



THE CHANGE READINESS AUDIT: PREPARING YOUR ORGANIZATION FOR CONTINUOUS CHANGE

The organizations that will move forward most effectively will be those building the internal capacity to lead change well.

As we look ahead, we can assume the one thing that will not change is change itself. We are living and working in a super-cycle of change. Organizations are navigating rapid technology acceleration, evolving workforce expectations, shifting business priorities, and ongoing disruption, often all at once.

In this kind of environment, the ability to lead through uncertainty and help people thrive becomes an essential skill.

While we've made positive strides, many organizations still approach change reactively. New initiatives are launched quickly, priorities shift rapidly, and leaders are often left managing resistance, confusion, fatigue, or misalignment in real time. Speed matters, but sustainable change requires organizational readiness.

Building change readiness does not slow progress. It strengthens it.

Organizations that intentionally build internal change-management capabilities are often better equipped to navigate disruption, reduce unnecessary friction, strengthen trust, improve communication, and sustain momentum over time.

Rather than treating every transition as a separate fire to put out, they develop the practices, rhythms, and cultural foundations that allow people to move through change more effectively together.

This Action Step invites leaders to assess and strengthen their organization's "change readiness" muscles by evaluating how effectively their teams, managers, systems, and culture support change in practice.

Strong change readiness helps organizations:

- Reduce confusion during transitions
- Identify gaps before they become larger problems
- Strengthen communication and alignment
- Improve employee trust and engagement
- Support managers navigating uncertainty
- Create more sustainable implementation practices
- Shift from reactive change management to proactive organizational capability-building

Importantly, strong change readiness requires employees to feel informed, supported, included, equipped, and able to adapt successfully within the environment being created around them.

Take Action: Conduct a Change Readiness Audit

Set aside time to conduct a simple organizational Change Readiness Audit.

Step 1: Identify a Current or Upcoming Change Initiative

Select one organizational shift currently underway or expected in the near future. This could include:

- Policy or process changes
- Technology or AI integration
- Restructuring or team changes
- Workplace flexibility initiatives
- Communication or culture initiatives
- Leadership transitions
- Talent or wellbeing strategies

Step 2: Evaluate Readiness Across Key Areas

Using the reflection questions below, assess your organization's readiness across five areas: leadership alignment, community and clarity, manager readiness, employee experience and trust, and organizational agility.

Consider both organizational systems and individual human experiences when discussing these questions, and as a team, encourage honest discussion around where friction, uncertainty, or resistance may emerge.

Assign a rating to your organization for each question: strong, developing, or needs attention.

- Leadership Alignment
 - Do leaders across the organization appear aligned around major priorities and initiatives?
 - Are leaders communicating consistent messages during periods of change and uncertainty?
 - How comfortable are leaders with ambiguity and evolving circumstances?
- Communication & Clarity
 - How effectively does information flow during periods of transition or uncertainty?
 - Are expectations communicated clearly and consistently?
 - Where does confusion tend to emerge most often during change initiatives?

- **Manager Readiness**
 - Are managers equipped to support teams through uncertainty and evolving priorities?
 - Do managers know how to navigate difficult conversations during change?
 - Where might managers themselves need additional support or development?
- **Employee Experience & Trust**
 - How are employees experiencing change emotionally and operationally?
 - Do employees feel informed, included, and supported during transitions?
 - Are employees comfortable raising concerns, questions, or challenges?
- **Organizational Agility**
 - How quickly can your organization adapt without creating unnecessary chaos or confusion?
 - Where do bottlenecks, friction points, or competing priorities slow progress?
 - Are teams encouraged to learn and iterate, or pressured to appear certain at all times?
 - Does your organization treat change as a one-time initiative or an ongoing organizational capability?

Step 3: Identify One Area to Strengthen

Rather than trying to solve everything at once, identify one area where strengthening organizational readiness could create meaningful impact.

Examples may include:

- Creating more consistent communication rhythms
- Offering managers additional support or training
- Clarifying decision-making processes
- Improving feedback loops
- Involving employees earlier in change conversations
- Reducing competing priorities during implementation

Step 4: Create One Small Shift

Choose one practical action from the area you have chosen to strengthen that your team can begin implementing immediately to help improve change readiness over time.

Small, intentional shifts practiced consistently often create stronger long-term organizational resilience than large-scale reactive responses.

Step 5: Create a Plan for Continued Improvement

Schedule time to revisit the audit and assess additional areas where your organization may benefit from further support, alignment, or adjustment.

As you identify new opportunities for growth, focus on building small, practical shifts within each area over time. Continuous improvement often happens through steady, intentional progress rather than sweeping organizational changes all at once.

Want Support Putting This Into Practice?

As a DFA member, you don't have to navigate organizational change on your own. We're here to support you as you strengthen your organization's capacity for sustainable change.

- **Strategy Session:** Each member organization receives an annual one-hour strategy session. You might use this time to assess your organization's current change readiness, identify friction points or communication gaps, explore leadership alignment, or think through how upcoming initiatives may impact employees, managers, and culture.
- **Policy Review:** Members can submit one policy, framework, or initiative each year for feedback. This may include workplace flexibility strategies, communication plans, leadership development efforts, organizational restructuring, or broader culture and wellbeing initiatives.
- **Advisory Sessions (Champion and Leader Members):** Champion and Leader members have access to advisory sessions for ongoing support. These sessions create space to think through real-time organizational challenges, navigate evolving priorities, strengthen communication during periods of uncertainty, and support leaders and teams through ongoing change.

We're here to work alongside you as you build more future-ready, human-centered organizations that can navigate sustainable change.