

Editorial

Javier Bajer

Farewell change management

Today we say goodbye to a very dear friend, companion of so many of our projects, initiatives, jobs, careers and, for many of us, our *raison d'être*: our ever-faithful and loyal *change management*. We will miss you dearly.

We will miss the absolute certainty and predictability that you always represented. We will remember when we always had a clear starting point (the unquestionable “As Is”) and worked with the top team (or even the entire organisation, if there was sufficient budget) to articulate an even clearer destination (our “To Be”).

We will sincerely miss always having a defined gap, a journey, a process, milestones and checkpoints, key sponsors, train-the-trainer cascades and most important of all: the KPIs. I remember how much we loved having tools that helped us measure progress along intricate but exact timelines (for which our gratitude goes to Mr Henry Gantt, whose discovery has been keeping us on track since 1910).

We will definitely miss having to convince large groups of people to “join the journey” using a combination of burning platforms, boiling frogs, evangelistic best practices and the forever-celebrated case studies, which we temporarily “borrowed” from authoritative business schools. In the good old days of change management, we also had early adopters and late laggards, change curves and taxonomies, steps and models. What lovely memories!

Gone are the days when we could simply enrol a team of motivated “change agents” (or change champions, which was even cooler) asking them to bring everyone on board. We would then have people singing from the same hymn sheet, rowing on the same boat or any of the other metaphors we were able to utter without having to hide a chuckle during our roadshows.

Change management, we are sorry to have to say goodbye to you. We have had many amazing years together, and we are very grateful for the excellent job you have done for us all this time.

But today, things have changed a lot. We are never too certain of where we are, and even less certain of where we need to go. Today, we are needing to change how we deal with change. We are instead going to have to put our efforts into charting new territories, finding new ways of adding value and trusting that those who truly care will instinctively be navigating too, without having to wait for someone else to manage their change.

Farewell change management. Welcome courageous exploration.

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