

Change Readiness Scorecard

Every year, leaders are faced with developing and delivering on a plan. And while some change initiatives are more ambitious than others, like a merger, reorganization, product launch, or division realignment, all goals are about change.

The question is: Are you ready for change?

Research from McKinsey, Google, Harvard, Prosci, and others tells us what differentiates successful change initiatives from the majority that fail. The good news is that when organizations do get it right, 96% report improved and sustained performance*, so these criteria not only indicate what might be missing, they also show you how to get there.

Rate yourself 1–10 on each. Be honest. Research shows leaders consistently overrate their own effectiveness during change.

1. SHARING YOUR STORY AND WHY IT MATTERS

The Power of Narrative Inspiration

Do you have a clear, compelling story about why this change is happening, where you're going, and why it matters — that you're actively sharing across the organization?

★ **Research:** Clear, ongoing communication can more than triple change success rates. Company-wide change efforts are 12.4x more likely to succeed when senior managers communicate continually about progress. Nearly half of transformation leaders later say they wish they'd spent more time communicating.

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2. WHAT KIND OF LEADER ARE YOU?

Power or Force?

Are you and your senior leadership team visibly living the changes you're asking others to make — not just announcing them?

★ **Research:** When leaders role model the behavior changes they're asking others to make, transformations are 5.3x more likely to succeed. Yet while 86% of employees say their company's values are clearly communicated, only 44% say those values are consistently demonstrated, a gap that erodes trust during change initiatives.

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3. A PYRAMID OR A CIRCLE?

Integrating Everyone

Are the people most affected by this change actively involved in shaping it — not just being told what's changing?

★ **Research:** Without engaging line managers or frontline employees, only 3% of transformations succeed. With frontline initiative, success rises to 71%. With both frontline initiative AND frontline ownership, it reaches 79%. Organizations where at least 7% of employees have ownership of results are twice as likely to deliver positive returns — yet the average company involves only 2%.

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4. MOTIVATION: THE WHY BEHIND THE WHY

Compliance or Commitment?

Do your people have genuine motivation for this change — not just compliance? Do they see what's in it for THEM, not just the company?

★ **Research:** When people can link the overall aspiration to their own work and what matters most to them personally, they are significantly more likely to drive success. McKinsey found that when employees understand how their individual work supports the company's broader vision, transformations are 5.5 times more likely to succeed.

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5. PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Subconscious sabotage - or support?

Can people at every level voice concerns, surface problems, and challenge direction without fear of being punished or sidelined?

★ **Research:** Psychological safety is the #1 factor distinguishing high-performing teams — above talent, resources, or structure. The numbers are stark: workers in psychologically safe environments are less than half as likely to feel stressed daily (27% vs. 61%) and less than half as likely to be looking for a new job (19% vs. 41%). It's especially critical — and most often deprioritized — during times of upheaval.

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6. ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?

Emotional Energy, Joy, and Change Fatigue

Is there genuine excitement, curiosity, or joy around this change — or has it become another obligation people endure?

★ **Research:** Employee willingness to support change collapsed from 74% to 43% between 2016 and 2022. The average employee now faces 10 planned changes per year, up from 2. Change fatigue causes burnout, decreased engagement, and higher turnover. Teams that use intentional rituals and celebration show significantly higher commitment, psychological safety, job satisfaction, and lower turnover intent—and are more resilient during periods of change.

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7. IS EVERYONE ON THE SAME PAGE?

Force vs. Feedback

Would your leaders, your managers, and your frontline employees describe this change — its purpose, its impact, and what's expected — the same way?

★ **Research:** Senior leaders are 2.5x more likely than other employees to rate a transformation as successful — a perception gap that signals misalignment, not success. When transformations foster genuine understanding and conviction across the organization, they are 3.2 times more likely to outperform their peers.

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8. SUSTAINED COMMITMENT AND MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

Active Engagement

Are your leaders and initiative champions investing consistent time and visible attention to this transformation — not treating it as a side project?

★ **Research:** Success is 2x more likely when leaders invest more than half their working time in the transformation. In practice, only 43% do. Leaders most often wish they'd spent more time aligning their top team (47%) and communicating a change story (49%).

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9. FOCUSED FLEXIBILITY

Navigating the Ups and Downs

Do you have an ongoing system for tracking progress, surfacing what's working and what isn't, fine-tuning the approach, and reframing when necessary?

★ **Research:** Organizations that give people real tools to track progress, like dashboards and project plans, are 3.8 times more likely to outperform their peers. Organizations that identify underlying mindsets that need to change as early as the planning process - and continue monitoring throughout - are far more successful.

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10. THE HIGH ROAD AND THE BOTTOM LINE

Reward Beyond Results

Is this change connected to something bigger than the numbers — a purpose that genuinely resonates across the organization and gives people a reason to bring their best?

★ **Research:** Transformations that measure success across multiple dimensions — financial, operational, customer, employee, and social impact — are 1.9x more likely to outperform competitors than those focused on financial targets alone. Organizations that are highly effective at managing change see 2.6 times more revenue growth over three years than those with below-average effectiveness. When employees can connect the aspiration to their own work and what matters most to them, success is significantly more likely.

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Change Readiness Scorecard

Research Sources

Every statistic in the Scorecard, traced to its original study. All links verified August 2026.

★ INTRODUCTION

96% report improved and sustained performance. McKinsey & Company, "[How to gain and sustain a competitive edge through transformation.](#)" October 2023 (n=472). Figure applies to transformations that implemented all four elements: will, skill, rigor, and scope.

Prosci anchor. Organizations with excellent change management met or exceeded objectives 88% of the time, versus 13% with poor change management. Prosci, [Best Practices in Change Management](#) (2,600+ practitioners), 2023.

1 SHARING YOUR STORY AND WHY IT MATTERS

Triple success rate · 12.4x · nearly half wish they had communicated more.

McKinsey & Company, "[How to beat the transformation odds.](#)" 2015 Global Survey (n=1,713).

Rigorous, action-oriented transformations reported a 79% success rate, three times the 26% average. The 12.4x figure applies to enterprise-wide transformations in which senior managers communicate continually about progress. 49% of initiative leaders said they would spend more time communicating a change story.

2 WHAT KIND OF LEADER ARE YOU?

Role modeling → 5.3x more likely to succeed. McKinsey & Company, "[How to beat the transformation odds.](#)" 2015 Global Survey.

86% say values are clearly communicated, 44% say they are consistently demonstrated. Resume Now, "[The Values Gap Report.](#)" via [HRO Today](#), 2025.

3 A PYRAMID OR A CIRCLE?

Only 3% succeed without engaging line managers or frontline employees. McKinsey & Company, "[The people power of transformations.](#)" 2017 (n=1,487).

71% with frontline initiative · 79% with frontline ownership as well. McKinsey & Company, "[What successful transformations share.](#)" 2010 Global Survey (n=2,314).

7% employee ownership → 2x likelier positive returns; average company involves 2%. McKinsey & Company, "[How many people are really needed in a transformation?](#)" Returns measured as total return to shareholders in excess of a sector and geography index.

4 MOTIVATION: THE WHY BEHIND THE WHY

Understanding how your work supports the vision → 5.5x more likely to succeed.

McKinsey & Company, "[How to beat the transformation odds.](#)" 2015 Global Survey.

5 PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

The #1 factor distinguishing high-performing teams. Google re:Work, "[Understand team effectiveness](#)" (Project Aristotle, 2015–2016). Foundational research: Amy C. Edmondson, Harvard Business School, "[Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams.](#)" Administrative Science Quarterly, 1999.

27% vs. 61% daily stress · 19% vs. 41% job-searching. American Psychological Association, [2024 Work in America Survey.](#)

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6 ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?

Willingness to support change fell from 74% to 43% • 10 planned changes a year, up from 2. Gartner research, published as Cian O Morain and Peter Aykens, "[Employees Are Losing Patience with Change Initiatives](#)," Harvard Business Review, May 2023. Figures compare 2022 with 2016.

Team rituals → 23% higher commitment, 20% more psychological safety, 22% higher job satisfaction, 28% less thinking about quitting. Marilyn Zakhour, Constance Noonan Hadley, and Maya Mahfouz, Boston University Questrom School of Business, "[How Team Rituals Can Enhance Life at Work](#)," January 2025.

7 IS EVERYONE ON THE SAME PAGE?

Senior leaders 2.5x likelier to rate a transformation successful. McKinsey & Company, "[How to beat the transformation odds](#)," 2015 Global Survey.

Understanding and conviction → 3.2x likelier to outperform peers. McKinsey & Company, "[How to gain and sustain a competitive edge through transformation](#)," October 2023.

8 SUSTAINED COMMITMENT AND MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

2x likelier when leaders invest more than half their time; only 43% do • 47% and 49% regrets. McKinsey & Company, "[How to beat the transformation odds](#)," 2015 Global Survey. Leaders here means senior leaders and initiative leaders combined.

9 FOCUSED FLEXIBILITY

Dashboards and project plans → 3.8x likelier to outperform peers. McKinsey & Company, "[How to gain and sustain a competitive edge through transformation](#)," October 2023.

Identifying underlying mindsets early → 4x likelier to rate the change successful. McKinsey & Company, "[What successful transformations share](#)," 2010, and "[Getting personal about change](#)," adapted from Beyond Performance 2.0, 2019.

10 THE HIGH ROAD AND THE BOTTOM LINE

Multi-dimensional aspiration → 1.9x likelier to outperform competitors. McKinsey & Company, "[How to gain and sustain a competitive edge through transformation](#)," October 2023. Dimensions tested: financial, operational, customer, employee, social and environmental, and capability building.

Change-effective organizations see 2.6 times more revenue growth over three years. WTW (Willis Towers Watson), "[The business case for change management](#)," May 2023, compared with organizations of below-average change effectiveness.

Have questions or additional resources? Please share: Contact Brownell at Brownell@Brownelllandrum.com