The Everyday CHANGE Community Toolkit

BUILD A CHANGE COMMUNITY AND IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S ABILITY TO CHANGE FOREVER

WELCOME

If you want to know how to create your very own change community then you are in the right place – this has been written for you.

If your organisation has a lot of change going on, people who work in change but are geographically or departmentally separated or working in silos, a need to upskill your people to better manage change, or issues with trust and communications regarding change, then a change community can help address all of these.

I've seen and felt the power of connections, of bringing people together and empowering them to make change better. I honestly cannot tell you what an incredible impact a change community will have on the individuals working within change, as well as your organisation's ability to successfully manage and implement change long term, if it is done well. It's incredible. And I know about this stuff because I've been there and done it...and wrote the book, or in this case the Toolkit.

Working in change can be lonely. It can be hard, frustrating, isolating. I've felt it. And I've seen others go through it...and that's when it's going well! Being part of a community of like-minded people can turn that experience on it's head. I've experienced it myself. It can provide meaningful connections with peers, support and motivation when things get tough, as well as the benefit of collective wisdom and new ideas.

In the same spirit as The Everyday Change Playbook, this has been written to pass on everything we know about change communities. In Chapter 3 of the Playbook, we advised you not to underestimate the power of community during change, and here I'm going to walk you through how you create your own change community and harness this power.

In this Toolkit you have access to checklists, videos and templates you can use to give you support, inspiration and to save you re-inventing the wheel.

- Step-by-step guide
- Content for building your case to get permission to get your change community started
- Templates for launch communications
- Outline intranet site layout
- Terms of Reference
- Membership process
- Welcome email draft
- Suggestions for themes
- Event checklist
- Event communications
- Pitfalls to avoid

Let's make the magic happen!

LET'S MAKE THE MAGIC HAPPEN!

JAN.

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PART 1: BUILD IT

WHAT IS A CHANGE COMMUNITY?

A change community is simply a group of people who have an interest in change and they want to get better at it. In this case, its within your organisation.

Developing a change community will help you create a group of empowered and capable individuals all over the organisation who have the skills, confidence and connections to help drive change forwards, but in a way that is sympathetic to the organisational context.

I'm not talking about the kind of communities that meet to spout bullshit to each other about how successful their most recent project was, when everyone knows if you scratch the surface, you'll find out they are using a hell of a lot of poetic license when they call it "successful".

I mean the groups where people are honest, open and supportive. They get to the nitty gritty, sharing their issues honestly, collaborating to find solutions, really supporting each other in trying to make things better.

These communities can help build trust and collaboration where previously there was suspicion and division. They can improve the knowledge and skills of an entire group of staff just through the sharing of the existing experience within the organisation, without any need for additional investment. And even if individuals aren't getting support within their own team directly, they find confidence and empowerment within the group.

There is immense power in this. And this Toolkit will help you harness it.

WHAT IT IS

- A group of people with a common interest (aka practice) who want to get better at doing it
- Owned by people who are themselves part of the group
- A place to be collaborative and share best practice and experience
- There for the people in the group to shape and use to help themselves improve as required
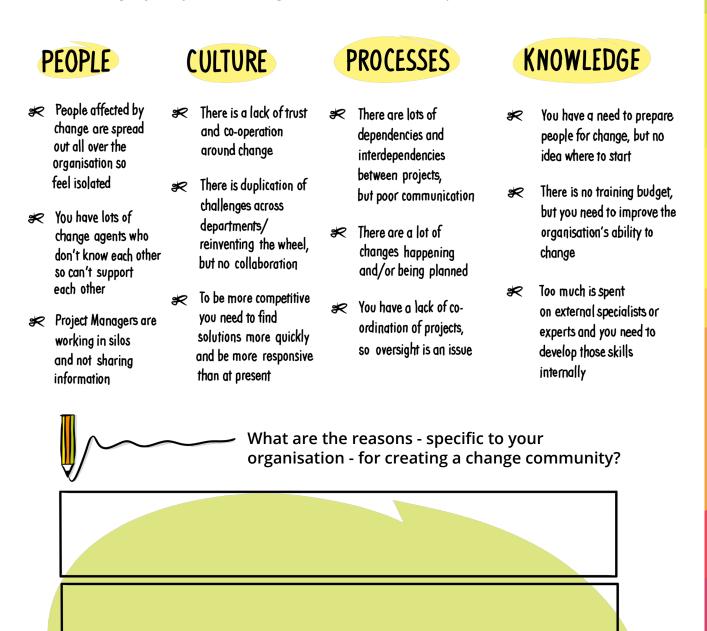- Responsive, supportive, empowering, collaborative, optional, free & powerful

WHAT IT ISN'T

- For everyone and anyone
- A place to moan and complain, but not try to make things better
- A platform for an organisation to instruct or direct staff on what to do or how to behave
- A tool to reinforce bad behaviours or organisational myths
- Mandatory, controlled, fixed, costly & directive

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HOW TO START

Now you know what a change community is (and more importantly, what it isn't), how do you get started?

First off, think about why you want to create one at all – what is going on in your organisation that you think this a change community could specifically help address? What challenges are you facing that a change community could help resolve? To get your juices flowing, here are some examples:

PEOPLE

- People affected by change are spread out all over the organisation so feel isolated

- You have lots of change agents who don't know each other so can't support each other

- Project Managers are working in silos and not sharing information

CULTURE

- There is a lack of trust and co-operation around change

- There is duplication of challenges across departments/ reinventing the wheel, but no collaboration

- To be more competitive you need to find solutions more quickly and be more responsive than at present

PROCESSES

- There are lots of dependencies and interdependencies between projects, but poor communication

- There are a lot of changes happening and/or being planned

- You have a lack of co-ordination of projects, so oversight is an issue

KNOWLEDGE

- You have a need to prepare people for change, but no idea where to start

- There is no training budget, but you need to improve the organisation's ability to change

- Too much is spent on external specialists or experts and you need to develop those skills internally

What are the reasons - specific to your organisation - for creating a change community?

WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?

You know why you are doing this, so it's time to think about what you think this will look like for your organisation, what will define success?

Consider what success will look and feel like from different perspectives e.g. from an individual working in change, to their manager, to the organisation itself. And don't forget yourself in this!

Describe the impacts this will have once it's up and running.

Create a short paragraph for each, but try and link it back to the reasons you have for creating a change community in the first place – what will it look and feel like when those issues have been addressed?

For example...

Staff feel empowered to input into improvements within the organisation and they are gaining knowledge, confidence and resilience

Managers can see the confidence, attitude and enthusiasm of their staff improve, and the results are improving as more project benefits are being realised

ONCE OUR CHANGE COMMUNITY IS IN PLACE

More projects are being delivered successfully and staff are collaborating and sharing information more effectively

There is a wider positive engagement with change throughout the organisation

Size doesn't matter

Please do not make the size of the community one of your success indicators - it's almost irrelevant. The size of your community will depend on the size of your organisation, how many of those people are interested in or involved in change and the culture of your organisation. It will vary as it develops as well.

The most important thing is the value it delivers to its members and the organisation. Focus on supporting the people who are members, not on getting more and more people to take part. Think quality over quantity.

Having said that, don't shut people out – it doesn't matter what their job role, responsibilities or seniority is. Keep membership open, as you will need different people at different times to address different issues. The community needs a diverse representation to provide a spectrum of perspectives.

Anyone and everyone who has an interest or involvement in change in your organisation can take part, regardless of role or responsibilities.

Find your flock

So, on the topic of people, think about the individuals in your organisation who will take part.

We are all human and we work with other humans (mostly anyway!). The connections we make with other people are a big part of what drives us, in and out of work. We don't change for a strategy. We don't do things differently for a vision statement. And we definitely don't make things better because the project plan said to!

And what about you? Sometimes you probably feel like you are on your own with this stuff, especially when you are the one leading the change. It's ok – that's normal. But just because it's normal for this stuff to feel a bit isolating, that doesn't mean it has to be.
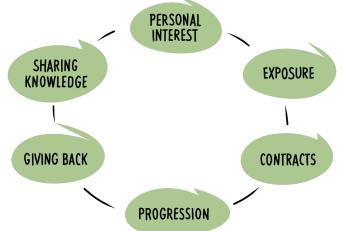
You are not alone - there are ALWAYS others who are dealing with the same stuff. There are individuals or small groups of people (not necessarily just those directly in project management) dotted all over your organisation.

Yeah, you can see and hear the wave of people who might be against a particular change all too loudly, sometimes it can feel like it's any change at all (it's not – trust me). But there is another group, a quieter group, who are not only supportive, but can be your greatest allies. They are quiet right now because they get shouted down, they feel like they are on their own, and they've been labelled as trouble makers. These are the people who see the issues that need changing and raise their head above the parapet to point them out or suggest what could be done about it. They often get told "no, sit down, don't rock the boat, stop being disruptive". The phrase they hear most often is "we tried that before and it didn't work". After a while this gets pretty miserable and they either leave or give up. Neither is a good outcome for the organisation.
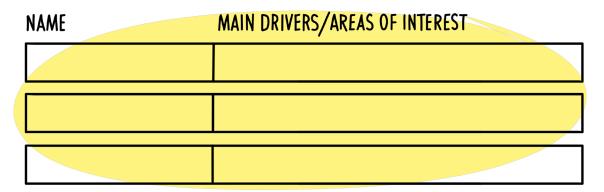
> These disrupters are your people. These are the people that will help by being the very core of your community. The change agents. This is your flock.
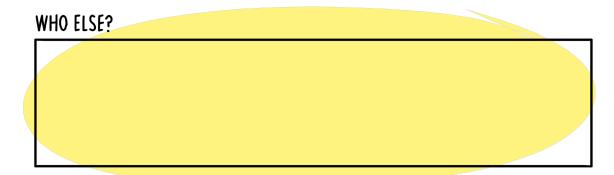
So, identify who those people are. The exact number will depend on your organisation. You probably know several of them already, so jot their names down and think about how you are going to approach them and get their buy-in. You probably won't have to do much convincing with these guys, but consider what's in it for them? This isn't cynical - individuals are driven by different things, and if you know what would get them most interested in supporting the community you need to focus on that.

PERSONAL INTEREST

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

EXPOSURE

GIVING BACK

CONTRACTS

PROGRESSION

Who are the main individuals you need on board?

NAME	MAIN DRIVERS/AREAS OF INTEREST

There will also be others, who you don't know yet. But you'll know their job titles, or their departments, projects or programmes. Create a list of those as well, even if it is just a list of job titles at this point. These might include project managers, programme managers, change managers...or you may have roles that are specific to your organisation. They are the people currently involved in initiating, managing and implementing change. This list won't completely encompass everyone who will eventually be part of your community, but it's a damn good starting point.

WHO ELSE?

Build it and they will come

OK. We are getting there! We've explained who will be part of it, but how will a change community be delivered in your organisation? Do you need people to meet in person? Or would something online work better for you?

I always advocate in-person events where possible, because I don't think anything can really replace meeting people face-to-face. But there are often good reasons why this isn't feasible, or simply doesn't fit with the way your organisation works.

A mix of both might work best. Plus, different types of events attract different types of people, and diversity is great. So, don't be afraid to mix it up a bit.

To start with, something online might work best. Its minimum commitment for people, so low risk, and will likely be easier for managers to approve if it takes the least time out of the day. Once the community is more established you might want to try getting people together in one place now and again.

The first theme

Choosing what the first discussion topic is going to be is vital. You need to think about this up front, as it'll help people sign up to the idea if they can relate to the initial theme. It needs to link directly to at least one of the main reasons you want to start a change community in the first place. And it absolutely must be relevant to the people you are going to invite.

My first change community event was designed to help connect people working at a project management level within the organisation. There were lots of opportunities for more senior people to meet e.g. sponsors and directors, but none for the people "doing" the work to meet. And they needed to – there were loads of dependencies and interdependencies that needed managing, but they didn't know who each other was, or how to address the issue.

I created a speed-dating type event. I asked each of the project teams which other project(s) they had most interdependencies with, then I matched them. It was a very big excel spreadsheet! The event itself was crazy (but great) – each team had a few minutes with each other, just enough to do introductions and outline their commonalities. When their time was up, I blew a whistle (my favourite bit!) and they moved onto the next team.

It was fast, fun and hit the mark. People left with a buzz, as well as the connections they had previously lacked. It meant the interdependencies they had previously been struggling with were easier to manage, and their managers could see the benefits almost instantly.

This was a one-off event that addressed a very specific need. The next event I did was completely different, as it was focussed on tackling something else entirely.

Yours will be different too. But if you design something that addresses a real and current issue and has an immediate impact, you are onto a winner.
For some inspiration, take a look at the videos you have access to as part of the Toolkit that talk through different themes you could consider e.g.

- Resistance to change
- Change fatigue
- Engaging sponsors
- How to rock the boat and stay in it

Once you've got an idea, run it past some of the people you identified earlier as "your flock" to get an idea of how it will land. Listen to what they say & ask them for their input. The more collaborative and relevant this first event is, the better.

Getting permission

Now you are ready to ask if you can do it. You know why you want to do it, who you want to take part, how you are going to deliver it and what it's going to tackle first.

Personally, I prefer to ask for forgiveness than permission. But sometimes you need an official "yes" before you can jump in, and this is one of them.

It can take a bit of convincing to get the-powers-that-be to sign off on something that sounds a bit intangible, a bit fluffy even. Why should people be given permission to take time out to go to something that isn't necessarily directly impacting their role, or that doesn't produce something specific? Especially if things are tough and people are already working so hard?

Step back, or rather flick back, to the first couple of sections and re-visit why you wanted to create a change community in the first place. You know this is going to be worthwhile and that it'll be a damn good use of people's time, ultimately making your change better long term. You know all the other benefits that the community will bring. These are good enough reasons in themselves, but make sure your reasons tie into the main challenges your organisation is facing.

There is probably one single thing – what is the "big issue" that is getting in the way of successful change in your organisation right now? What is it that's keeping your Board up at night? You need to identify that one thing that gets everyone nodding (or rolling their eyes!). Then clearly articulate how the community will help address this. You might need to so this on an individual-by-individual basis, or from different perspectives, as different people/departments have different priorities.

What helps convince some people is that it's essentially "free". Yes, it'll take some of your time, and it'll take up some time of those participating, but there is no financial outlay for the organisation. You can do the majority of this in-house and if you need external input, you'll find many people who are happy to contribute their time for free. Especially at the beginning, you really don't need to spend anything.

The pitch

Don't use jargon or fancy words. Just explain it as you would to a mate in the pub. But be prepared, people will want to know things such as:

LIKELY QUESTIONS	HINTS TO HELP	YOUR ANSWERS
What is it?	Give a really short concise answer	
Why now?	Explain your timing and why you want to do it now	
Why your team?	Explain why its appropriate that your team leads it	
How will it help address the one big issue your Board is worried about?	Be specific – this is the crucial bit. Here you need to let your enthusiasm and belief in the community show. Don't be afraid to create a mini-story describing the big issue and how the community will help resolve it (think benefits increase, improve, decrease, reduce)	
What other problem(s) will it address?	Continue the story here, make it specific to your audience and look long term as well as short term	
Who is it for?	Name individuals if appropriate, as well general job titles/groups	
How much will it cost?	Its free!	
What will it be like?	Describe your first event and then the potential for others	
What do you want from me?	To give permission to try it/to give staff permission to attend and participate/attend an event	
When is it going to happen?	You don't necessarily need an exact date, but you'll need a rough idea of when you are aiming to kick things off	
How will you know if its succeeding?	This is the "what good looks like" section.	

LIKELY QUESTIONS	YOUR ANSWERS
What else?	

We've provided templated slides you can use to help your pitch as part of the toolkit

You will need to work within your organisations processes and hierarchies. It may be a single individual who needs to say yes, or it might be several boards and groups you need to persuade before you can finally actually do it, and they will have different priorities and agendas.
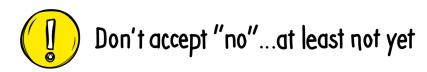
If it's the latter, create a mini communications plan before you get started – your core messaging will be the same, but you may need to adjust it slightly for specific groups.

If you aren't sure, try and meet with someone who is part of the group beforehand, find out the temperature of the water and what their main priorities and concerns are before the official meeting date. Ideally, get this person convinced before the meeting so there will be at least one person in the room cheering you on before you start.

BOARD/INDIVIDUAL(S)	PURPOSE OF BOARD/GROUP	MEETING DATE	MAIN MESSAGES

At this point you don't need everyone to think this is a great idea. But you do need the authorization to go ahead and get it started. So, when you come across the sceptics, the ones you need to convince, just ask for a chance – even if that's approval to try just the first event to start with. The proof is in the pudding. We know this from experience. And we know this stuff works, so be confident.
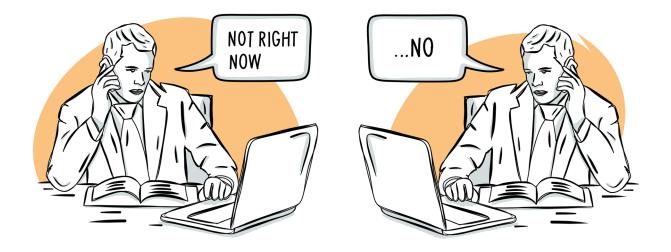
What's not to like? It's free, it's got huge potential benefits, it's a no brainer. Now, get yourself on the agenda for each of these meetings and go for it.

⚠️ Don't accept "no"...at least not yet

You might get push back. In fact, expect push back. Challenge is good – it helps you make your proposal better.

You might get a "not right now".

You might get a flat "no".

That's absolutely fine (I know it doesn't feel fine!). Maybe your pitch wasn't quite right. Maybe it isn't a good time. Ask for the reasons why. Take those away and work out how you can address them & then go back with a better pitch, at a better time. Never take the first "no"...or even the second or third!

We have seen the results and the impact a change community can have and whole heartedly believe they add huge value to how well an organisation delivers change. So don't give up if you get resistance, address the concerns people raise and it'll make your community even better.

PART 2: SETTING IT UP

In the previous section we walked you through what a community is, you identified why you want one and you got permission to do it (nice work – never doubted you would).

Now you need to get it up and running. Don't worry, this section is going to walk you through the best way to get started.

By starting, we don't mean you've got everything in place. You don't need a big launch, a gorgeous intrant page, cupcakes or balloons. But exactly how you get going is up to you. It will depend on what you think will work in your organisation and what is appropriate at this moment in time.

We would suggest a soft launch, where you start slowly and build from there, adjusting your approach as you go. This allows you to feel out your audience and see how the land lies. You can get the main players involved and they can help you design it. That way you get buy-in from them early doors and they feel ownership of it – which is how it should be, the community is run by its members, for its members. You just get to pull it all together (which is a beautiful thing).

Your role

Have you thought about who will actually lead it?
Is it you? Or is it someone in your team?

Before we go any further, take a moment to consider your role in leading the community. You are there to bring people together, to listen to their issues and concerns and respond to them. You may need to identify themes yourself, but the members should be suggesting themes and telling you what they need help with. You can then find relevant speakers/activities.
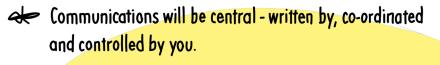
You might need to do this yourself – you might need to be brave and talk about a mistake, a failure, a challenge. You might need to tell your own story. It'll be worth it. You need to create trust and one of the ways of doing this is being authentic, open and honest yourself. If you relate it to the theme or challenge being discussed, you can open the floor to others to do the same.

The community has to be a place where people can share things openly and honestly, and be vulnerable in sharing when things may have gone wrong without fear of ridicule or repercussions. This hard to do. It takes courage.

Be brave. It starts with you.

So think about your theme and think about what kind of introduction you are going to do (yes, you!). Think about what experience you can share. Set the tone with your own honesty and enthusiasm.

Consider how you (or your team) will run it logistically too:

- Communications will be central – written by, co-ordinated and controlled by you.

- Events will be organised and run by you.

- Membership information is gathered and held by you.

- Budget or spend belongs to you. This should be zero, or minimal, but it sits in your department.

Yes, the community is for its members, but it needs to be co-ordinated centrally. And that role is yours.

Time and Date

This might seem trivial, but its crucial. It doesn't matter how much someone wants to come to your event, if they can't make it because they are doing something else.

Choose a date that doesn't clash with any major business processes or times when groups of staff are tied up elsewhere. This includes peak holiday times.

Consider the day of the week too. Mondays and Fridays don't work. Trust me.

And make sure its during normal working hours. This should be treated like any other sort of training and not an add-on to a normal working day.

Having said all this, you know your organisation best. So do what you know will work best. And once you've got a few events under your belt, you can try something different – you'll probably get a slightly different audience, which is always worthwhile.

Your main messages

In Part 1 you identified answers to questions people would ask when you were seeking permission. You can adapt that now, and improve it now you know more, to create your main communication messages:

What it is	
Who it's for	
What its designed to do	
Who is supporting it	
Your first event	
How you join	

Use these messages in all your communications going forwards, so the messaging is the same throughout. Repetition is the best way to get recognition and familiarity amongst your audience.

Community Membership

In my experience, the best approach to membership is to keep it open, but provide benefits to those who actively "join" i.e. anyone can attend events or use the information on the intranet site, but if people want to receive invitations to future events and be included in communications, then they have to sign up to be a member.

You do not need to respond to everyone's problems all at once! If you get to a certain size, you can run sub-groups to address specialist issues. But for now, if someone wants to take part then they can.

They don't even have to be an official change community "member" to come to community events. The community is open and inclusive, don't shut someone out because they don't have a specific job title – you don't know what influence they might have or what input they can offer.

However, through membership, they get to tell you what their issues, concerns and challenges are. Your job is to respond to what they need. Obviously, you can use it to disseminate information when its relevant, but its push and pull, not just push.

To do this well, you need to know who your membership is. They don't have to commit to taking part in anything to become a member, but they do need to give you their email address so you can tell them about what you are doing and ask them for their opinions (they don't have to commit to responding though).

In return, they will receive invitations to future events and other relevant communications.

An easy way to do this is for people to send an email simply requesting to join, or once it's set-up, add a "Join" button on the Intranet page that should generate an email that can be used to create a membership list.

Have you considered what information you want from members? The list should contain basic information such as name, job title, department, email address.

The email address list can then be used to send emails to the whole group, or it can be separated out by job title or department for more specific mailings.

Once you've received a request to join, reply with an email welcoming them to the community and pointing them to any useful resources, and promoting your next event of course. .

You should also consider creating a Terms of Reference.

Draft text for your email communications & draft Terms of Reference are provided separately as part of this toolkit.

COMMUNICATIONS

Now you need to let people know about the community, sign up for membership and most importantly the first event.

Use the standard internal communications methods used by your organisation.

You don't need a logo, a brand or anything else fancy. You just need your main messages out there. So meet with your internal comms team if you have one, and ask for their help. They are the experts and will at least be able to advise you. Use as many of these communications methods to promote the community, especially at the beginning as awareness is essential. Spread the word anyway you can.

Some of the "standard" communications methods to consider include:

NEWSLETTER

Your organisation probably has a news section on its intranet home page or in its newsletter. Promote the launch of the community on it, as well as advertising the individual events.

There may be departmental newsletters depending on the size of your organisation, some of which may be perfect for you to promote the community on as they are aimed at specific people e.g. project managers.

We've provided draft text you can use for this as part of the Toolkit.

INTRANET

Create an intranet site/page for the community. This is the "home" of the community, a place anyone can come to find out the info they need and sign up to events.

You can direct people to it from your other communications, and it can sit as part of your department's site - or somewhere else, as long as you have access to it and can update it easily.

We've provided a draft layout and welcome page text as part of the Toolkit.

Also, look at your organisations intranet. Is there anywhere else appropriate you can promote it? There may be an events section, where you can promote each event individually, or an area already dedicated to change?

EMAIL

Email is your friend. Especially if your audience is geographically dispersed. But please don't overdo it! Too many communications will put people off. Keep it simple, keep it relevant, keep timely.

We've provided draft text for a launch email as part of the Toolkit.

There may be email lists you can use to contact groups of staff, so find out. Jump on departmental emails if appropriate.

WORD OF MOUTH

Encourage people to invite their colleagues to events – this is the most effective way to build your community. This could simply be a line at the bottom of your emails/invites suggesting they forward it onto any colleagues they think might be interested.

Also get your change agents to spread the word within their networks.

Choosing and briefing your speakers

Choosing speakers can be tricky. In my experience, the most effective speakers have practical experience as well as expertise in the topic at hand. They can be internal or external – one of each can work really well, with the external speaker providing an outside view and a more general level of knowledge, followed by the internal speaker who can relate it to the specific organisation, its culture and even specific projects. They can make it personal, by talking about the topic, how they have been affected, what they have done and what they have learnt.

For external speakers, find those people in relevant associations, institutes, on Linked-In, even people like us...people who will support you, "get" what you are trying to do, and understand the challenges you face. Many will do so for the price of the train or a coffee, so don't pay unnecessarily for speakers.

Brief your speaker(s), whether they are internal or external, so they understand the tone, the audience and the interactivity preferred. Also – and this is important – make sure the content is presented in the context of your organisation. It has to be relevant to your organisation and audience.

And give them a time limit.

The First Event

You've got your theme, your date, your speakers, your venue. Your promotions have worked and you've got a list of people who want to attend...now you actually have to deliver it!

Tips

1. **Confirm who is attending.** You need people to let you know if they want to attend so you can plan. So your call to action on all your event communications is to contact you to secure a place. You can do this via email or use an application such as EventBrite to gather attendee information. You need an idea of numbers as a minimum. You can then send them a confirmation email with further details about the event and confirming they have a place.

2. **Set an agenda.** I don't mean a long list of individual items, but give a brief outline of what will be covered, when and by whom. This is not your standard meeting, so don't make it feel like one, but people like to know what they should expect. Think about what outcomes you want and how you want people to feel. Keep it brief and share it a couple of days beforehand.

3. **Include a break.** If it's in-person. And make it a decent length of time. Provide tea and coffee. Your people want to connect at these events, do a bit of networking and catch-up with people they don't normally see.

4. **Do the welcome yourself.** You are the face of the community – it's you they will hear from most. If it's not you, who is it? Set the tone. Reiterate what the community is, why it's being created and who it is for. Tell people you will share slides etc. so people can be free from taking notes. And tell your story, brave soul.

5. **Include a mix of activities.** Make it interactive. No one wants to be talked at for ages. It's fine to have someone speaking, but not for an hour! Make sure there are opportunities for feedback, questions, group or individual activities (if appropriate).

There are some ideas for ice breakers included as part of this Toolkit.

6. **Think about what people will see, hear and feel.** If its in-person, do you need signposts? Do you want music (don't dismiss this out of hand, it sets the tone)? Do you need name badges? What about tea and coffee when people arrive? Do you want them to sit where they like? Are pens/paper/sticky notes etc. needed? If it's online, think about what people will see onscreen. Do you want everyone's cameras on? Do you want everyone's faces onscreen all the time or just the presenters? How do people ask questions? Can people make typed comments?

7. **Think about take aways.** I'm not talking about Friday night pizza. Is there anything people can take away with them? Not a naff flyer about how great the community is, or even a cake (although don't underestimate the draw of free cake!) more like a link to a specific tool or book, or something else they can use in their role?

8. **Ask for feedback.** Always ask participants to feedback how they found the event (you can do this formally or informally). Ask what went well, as well as what didn't. And always ask what topics should be covered in future. Thank them for their input and remind them that this community is for them.

9. **Send a follow-up email.** Reiterate the above and ask for any feedback, suggestions and future topics. Share the slides and tell them about the next event, if you've got one lined-up.

10. **You said, we did.** Take the feedback onboard and incorporate it into your future events. You will need to adjust what you do in response to the feedback from the community, to make sure it continues to be something that is useful to them.
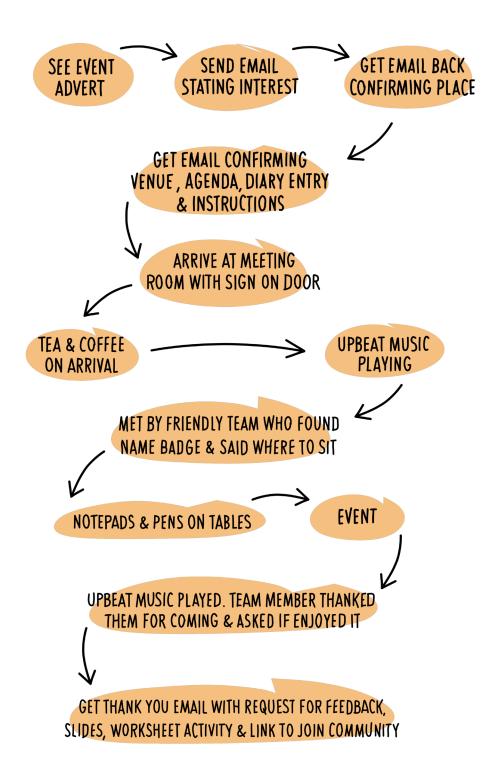
ACTIVITY

Try putting yourself in the shoes of those attending your event. Walk through the process from their perspective, from when they see the event advertised to when they get the thank you email post-event. This includes where they need to go, do they know what to expect, what happens when they arrive/log-in, etc.

Example for an online event:

SEE EVENT ADVERT → SEND EMAIL STATING INTEREST → GET EMAIL BACK CONFIRMING PLACE → GET EMAIL CONFIRMING LINK TO JOIN, AGENDA, DIARY ENTRY & INSTRUCTIONS → CLICK ON THE LINK TO JOIN → SEE WELCOME SCREEN → EVENT → GET THANK YOU EMAIL WITH REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK, SLIDES, WORKSHEET ACTIVITY & LINK TO JOIN COMMUNITY

Example for an in-person event:

Do the same from the perspective of your speakers. This helps you ensure you've planned as much as you can, eases the stress of worrying you have forgotten something, and helps your event run as smoothly as possible.

What if it doesn't work?

Issue - No one signs up

Considerations
- Re-visit your communications
- Is it being promoted in the right places?
- Are the messages right?
- Is someone blocking it?
- Speak to people you thought would sign up and see what they say

Issue: It's too big

Considerations
- Is the membership right?
- Are the right people attending events?
- Look at splitting it into smaller groups or sub-groups
- Does it matter?

Issue: It's too small

Considerations
- Is the membership right?
- Are the right people attending events?
- Is it adding value to those who do attend?
- Re-visit your communications
- Does it matter?

Issue: We can't find a theme

Considerations
- Look at the videos in this Toolkit for inspiration
- Ask your change agents/core members for suggestions
- Identify a theme yourself and run with it (someone may object, but offer their suggestion)

Issue: We can't find any speakers

Considerations
- Ask your change agents/core members for suggestions and/or to speak themselves
- Are there experts internally?
- Get on Linked-In and look for specialists
- Check your contacts list

PART 3: SUSTAINING YOUR COMMUNITY

You've delivered your first event; you are planning the next one and are slowly generating a membership list. But how do you keep building it and keep it fresh?

The key is relevance. Make sure your topics respond to the issues your audience is facing. Mix up delivery methods, locations, levels of interactivity. Different things will appeal to different people. But the absolute key is that the topics being discussed (and resolved) are relevant.

Intranet site content

The intranet site is the main point of contact for members. It can develop to be more useful as your community matures. Think about how you can add more value to members, this could include:

- Change-related vacancies within the organisation
- Role descriptions for change-related jobs
- Further development opportunities such as external accreditation
- Links to external events such as the Association of Project Management or Change Management Institution events in the region
- Opportunities to find a mentor within the organisation
- Change Champions section/sub group
- Events designed for teams to address specific issues/challenges

Horses for courses

Not every event or every activity will be relevant or timely for every member. No one has to attend or take part in everything. The community will only work if its valuable to its members. So let people cherry pick what they do, and make it easy for them to do so.
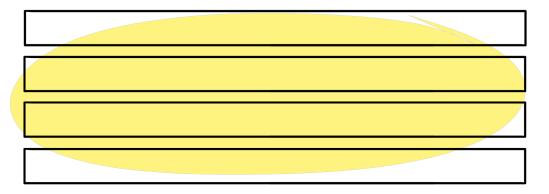
Membership

In future, more information can be added to your membership list, such as specific areas of interest, events attended, qualifications etc. so you can further target your communications. There are lots of possibilities, but don't overcomplicate it.

Over time, you can create a membership list that enables you to really understand your audience, improving relevance and helping you spot areas where you can offer value to the organisation.

For example, a mature change community I managed gathered voluntary information regarding the relevant qualification's individuals held (making sure to adhere to Data Protection regulations). It provided a perspective on what qualifications people had, where there might be gaps and the different levels of knowledge within the organisation. It gave a view on how mature the organisation was in regard to change and where it could improve this, plus meant emails regarding specific developmental events could be sent to people who would be more interested, and reduced the amount of "spam" emails sent out to the community as a whole.
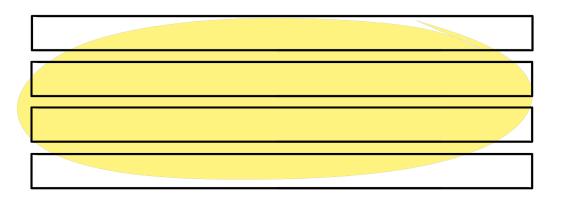
What additional information could you glean from the community to help your organisational change maturity long-term?

Sub-groups

As your community grows, you might be able to identify sub-groups with specific interests. You can run mini-events specifically for these groups, or simply put them in touch with each other and they will likely manage it themselves.

Have you identified any potential special interest themes e.g. Agile, Systems Thinking, etc?

The community changes as the organisation changes

Think about how the community can evolve and add value as your organisation and change mature. This will look different for every organisation, but the community will need to change as the organisation changes. This may mean it expands, or that it shrinks at times. It might mean more or less events. But if it doesn't it adapt and change, it will not stay relevant.

How do you stay relevant?

Never stop asking...

- What are the big organisational issues?
- What do your members want?
- What are their challenges?
- What do they need?
- What are they interested in?
- How do they want to do it?
- When do they want to do it?

...never stop listening.

Finally

We wrote this Toolkit to share what we know about creating one. By using it you should have managed to get your own community started.

With the Toolkit you also have access to:

- **Checklists** – to help you manage your progress
- **Videos** – to suggest potential themes
- **Ice breakers** - to help you get your events off on the right foot
- **Templates** – to save you re-inventing the wheel, especially with regards to communications

If you need more going forwards, we can help you iron out any issues you are having getting it off the ground, taking it to the next level, or we can speak at one of your online events.

We are with you when you need us. But you've got this.
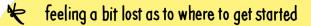
EVERYDAY CHANGE

Everyday Change is not-quite-a consultancy

Why? Because it has all the talent and none of the fuss, with an open optimism that your experiences of change can be positive and should always be centred around being better. And the best bit?

It's all about you.

Everyday Change was created for you and others like you for the days when you're…

- trying to create change in teams and organisations
- feeling a bit lost as to where to get started
- struggling to find the real problems and priorities
- wanting to create something brilliant, but lacking direction

and you're in the right place, if you'd like to do it with a bit of little umph.

Check us out or get in touch!

WEBSITE: WWW.EVERYDAY-CHANGE.COM

BOOK: THE EVERYDAY CHANGE PLAYBOOK

SOCIAL: LINKEDIN

EMAIL: HELLO@EVERYDAY-CHANGE.COM

A bit about Jan…

I have worked in both the public and private sectors, in roles within sales, marketing, risk, project management and change management. A qualified change practitioner, change has been my focus for several years, most notably working at The Open University as part of the award-winning Portfolio Office team.

LET'S MAKE THE MAGIC HAPPEN!

JAN.

My favourite thing about change is the power of communities and storytelling in terms of how they simply make your change more accessible, real and generally better. I love exploring the psychology of change, and how it relates across disciplines, organisations and people.

My world starts with my husband and son in Milton Keynes (but originally from Birmingham so my Brummy twang runs strong) and I hang out with Everyday Change as a consultant working with people like you, to make your change less shit.