

Change Agents: three traditional types (fact-based, authority-based and relationship-based) and transformational (based on emergent reality)

Strategies → Organizational Change → Transformation

Toward Win-Win Negotiation and Long-Term Trust	Toward Equality and Change	Toward Vision Realization and Moral Courage					
Toward the Preservation of the System	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;"> <p>Participating Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: relationship</p> <p>Method: open dialogue</p> <p>Questions: Is there a focus on human process? Is everyone included in an open dialogue? Do I model supportive communication? Is everyone's position being clarified? Am I surfacing the conflicts? Are the decisions being made participatively? Is there commitment to a "win-win" strategy? Are the people cohesive?</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;"> <p>Transforming Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: emergent reality</p> <p>Method: transcend self</p> <p>Questions: Am I envisioning a productive community? Am I first looking within? Am I embracing the hypocritical self? Am I transcending the external sanctions? Am I embodying a vision of the common good? Am I disturbing the system? Am I surrendering to the emergent process? Am I enticing through moral power?</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Participating Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: relationship</p> <p>Method: open dialogue</p> <p>Questions: Is there a focus on human process? Is everyone included in an open dialogue? Do I model supportive communication? Is everyone's position being clarified? Am I surfacing the conflicts? Are the decisions being made participatively? Is there commitment to a "win-win" strategy? Are the people cohesive?</p>	<p>Transforming Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: emergent reality</p> <p>Method: transcend self</p> <p>Questions: Am I envisioning a productive community? Am I first looking within? Am I embracing the hypocritical self? Am I transcending the external sanctions? Am I embodying a vision of the common good? Am I disturbing the system? Am I surrendering to the emergent process? Am I enticing through moral power?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;"> <p>Forcing Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: authority</p> <p>Method: leveraging behavior</p> <p>Questions: Is my authority firmly established? Is the legitimacy of my directive clear? Do I understand their fears? Am I capable and willing to impose sanctions? Is there a clear performance-reward linkage? Am I controlling the context and flow of information? Am I using maximum leverage? Are the people complying?</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;"> <p>Telling Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: facts</p> <p>Method: rational persuasion</p> <p>Questions: Am I within my expertise? Have I gathered all the facts? Have I done a good analysis? Will my conclusions withstand criticism? Are my arguments logical? Are my arguments clear? Do I have a forum for instruction? Am I prepared to argue effectively?</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Forcing Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: authority</p> <p>Method: leveraging behavior</p> <p>Questions: Is my authority firmly established? Is the legitimacy of my directive clear? Do I understand their fears? Am I capable and willing to impose sanctions? Is there a clear performance-reward linkage? Am I controlling the context and flow of information? Am I using maximum leverage? Are the people complying?</p>	<p>Telling Strategy</p> <p>Emphasis: facts</p> <p>Method: rational persuasion</p> <p>Questions: Am I within my expertise? Have I gathered all the facts? Have I done a good analysis? Will my conclusions withstand criticism? Are my arguments logical? Are my arguments clear? Do I have a forum for instruction? Am I prepared to argue effectively?</p>	Toward the Pursuit of Truth
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Toward Compliance and Personal Survival	Toward Structure and Control	Toward Logical Explanation and Immediate Action					

Differentiating Traditional and Transformational Change Agents

Traditional Change Agents	Dimension of Differentiation	Transformative Change Agents
Personal Survival	Core Vision	Productive Community
Fixed by Position	Leadership	Spontaneous Contribution
Equilibrium	Desired System State	Bounded Instability
Prevent Insurgency	Social Movement	Enact Insurgency
Responsive	Empowerment	Self-authorizing
Script Driven	Consciousness	Mindful
Social Expectation	Moral Reasoning	Principle Driven
Respond to Stimulus	Sanctions	Transcend Sanctions
Divided, Guarded	Self	Authentic, Open
Provokes Closure	Stimulation	Provokes Openness
Exotelic	Motivation	Autotelic
Uses Symbols	Symbolic Communication	Becomes a Symbol
Controlled	Learning	Surrender-based
Imitation	Source of Vision	Creation
Instruction	Vision Transfer	Reframing
Problem Solving	Mode of Inquiry	Appreciative Inquiry
Accountability	Cause and Effect	Co-creation
Expertise	Stimulus for Change	Improvisation
Negative Force	Resistance and Uncertainty	Positive Force
Other	The Target of Change	Self

Details of Dimensions of Differentiation

Core Vision

The transformative change agent has a core vision. It is a vision of high purpose and productive community. To have such a vision, the change agent must be inner directed and other focused. Bear in mind that when I say *productive community* I mean any relationship, ranging from two people to a large organization. The productive community is an envisioned set of relationships that are synergistic, in which the collective good and the individual good are one. As each pursues one's goals, the other is enriched.

In the productive community there is a continuous clarification of purpose. The roles and expectations may be hierarchical but are being continually clarified. Different people serve different functions. Yet there is flexibility because there is high trust, and that trust allows for constructive confrontation. Issues are brought to the surface, not suppressed. People accept emergent reality and accept the need continually to change. Authority figures exist but they are servants to the system. Everyone sacrifices for the common good. People are thus more able to accept the fact that their greatest service to the system may be to leave it. The pursuit of productive community begins to decay whenever anyone chooses personal good over collective good. It is a fragile journey of trial-and-error learning.

Leadership

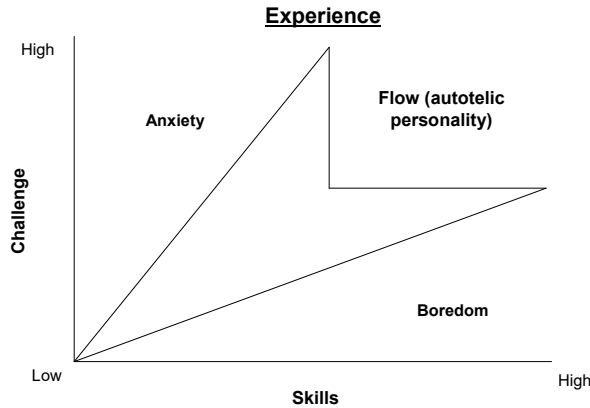
Although there are authority figures in the productive community, leadership is not fixed by authority positions. It is spontaneously contributed by anyone whose skills or knowledge are needed at the moment. Everyone is expected to sacrifice for the common good. Change agents strive to avoid being too soft or too hard. The preferred style is high concern for task and high concern for people. People are expected to choose the collective good over personal good, and it is possible to challenge everyone – including the highest authority figures.

Because the leaders are internally directed and other focused, they encourage such challenges. They see themselves as servants to the higher purpose.

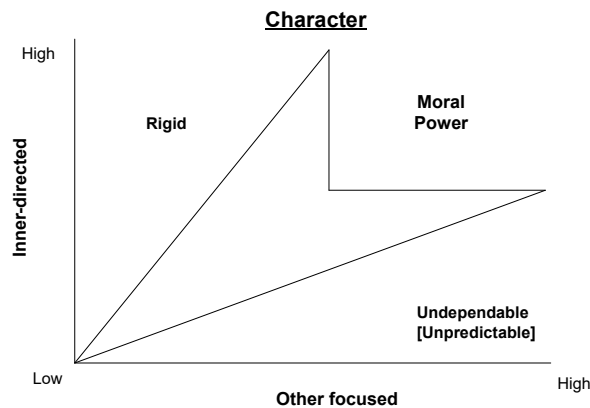
Desired System State

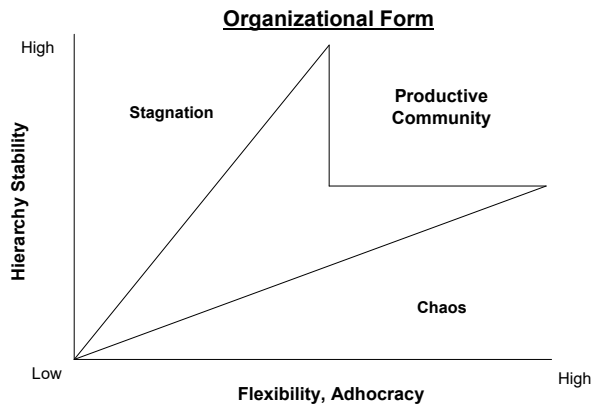
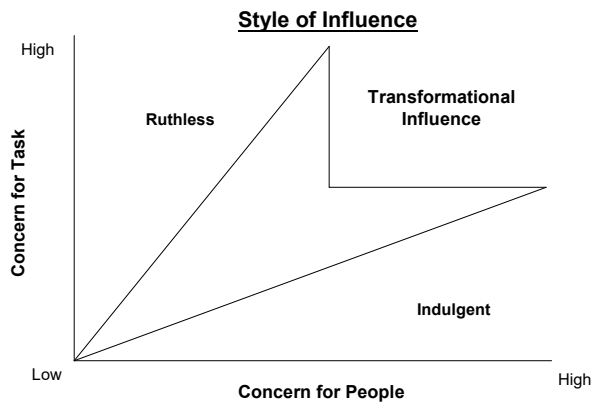
ACT (Advanced Change Theory) envisions the productive community, and this is the kind of relationship that the transformational change agent is trying to establish. Productive community is bounded by a clear structure, which includes well defined purpose, roles, and procedures. These are constantly clarified. Yet within that structure is a great deal of flexibility. People work in a setting where there is a rich and open flow of information. Much time is devoted to productive dialogue. Openness, responsiveness, and flexibility ensure that emergent reality is recognized and constantly being tested. People are accountable but free. They are empowered to make decisions. Negative feedback loops provide continuity while positive feedback loops allow for self-organization. The system can increase in complexity and integration. It can easily transform to high levels of performance.

In ACT, the transformation to higher levels of performance emerges from conditions of bounded instability. Here positive opposites interact and the system moves to a higher level of order. This is difficult to conceptualize. Below is Csikszentmihalyi's concept of *flow*. He reasons that flow emerges when skills and challenge are both high. If challenge is high but skills are low, the result is anxiety. If skills are high and challenge low, the result is boredom.

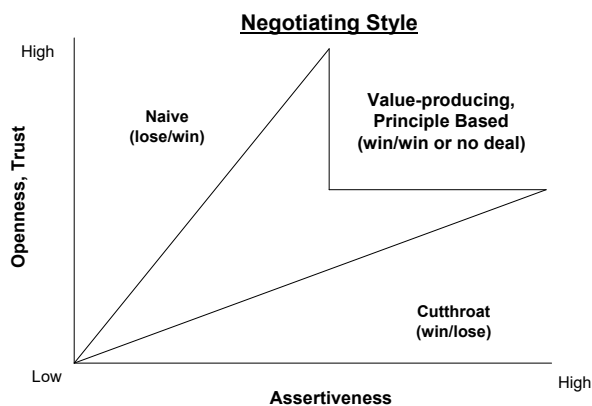


By using the same logic, we can identify other higher-order concepts such as moral power, transformational influence, and productive community [added negotiation style, added by Joe].





The diagram below, on Negotiating Style, has been added – it is not included in Quinn’s book



These higher-order concepts are indicative of desired system states that operate at the edge of chaos. They cannot be conceptualized through the normalized either-or lens. The capacity to think in both-and terms is central to transformation.

Social Movement

Productive community is not *normal*, yet instances of productive community emerge with regularity. In the negative state previously described as *frozen bureaucracy*, that is, a rigid and predictable structure, productive community can only occur through the initiative or spontaneous emergence of a social movement. A social movement is usually seen as a form of insurgency, however, and in the normal model the responsibility of authority figures is to prevent insurgency. Transformational people working within such organization transcend this paradox. They maintain continuity while also transforming the system. They bring about social movements that allow the hierarchy to adapt. They become loyal social insurgents. They know how to challenge the old reality without threatening the authority system. They maintain the creative tension. Such a person is committed to the path of collective fulfillment.

Transformational change agents envision productive community and enact it. This generally requires them to follow some demanding patterns of self-mastery.

Empowerment

The understanding and practice of ACT requires self-mastery and the transcendence of self. To overcome the pressures of conformity, the change agent has to look within. Since all of us are self-deceptive and hypocritical, this involves considerable reflection and clarification of purpose. Clarification of purpose happens when one makes a fundamental choice; a decision to live committed to some aspect of our own highest potential contribution.

When fundamental choices occur, our suppressed purposes and passions make their way into our consciousness. When we make such a choice, our outlook and our behaviors change. We develop constancy of purpose and tend not to bend with circumstance. When others would normally conform, we maintain the capacity for creative response. We initiate when others are reacting. We also increase our capacity for self-change. It is only when we make such fundamental choices that we find the capacity to transcend our fears of the sanction system and transcend our fears. We become free. We are empowered.

Consciousness

When we make a fundamental choice, we expand our vision beyond object reference and discover that the essence of reality is not transactional. Underneath the external props, such as identifying ourselves with a specific role or status within hierarchy, we have an ongoing self. This self is of inherent value, which is best expressed when we are in pursuit of our unique purpose. With fundamental choice, we transcend our scripts, deviate from the norm, and begin to pursue our unique mission. When we let go of our old scripts, when we stop trying to serve ourselves and seek to serve others, a new self emerges. Our consciousness expands and we become aligned with emergent reality. We become more unified with our environment. The self becomes undivided. The self becomes mindful and creative. We begin to take initiative, and we begin to co-create our world.

Moral Reasoning

In the normalized model, change agents employ conventional levels of moral reasoning. In deciding what is right, they ask questions such as, "What is fair or just in the given situation?" In contrast, the transformational change agent operates at the highest level of moral reasoning and asks, "What is right?" The change agent then asks, "What result do I want to create?"

Whereas the normal change agent is driven by social expectations, the transformational change agent is driven by principle. Such commitment stimulates inner growth for the change agent. The willingness to pursue principle in a transactional world usually brings punishment and pain, but the willingness to persist is a form of purification that increases moral power and attracts others to the path of higher purpose. The transformational change agent does not pursue rewards or punishments but rather pursues a given contribution for its own sake. He or she creates for the sake of creation. The motivation is not self-interest but love. People with such a motive tend to attract and elevate others.

The Self

In the practice of ACT, the change agent looks within to face fears and self-deception and through this process is able to reduce integrity gaps. In this way the self becomes less divided. What is felt and what is said become congruent. The agent is more willing to make his or her personal issues public, and this is the first stimulus for cultural change. Because the change agent is more inner directed and other focused the person is more empowered and empowering. Agents are more empowered because they have more awareness of how they are interpreting the world and are more attuned to the subtleties of the system. They see more deeply. They act more creatively. In doing so, the authentic self transcends its own culture.

Stimulation

As discussed above, flow is an experience we have when we engage in an activity that is challenging but achievable within our present skills and capacities. When we're in the flow, we reach complete absorption. Whatever we are doing at this moment is worth doing for its own sake. Self-consciousness wanes. In this state there is harmony and a sense of timelessness. Physical and psychic energy expand. Attention is highly ordered and deeply focused. There is a positive tension between arousal and control. There is a sense of confidence and strength. Flow leads to growth. The simultaneous manifestation of arousal and control tend to give rise to learning. As a transformational change agent one understands this creative tension and invites people to it, provoking and disturbing but careful not to push the change target too far. They avoid the toxic intervention that results in anxiety and shut-down. This kind of person seeks mindfulness and openness to learning.

Motivation

People who enter flow regularly tend to live lives of involvement and enthusiasm. They tend to develop autotelic personality. An autotelic personality is inclined to do things for their own sake and is internally and not externally driven. Such people are less focused on material possessions or external recognition. They are more autonomous and less likely to be driven by rewards and punishments, and they tend to be full involved with everything around them.

The transformational change agent has the same characteristics as the autotelic personality. This kind of agent is internally driven and other focused, has high concern for task, and has high concern for people. A person who is a change agent understands the growth available on the edge of chaos and seeks to invite others to that same state of growth and empowerment.

Symbolic Communication

Acts are more persuasive than words. Principle-driven behavior is likely to be revolutionary because it distorts the normal system. It splinters people into supporters and resisters. The change agent becomes a living symbol, a "metaphor for metamorphosis". The transformational change agent embodies the common good, the new possibilities, and the vision. The change agent creates for the sake of the creation.

Inner-directed behavior is rare. For it to work, people around the change agent must be able to grasp what that change agent is doing. If we want to become change agents within the framework of the ACT model, we must become mindful. In doing so, we become open to influence. The living symbol radiates signals that repel some people while attracting others. Change agents usually attract others because they symbolize the potential within each person or within an organization. As attracted people come together they engage in a new dialogue and this gives rise to productive community.

Learning

To be fully alive we need to be engaged with what is really happening around us. Engaging emergent reality requires confidence and courage. It means leaving our zone of control, familiarity, and comfort to go to the edge of chaos. It means going forward without answers and learning as we go. Professional knowledge gives us confidence that we can perform as long as the context does not change, but learning at the edge of chaos means learning in the present moment. Our capacity to do this increases as our integrity increases. With increased integrity, authenticity, and an undivided self, we can successfully process more information; we are conscious of more cues. With increased integrity, we are better able to surrender control and trust the process of co-creation, self-organization, and

transformation. As we surrender control, we are filled with intelligence. As we stand in our truth, the path opens. We learn our way to transformation power and accomplishment.

Source of Vision

Such learning gives rise to a vision of what can be. Conscious leaders see potential. They are familiar with the power of a self-organizing universe. Transformational change agents have reverence for the potential in the universe. Their purpose is to call forth such potential. Their vision is always unique.

Transformation comes about not as a result of imitation but through creation. The vision must be unique to the moment. It is not a result of rational analysis but of living on the edge of chaos and hearing voices within the system. Listening is a form of co-creation, and vision emerges from such listening. Nor is vision the result of political compromise. The human spirit will simply not resonate with such incentive. Only an authentic voice can call for the necessary human commitment.

Vision Transfer

Having a vision is one thing; helping others share that vision is another thing. This seldom happens by didactic telling. Mindfulness must be created through disturbance of routines. The transformational change agent thus seeks to reframe meaning systems. In the transformational state, the change agent is able to see deeply and to have a more complex theory of the context. Complex understanding is often the foundation for reframing. A common tool for reframing is the bold-stroke image. It may be conveyed by a profound question, a revealing story, or a metaphor. The communicated image distorts the normal assumptions of the actors and sets them on a new behavioral course. The CEO of Coke asks, "What is our share of the stomach?" and the entire company changes.

Mode of Inquiry

As they invite others to growth and empowerment, the transformational change agent strives to transcend the "problem-solving" mode of inquiry that is at the core of the normal model. For the normal change agent, the language of problem solving is a language of deficit, of focusing on finding out what's wrong rather than building on what's right.

When we shift from the language of problem solving to the language of appreciative inquiry, we begin building a human system with a great capacity to construct the future. Until then, this capacity is constrained by normal assumptions and behaviors, so the objective of appreciative inquiry is to bring forth the "positive core" of the system, to tap the untapped potential, to call forth the best in every person, group, and organization. This is done by posing questions that ask us to reframe our perspectives and understandings, drawing out the hopes and commitments of the people and awakening the human spirit. Such questions distort the existing frames and force us to look at how we are relating to our worlds.

As a shared vision begins to emerge, with more and more people participating in the vision, the organization begins to self-organize. At this point the system itself actualizes its own positive essence, becoming its own agent of change. Just as people can be autotelic, so it may be possible that larger systems become autotelic, too. Such systems learn to enact productive community, create tasks that are worth doing for their own sake, and give rise to continuous learning and adaptation.

Cause and Effect

Transformation cannot be explained or produced in terms that we ordinarily associate with cause-and-effect paradigm. We begin to understand it only when we grasp the concept of co-creation. The transformational change agent engages in purposive, principle-driven behaviors, and these disrupt the system. We humans are driven to make sense of new behavior, so the change agent must stimulate this sense-making process. When that dynamic switches into action, an interdependent system begins to emerge. There are an increased number of positive feedback loops, and the system moves to the edge of chaos. Here small acts can bring transformation, yet the change agent is not the sole cause. The change agent, the individuals within the organization, and the context are co-creating the new system. The agent is necessary but alone insufficient to produce this kind of change. Indeed, as it begins to occur, this process has sacred overtones, drawing upon the mysteries of the universe itself.

Stimulus for Change

All efforts at transformation involve improvisation, thus challenging us to commit ourselves to an objective for which there is no known path. The way must be learned. The transformational state must be created. If we are functioning within a normalized system, this is going to be particularly difficult to understand or enact. You'll remember that within the normalized system, authority is equated with expertise. We are slow to question the expert or authority figure.

Transformational change agents stimulate improvisation by continually disturbing the system, bringing forth positive feedback loops, and attracting the organization into a state of high performance. On the edge of chaos, the cause-and-effect relationships are not clear. The change agent often does not know what to do. There are periods when they cannot predict from moment to moment what will happen next. They can only stand in their place and trust the process. They eventually reach high performance because they self-organize to a level of increased complexity and integrity. This occurs to them and not to others because others do not have the commitment or the courage to risk acting on the edge of chaos. Transformational change agents lead. Leadership means to go forth to die.

Resistance and Uncertainty

In the normal theories of change, resistance is a negative force that must be overcome. In ACT, resistance is a necessary ingredient for the transformational process. In fact, transformation begins with resistance. It is a necessary part of gestation. It calls for an adaptation on the part of the change agent. It requires mindfulness. In the midst of an encounter with the resistance, the change agent must imagine other alternatives. The change agent and the change target then become more tightly joined in a larger process of self-organization. Out of the tension caused by the resistance, a new system is born.

Creating a turbulent system means living in a turbulent system. The transformational change agent does not prescribe change. He or she must endure the pain of resistance and the pain of uncertainty. The change agent must trust the process, which is an act of courage and faith. Afterward we may say that the transformation was driven by the change agent. But this is only half-truth at best. The change agent was necessary but not sufficient. The outcome was predictable in a general but not a specific case.

The Target of Change

For better or worse, we all embody our own vision, even when we do not we have one. People live in accord with how they see the world. From the influence of our visions we model our behaviors, which then influence whatever environment we are in. The environment (this includes people) adapts and then expects these behaviors from us. It calls forth what we have been and tends to hold us within the pattern of behavior that we originated. The world we operate in thus becomes normalized and we have a grooved path that encourages us to continue the same behaviors. So who and what we are matters. But what we embody is a choice we can make. We can make a fundamental choice, and new behaviors will follow. The context in which we live and work will then call forth new behaviors.

We can control who we are. The transformational state is not a fixed and final state. We can become inner-directed and other focused for a time. We can be on the journey of collective fulfillment and then fall back to an outer-directed and self-focused stance. We can, for example, move to the path of intense achievement or to some other path. Yet the more often we make fundamental choices and experience transformational power, the more our basic character changes and the more likely we are to stay on the path of authentic living.

When we change ourselves we change the world.