can create movement to a new phase. Instead of feeling guilty about what you 'should' be doing, or wondering why you haven't implemented that great idea you had, consider where you are and what you need to do in order to move to the next phase in your cycle.

It's about being aware of which phase you are in, to care for yourself, and to identify what you need in



that phase, to take you through transitions successfully and sustainably.