



Compelling Conversations Are Crucial To Thriving On The Challenges Of Change

By Gary Edwards & Ian Berry



Change is all around us.

In some way every conversation we have every day is about change.

Some believe that change can be managed and that we can persuade people to change.

We say change cannot be managed. We believe change is a process.

People are beyond being persuaded to change. Persuasion means that they don't really want to change, but feel as though they have no choice.

Instead, people are looking for a compelling reason to change - a vision and a process that they can embrace and get behind with enthusiasm.

When an argument for change is persuasive, the person can say Yes - but might only do so because they believe they have to.

Yet when an argument for change is compelling, they can't say No - and they don't want to.



There

*Stress is caused
by being here
and wanting to be there.*
Eckhart Tolle



Here

To inspire people to live in the moment and change in their best interests we must become compelling communicators and conversationalists.

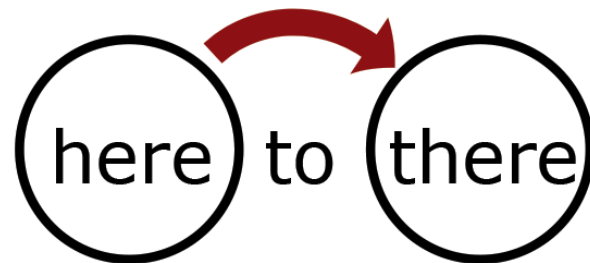
In this paper we explore several ways to be and do and suggest actions that you can take.

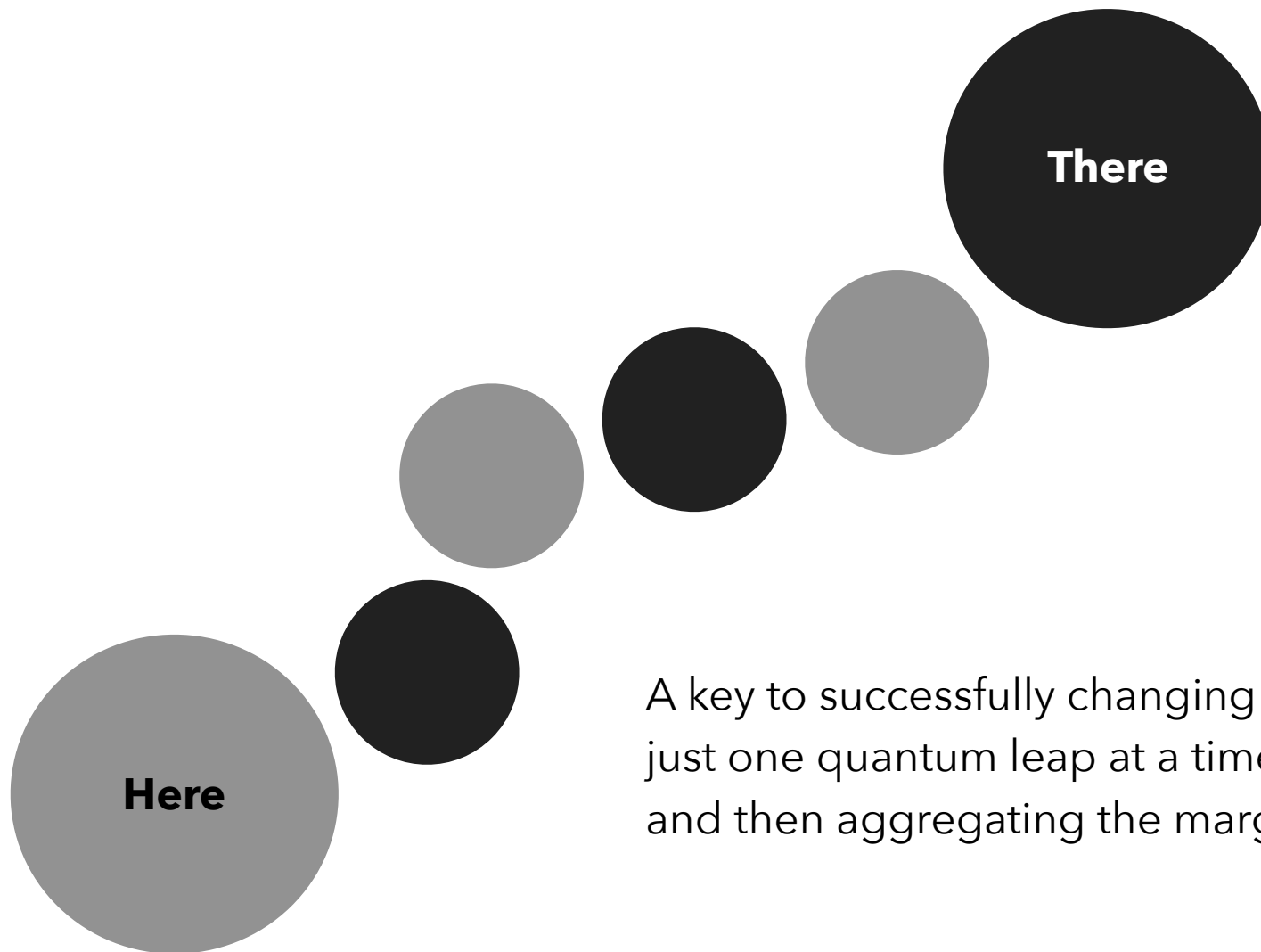
We also suggest a quantum leap and aggregation of marginal gains approach.

Common misconception:

A "quantum leap" does not mean a big jump, even though many people use it that way.

In fact, it's an infinitesimally small change, but the key is that it's a direct jump from





A key to successfully changing is shifting just one quantum leap at a time, and then aggregating the marginal gains.

We often think that people fear change.

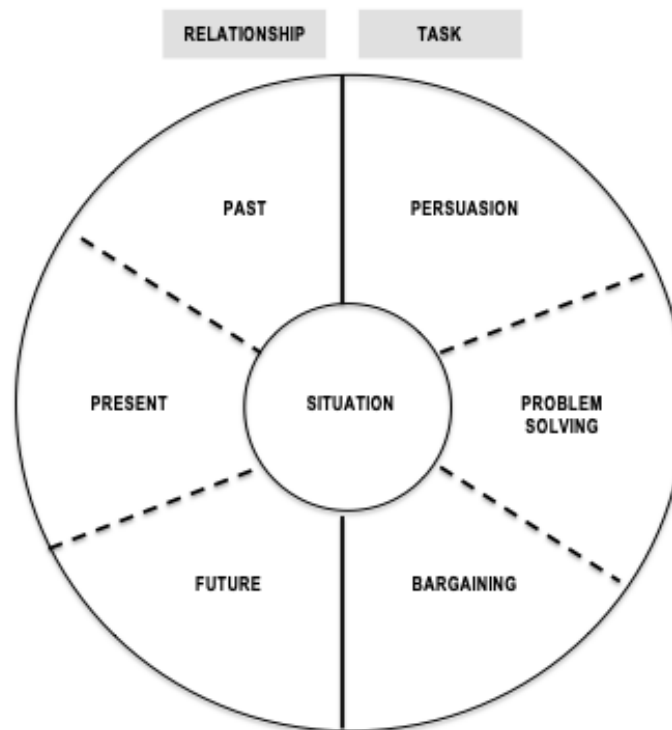
Yet that's not quite true. If the change is very positive for them, they'll embrace it.

People don't fear change, they fear the loss that the change might bring, and they fear being changed.

People want to know that they won't be worse off as a result of the change. They want to be involved in how the change is made – they want a choice and a sense of control.

Every conversation has two aspects: the Task (should we do this thing?) and the Relationship (are you someone that I can trust?)

Gary's model below addresses both of these aspects. Each aspect has three components, and each component has two key things to consider which we explore from the next page.



TASK

Persuasion

Persuasion is about trying to convince someone that they should do something. On its own, it can backfire. But it can have a positive role to play in building a compelling case for change.

There are two ways to do this:

- **Positive persuasion** – all the positive reasons why people should do what we are suggesting: it will be good for us, we'll make money, it's the way to go. Anything that says "It's a good idea."
- **Negative persuasion** – all the "negative" reasons why people should do something: we have to, it's what the rules say, if we don't someone else will. Anything that says "You/We don't have a choice."

TASK

Problem solving

People don't resist change because they don't have enough facts – they resist it because they are afraid of loss, so they have concerns about where the change might lead.

As a result we have to address two things:

- **Concerns** – concerns hold people back from agreeing to a change. In most changes, people are worried that they are going to lose something. This could be something tangible (money, time, market share) or intangible (face, ego, position, power). We need to understand their concerns and work to address them.
- **Interests** – while concerns hold people back, interests drive people forward. As long as people don't feel that their concerns outweigh their interests, they will look to see what they can gain from a situation. Like concerns, interests can be tangible or intangible

TASK

Bargaining

It is easier to get people to take a small step than a large one.

One way to do this is to offer them something in return for taking that step – to enter into a bargain with them. It usually takes the form of “If...then...” – “If you do X then I’ll do Y”

In thinking how to do this, we need to take into account what people:

- **Want** – what they would like to get out of the situation. These are not essential, so they might be prepared to trade some of their wants in return for what they...
- **Need** – the essential things that they must get. Things that they can't live without if the change goes ahead.

RELATIONSHIP

Past

Your existing relationship, that you have built up over time, is a major factor in whether people will agree with what you are suggesting.

It is therefore important to spend time building that relationship. There are two things to consider:

- **Building** – have you taken the time to build the relationship with the people you want to embrace the change? If not - time to start!
- **Maintaining** – building is not enough on its own: we must pay attention to the state of the relationship over time, and take regular steps to maintain it - and repair it if necessary.

RELATIONSHIP

Present

Even if you have built a strong relationship up until now, at the point that you want to ask someone to change they may still not be sure that what you are suggesting is right for them.

We need to make sure that the other person feels comfortable having the change conversation.

- **Respect** – to ensure that the other person feels safe to have the conversation, we need to show respect for their point of view. We have to reassure them that we truly want to listen to them - that we are sincerely interested in what they have to say, and that their opinions and thoughts are important to us.
- **Common goal** – to overcome any fear the other person may have that we are trying to talk them into something they don't want, we need to reassure them that we both have a common goal – a solution that works for both of us.

RELATIONSHIP

Future

In considering whether to agree with your vision for change, people want to know - how will this work? What will it look and feel like over the short to medium term? People want to know that they will be supported through the change, and that you won't just walk away from them once you have their agreement.

To do this well, we have to reassure people about two things:

- **Process** - what is the process from here on? What does the short term future look like - the next week, two weeks, month, six months?
- **Review** - how can the other person stay involved? Ensure they understand that you are open to feedback at any time, and agree on a date to review how things are going. Be specific about the date for a review, so that they have a level of certainty and don't feel as though the review might never actually happen.

Executive Summary

- 1) Use positive and negative persuasion.
- 2) When solving problems address concerns and interests.
- 3) Identify wants that could be traded to meet needs.
- 4) Be always building and maintaining relationships of high value and mutual reward
- 5) Show respect for the other person's opinions and work towards a common goal you can both live with
- 6) Ensure a certain future by sticking with an agreed process and making sure that reviewing progress is built in.

5 Possible Actions

- 1) Take the pulse check on the next page and get feedforward from people you trust on your next moves.
- 2) Approach others in a spirit of collaboration.
- 3) Build in formal after-action-reviews to all your key working relationships.
- 4) Integrate changes with what is already working well.
- 5) Get help.

Compelling Conversations Pulse Check

Please place an X where you are now and a ✓ where you believe you need to move to

	Good i.e. basic standards of performance are being achieved	Great i.e. above average; better than basic	Remarkable i.e. "conspicuously extraordinary"
Task - Persuasion (using negative & positive).			
Task - Problem Solving (addressing concerns & interests).			
Tasks - Bargaining (fulfilling wants & needs).			
Relationships - Past (building & maintaining).			
Relationships - Present (respect & common goal).			
Relationships - Future (following process & reviewing progress).			



Action 2) Approach others in a spirit of collaboration.

Detail a relationship you want to improve in your life/work.

Then list how you can change or modify your commitment, finding common ground, how you make connection, the regularity and kind of contact you have with the person you want to improve your relationship with.

These are the key processes that lead to an improved relationship.

Action 3) Conduct formal after-action-reviews. Below is Ian's proven process.

After-action-reviews are a game-changer because while every detail is still fresh in people's souls, hearts and minds is really the only time to effectively review performance. This is why all the great sports coaches get their teams in the room privately straight after the game and before they speak with anyone else.

Process:

- 1) Review one action at a time and answer the following questions what happened and why? What did we learn, relearn, and unlearn? How can we be better, wiser and more valuable in applying these learnings? Who will we become? What will we do next?
- 2) Determine with your colleagues how your answers will be integrated with what is already working well for you.
- 3) Upgrade your individual, team and organisational plans-on-a-page accordingly.
- 4) Reflect new perceptions in appropriate standard operating procedures, policies and practices (SOP's).
- 5) Upgrade learning and development materials.

Action 4) Integrate changes with what is already working well for you

Ian's proven process:

- 1) Choose one new perception to be integrated with one thing that is working well for you.
- 2) Decide who will be doing the work and how progress will be made visible.
- 3) Agree on a deadline for the integration.
- 4) Do an after-action-review of the integration.
- 5) Repeat.

Action 5) Get help

Gary and Ian regularly conduct a complimentary seminar on Compelling Conversations and why they are crucial to thriving on the challenges of change. They also provide workshops (3 by 70 minute sessions online) for private clients and as part of an online master-mind group.

To learn more

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and visit <http://www.ianberry.biz/online-and-in-person-events/> and <http://www.ianberry.biz/possibility-leadership-program/>