

SUCCESS STORY

# Building Resilience to Enable Positive Change



Minnesota Change Management Network (MNCMN)

**INDUSTRY:**

Consulting

**CHALLENGE:**

*A PriceWaterhouseCoopers survey of global executives found that half of executives did not believe their culture is adaptive enough to respond positively to change.<sup>1</sup>*

PWC RESEARCH

**SOLUTION:**

Adaptive Mindset for Resiliency

## OVERVIEW

The mission of Minnesota Change Management Network (MNCMN) is to provide opportunities for learning, networking, and the exchange of ideas among change management professionals in the greater Twin Cities area. With that in mind, more than 30 change executives and consultants came together in June 2015 for two workshops focused on Building a Resilient Mindset. The workshops utilized TRACOM's Adaptive Mindset Profile and curriculum. It focused on how Mindset can support change efforts including:

- Productively dealing with change in the workplace
- Overcoming the natural tendency for people to fear and resist change
- Managing stress to achieve accelerated, positive change
- Understanding our individual strengths and weaknesses related to resilience

## THE CHALLENGE

Research studies have shown that the vast majority of change efforts don't achieve success<sup>2</sup>, with failure rates at 70–75%. This low success is because organizations too often focus primarily on the process of change at the expense of the people that will actually determine the success. IBM found that “changing mindsets and attitudes” is the single most significant challenge when implementing change projects, far ahead of process, resources or technology.

IBM has been studying change for more than a decade. In 2014 they released their latest study “Making change work . . . while the work keeps changing” with a number of insightful findings. This survey<sup>3</sup> of almost 1,400 individuals responsible for designing, creating or implementing change found:

- Only 20% of respondents are considered successful in managing change
- 87% said not enough focus is placed on managing change in critical projects
- Only 40% believe they have the right skills to successfully manage change
- Only 49% of organizations hold their leaders accountable for effectively managing change

A previous IBM report looked at the challenges facing change projects and showed that people-oriented factors were significantly greater than process factors.<sup>4</sup>

But there is a growing recognition of how to address people's natural, biological aversion to change. And change management professionals such as members of the MNCMN are leading the way in how organizations deal with both negative and positive change.

"Organizations recognize that the pace of change has increased through technology and globalization," says MNCMN executive director Sara Lykken. "And they're committing resources to turning change into a competitive advantage. TRACOM's Building a Resilient Mindset workshop provided our change professionals with a new set of tools for achieving positive change."

The workshop included change professionals from leading, Minnesota-based Fortune 500 companies as well as independent consultants who have embraced proven change strategies to help organizations large and small. It was facilitated by certified instructors from The TRACOM Group, the leading provider of Social Intelligence assessments and training.

## THE SOLUTION

Discussion throughout the workshops and a post-workshop survey found that attendees see a strong connection between resiliency skills and the success of change efforts. Respondents were unanimous that the training "will increase the likelihood of success for a change initiative" and understanding the training's "resilience concepts helps people deal with the emotions that often accompany change."

As one attendee said "making people aware that they are wired to have a negative response to change helps them feel more responsible and in control. They can learn strategies to respond positively."

Other attendees appreciated the insight gained from completing their own Resiliency Assessment. "It's always hardest to look at your own issues and this gives an opportunity to look through a different lens."

While change affects an entire organization, successful change starts with leadership. MNCMN's Lykken emphasizes the role that senior leaders must play in effective change programs. "Top executives must both communicate the realities behind change programs and embody the behaviors they want to foster. They also need to focus their energy on the people side of the equation to help their employees adapt their mindsets and attitudes about change."

Lykken's advice should be taken seriously by leaders seeking change. A study by consulting group Right Management found that "when employees reported change was not handled well in their organization, they were overwhelmingly (94%) likely to become disengaged."<sup>5</sup>

*Resiliency is a key factor in preparing an organization and employee base for the often overwhelming and paralyzing effective of corporate change.*

WORKSHOP ATTENDEE