

Making change last: Four pillars against old habits

Adaptive module

~20 min

Most transformations don't fail at launch; they fail to anchor: six months later, old practices return and metrics slip, and barely one in eight truly lasts. The most neglected stage, making change last, is at the heart of this module: four concrete pillars that make change hold, and the deepest lever of all, the story the team tells itself about its ability to last.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 01 Understand why transformations collapse at the anchoring stage, six months after a successful start.
- 02 Anchor change over time through four pillars: rituals, managerial consistency, recognition, and measurement.
- 03 Maintain the dual stance, anchored and flexible, so that a successful change doesn't become rigid.
- 04 Work on the team's collective story about its ability to make its changes last.

WHO IT'S FOR

Managers and teams who have launched a change and want to make it last.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

- 1 **Self-assessment:** on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
- 2 **Expert video:** 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
- 3 **Practice scenarios:** the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
- 4 **Dated commitment:** one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
- 5 **Memo to download:** key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- The 4 pillars of anchoring change – Afthonios method (coaching), inspired by Kurt Lewin's "refreeze" phase and by Kotter, *Leading Change* (1996)
- Role modeling – McKinsey's influence model
- The Afthonios framework of 5 causes of collapse after launch

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Bain & Company, *Transformation & Change Survey* (2024, more than 400 executives): 88% of transformations fall short of their original ambition
- McKinsey, "The science behind successful organizational transformations": success is 5.3 times more likely when leaders embody the change themselves
- McKinsey, "Changing change management": about 70% of change programs fail
- John P. Kotter, "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail," *Harvard Business Review* (1995): in more than a hundred companies observed, eight recurring mistakes cause change to fail, including declaring victory too soon and failing to anchor change in the culture