Leading by Convening
Coalescing Around Issues

How People Are

Two organizational researchers, Keller and Aiken, describe some common myths about change in the business environment in their 2008 article, *The Inconvenient Truth about Change Management*. We have excerpted some key quotes and ask, "Do they apply beyond business? Is this how people are?"

For each of the following quotes conduct a Think/Pair/Share activity:

- With a partner, choose a quote that you will explore together.
- Take two minutes to read and think about the quotation individually.
- Take one minute to compose your individual thoughts.
- For one minute each, share the extent to which you agree or disagree with the quote.
- Finally, together decide, "Does the quote apply beyond business? Is this how people are?" and identify similarities or differences in your work or interactions.

How People Are (continued)

Quote 1

"Leaders are no more likely to start a social 'contagion' than the rank and file…. Success depends less on how persuasive the 'early adopter' is, and more on how receptive the society is."

I Am Thinking	Areas of Agreement or Disagreement	Similarities and/or Differences with Our Work

This quote suggests that exemplars are important; however, building broad support for ideas is just as important. We need models but cannot assume that is all we need.

Continued

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How People Are (continued)

Quote 2

"Research indicates that when employees choose for themselves (versus 'being told'), they are more committed to the outcome by a factor of almost five to one. Time communicating the message should be dramatically rebalanced toward listening versus telling."

I Am Thinking	Areas of Agreement or Disagreement	Similarities and/or Differences with Our Work

This quote suggests that practitioners need to have some involvement in implementing change. They need to decide that the change is good through meaningful interaction. Information is necessary but not sufficient.

How People Are (continued)

Quote 3

"What the leader cares about (and typically bases at least 80 percent of his or her message to others on) does not tap into roughly 80 percent of the workforce's primary motivators for putting extra energy into the change program."

I Am Thinking	Areas of Agreement or Disagreement	Similarities and/or Differences with Our Work

This quote seems to zero in on the differing pictures held by leaders and implementers relative to change. It suggests that success could be improved if leaders create processes to uncover what might drive and constrain implementers.

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