COURSE SYLLABUS

Exploring Change at Work Course

Explore why change matters and how individuals and organizations respond by learning proven strategies to navigate transitions successfully.

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/courses/exploring-change-at-work



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Course Outline

Module 1: What is Organizational Change?

- Define organizational change and why agencies evolve across structure, strategy, policies, procedures, technology, and culture.
- Differentiate planned versus emergent change and the role of organizational change management.
- Identify internal and external forces driving change and connect change to mission, vision, and strategic goals.
- Discuss benefits of change, including relevance, innovation, skill development, and improved morale.

Module 2: How Does Change Impact People?

- Explore typical emotional responses using the Kübler–Ross Change Curve (denial → acceptance) and related productivity effects.
- Recognize root causes of resistance (e.g., low trust, uncertainty, self-interest, lack of know-how or urgency).
- Compare reactions—active/passive resistance, compliance, and advocacy—and their workplace implications.
- Create personal strategies to embrace change for professional growth.

Module 3: What Does Successful Change Management Look Like?

- Explain why structured change strategies are needed and why many initiatives fail.
- Survey process-focused and people-focused models (Kotter, Lewin, PDCA, McKinsey 7S; ADKAR, Nudge, Satir, Bridges, Change Curve, Maurer).
- Identify common obstacles (employee/middle-management resistance, weak sponsorship, poor leadership, inadequate planning).
- Apply mitigations: clear communication, participation, strong sponsorship, training, metrics, and continuous improvement.

Module 4: How Can a Leader Successfully Manage Change?

- Avoid common leadership pitfalls (vague rationale, one-way messaging, leader invisibility, underestimating impact).
- Develop leader qualities that drive positive results: vision, communication, empathy, adaptability, decisiveness, integrity, accountability, collaboration, resilience, and continuous learning.
- Design a change communication plan using the 5Ws plus WIIFM/WDIMTM.
- Use two-way, multi-channel communication: prepare for resistance, listen to feedback, encourage participation, and reinforce key messages.