Lessons Learned in Overcoming Resistance to CMMI

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- **Successful change requires the right combination of strategy, structure, and support**

- **Your chances of success depend on your current culture, the desired end state, the resources available, the past response to change , and your ability to recognize and address resistance**

- **This presentation will provide practical approaches, tools, and techniques for overcoming resistance in your organization**

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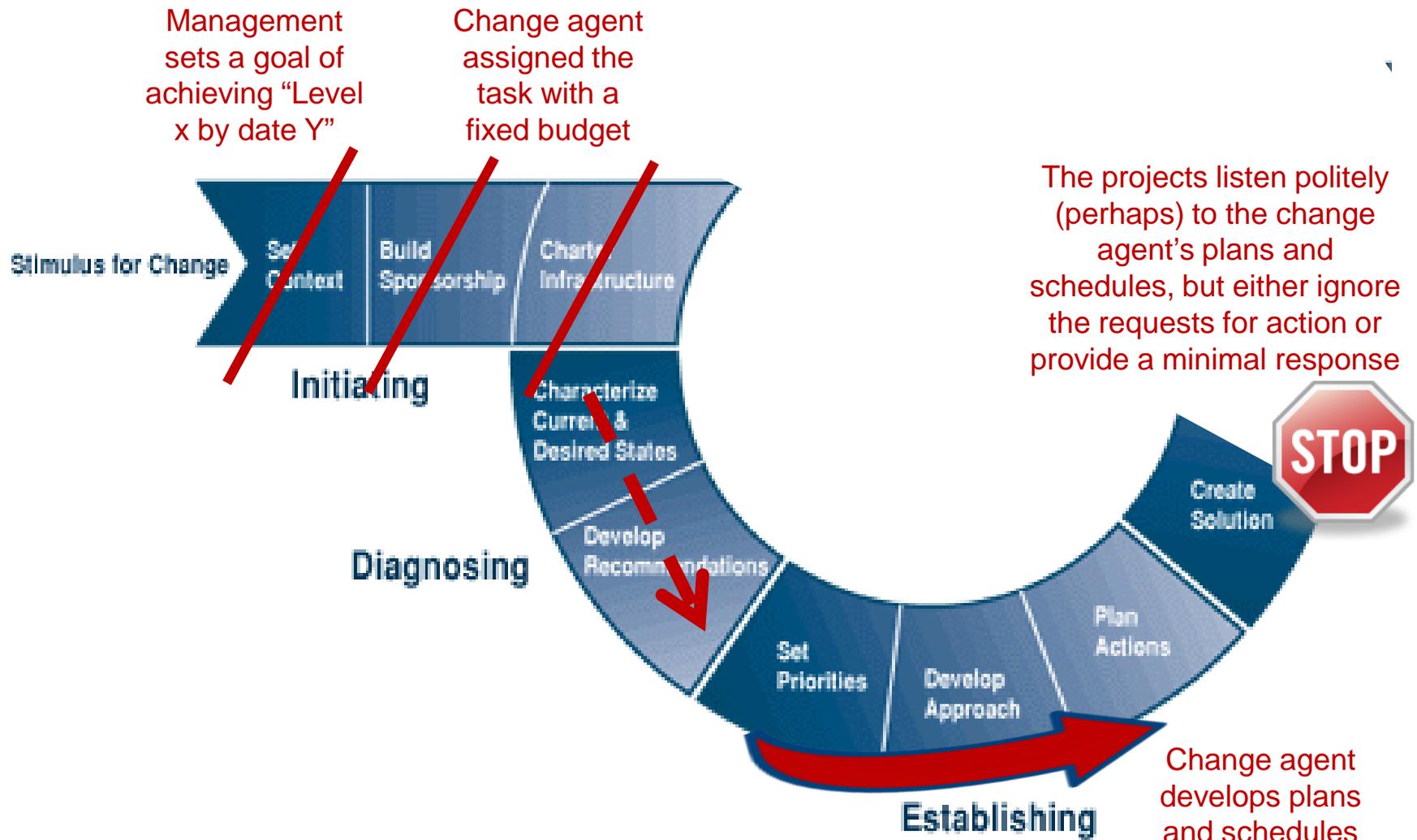
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The IDEAL^{SM} Model
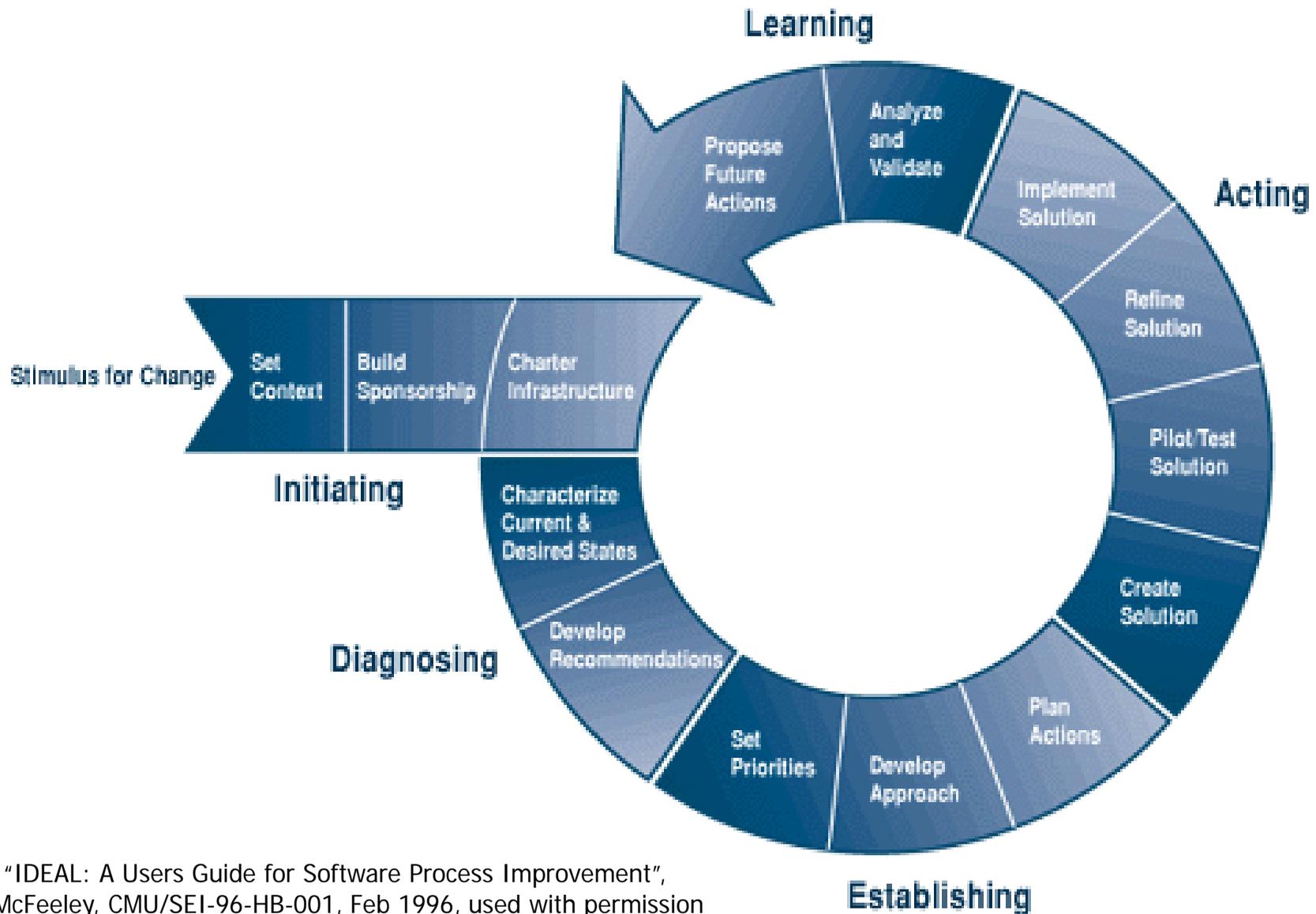
Source: "IDEAL: A Users Guide for Software Process Improvement",
Robert McFeeley, CMU/SEI-96-HB-001, Feb 1996, used with permission

The Non-IDEAL Model

Management sets a goal of achieving "Level x by date Y"

Change agent assigned the task with a fixed budget

The projects listen politely (perhaps) to the change agent's plans and schedules, but either ignore the requests for action or provide a minimal response

Stimulus for Change

Set Context

Build Sponsorship

Charter Infrastructure

Initiating

Characterize Current & Desired States

Develop Recommendations

Diagnosing

Set Priorities

Develop Approach

Plan Actions

Create Solution

Establishing

STOP

Change agent develops plans and schedules

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Topics

- **Necessary ingredients for change**
  - Why people resist change
  - Effective strategies for addressing resistance

- **Keys to leading the change**
  - Management support
  - Influence without authority

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Opportunities for innovation and creativity, learning and creating

Recognition from others, prestige and status

Being part of a group, identification with a team

Economic security, freedom from threats

Physical survival needs: food, water, shelter, etc.

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Why Do People Resist Change?

I want to stay where I am because…

    …my needs are already met here

    …I have invested heavily here

    …I am in the middle of something important

I do not want to change because…

    …the destination looks worse than where I am now

    …there is nothing to attract me forwards

    …I do not know which way to move

    …the journey there looks painful

    …the destination or journey is somehow bad or wrong

    …I do not trust those who are asking me to change

I am not going to change because…

    …I am able to ignore the change

    …I have the power to obstruct the change

Why Do People Resist Change?
Perceived Loss of Personal Power

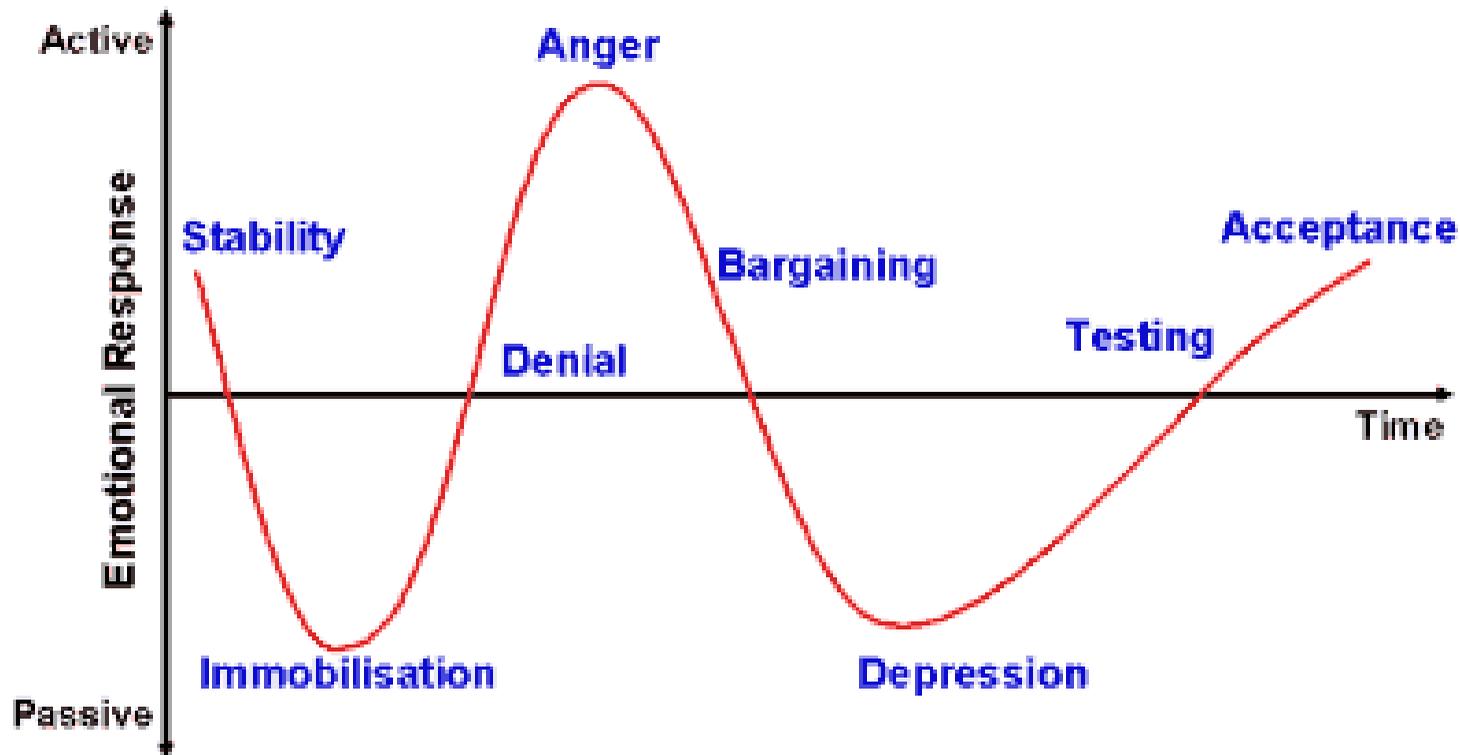Here's the new practices you need to start implementing.

so they must not be essential industry best practices!

then I've been wrong....

and I haven't been performing them....

If these are essential industry best practices...

Reaction to Change Perceived as Negative: Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle

Immobilization: Initial paralysis at hearing the bad news
Denial: Trying to avoid the change
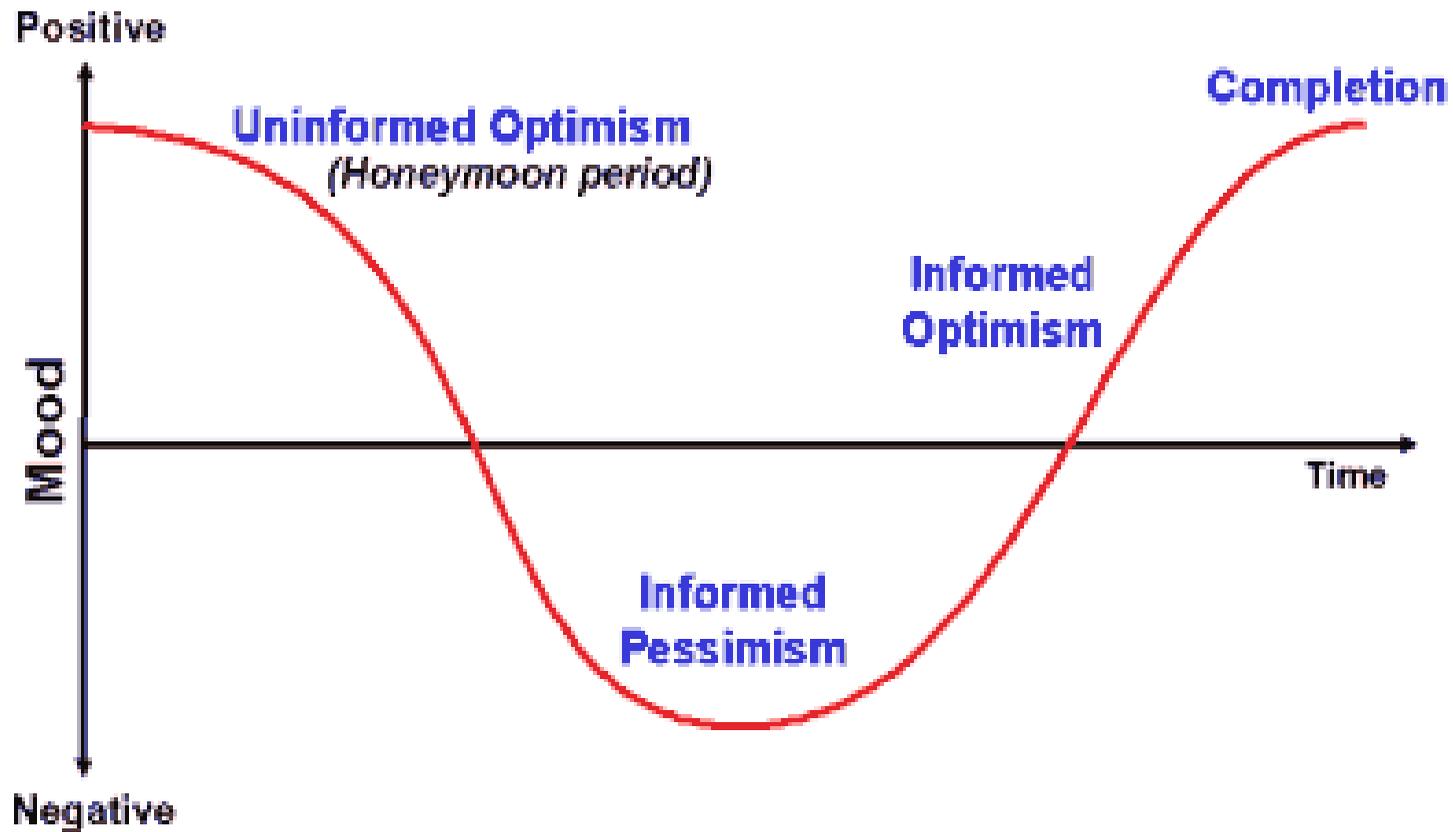**Anger:** Frustration, outpouring of bottled-up emotion
Bargaining: Seeking for a way out
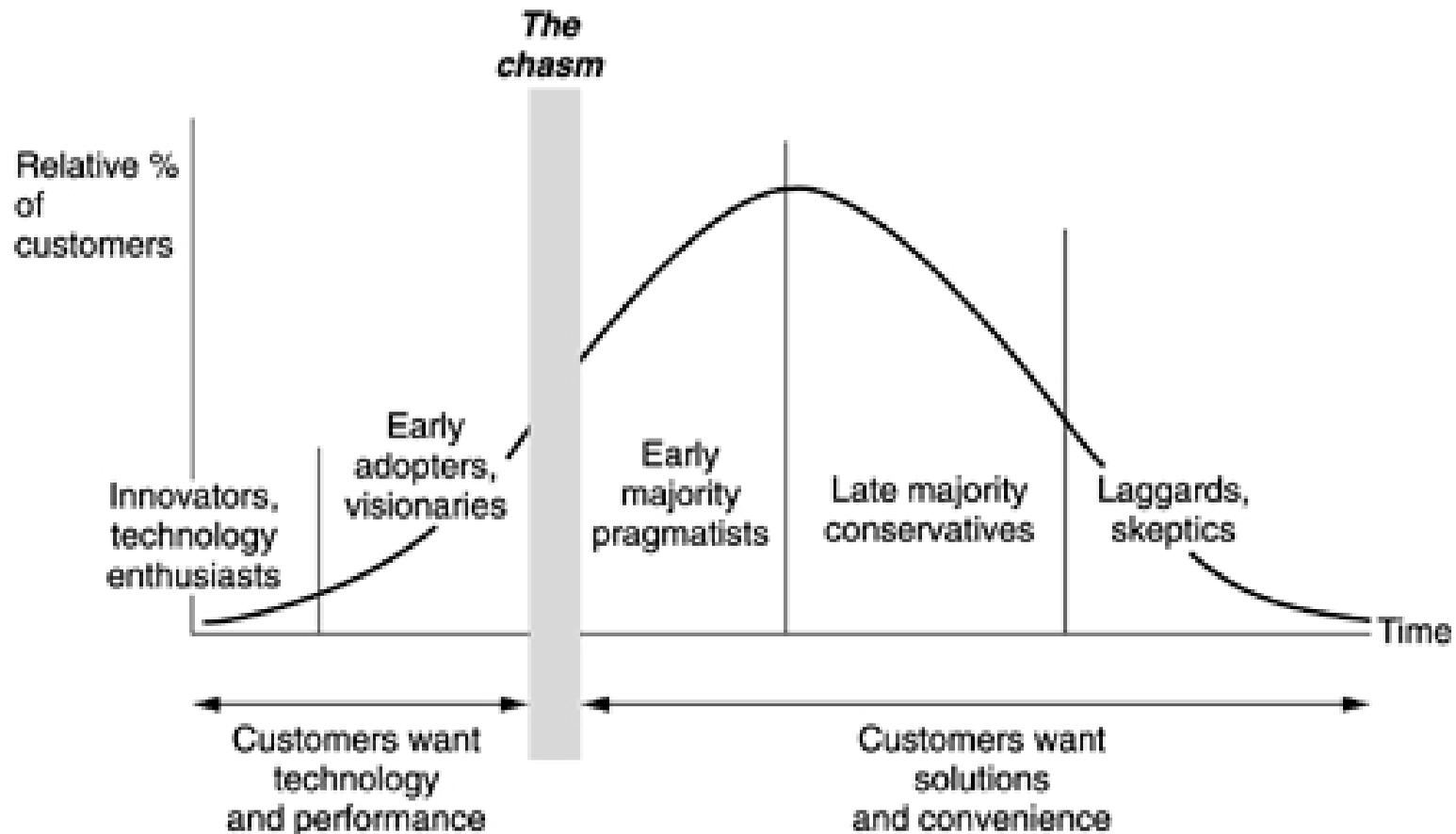**Depression**: Final realization of the inevitable
Testing: Seeking realistic solutions
Acceptance: Finally finding the way forward

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- **Early adopters are motivated by perceived benefits**

- **Late adopters are motivated by avoiding pain**

Source: Geoffrey A. Moore, *Crossing the Chasm*, 1999, used with permission

Topics

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  - Effective strategies for addressing resistance

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Different Practitioners Need Different Arguments

"Crossing The Chasm",
Geoffrey Moore

Innovators — Early Adaptors — Early Majority — Late Majority — Laggards

- (I, EA) Explain how the practice adds value
  - Identify a situation in which this value would be realized

- (EM) Where possible, provide data
  - It is difficult to find perfect data, which "proves" the value
  - Even perfect data may not convince a skeptic

- (EM) Identify others who have seen the (qualitative) value of this practice

- (LM) Couch the value in ways that appeal to the practitioner:
  - Reduced risk, addressing a customer issue, reduced workload, etc.

- (LM) Show ways that the practice can be done easily

- (LM) Suggest the practitioner try it and see

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Communicate the Key Messages

- **The change is driven by proven, industry best-practices**
  - Adoption is about learning how to apply these practices to our work
  - The practices may feel awkward and have limited value until we learn them
  - It's OK to make mistakes – we will get better over time

- **Improvement involves short-term investment for long-term gain**
  - Improving is essential to meeting our business goals

- **These improvements are an enabler (not a guarantee) of success**
  - Other aspects (people, technology, customer relationship, etc.) are equally important

- **When the entire organization is improves, everyone's job becomes easier**

- **Continuous improvement is a way of life**

Address Fear of Failure

- **The risk of change may be seen as greater than the risk of standing still**
    - Making a change requires a leap of faith

- **The perceived loss of personal power**
    - I'm seen as competent now, but in a new culture...

Effective Strategies

- **Clearly describe why the situation favors change**
    - Business goals, WIIFM

- **Make it clear initial mistakes are expected and will be tolerated**
    - Create forums for asking and answering questions

- **Show people how they can be effective in the changed environment**

Encourage and Support

- **Practitioners may feel they don't have time to learn new ideas**

- **Practitioners may need role models**
  - Most change agents don't need role models, because they easily imagine new situations

Effective Strategies

- **Ensure adequate resources during the learning curve**

- **Search out and publicize good examples and successes**
  - Set up pilot programs that model the change

- **Encourage the next step in the change process**

- **Ensure management takes accountability for action**
  - Must change short term priorities to achieve long term results

Ensure Accountability

- **Adopting and sustaining improvements is about each practitioner learning and performing the new behaviors**

- **The role of management in cultural change is to hold people accountable for the new behaviors and conduct**
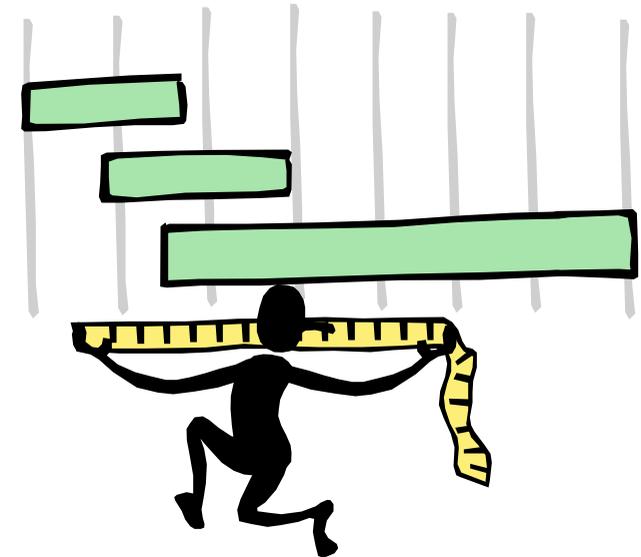
Effective Strategies

- **Change agents can enable management by:**

  – Helping them have a clear vision of the new culture

  – Identifying inappropriate behavior

  – Providing tangible, objective measures of adoption/sustainment

Help Them Accept Change

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- **People may fear hidden agendas**
  - Late Adopters often look for messages in how resistance is handled

Effective Strategies

- **Set up mechanisms for obtaining feedback**
  - Some will prompt genuine improvements
  - Some will be based more on fear and anger than substance

- **Be honest about setbacks and negative impacts**

- **Management must enforce change in the face of objections**
  - Consensus will almost never be reached
  - Communicate that objections and uncertainty does not eliminate the need for change - "The dogs may bark, but the caravan goes on."

Management Support

Management must:

- **Understand the key messages**

- **Be willing to take actions to reinforce them**

- **Provide resources to support/sustain process improvement efforts**

- **Set expectations that essential project functions will be funded and processes will be followed**

  – Project planning, estimation, tailoring, CM, QA, etc.

- **Support process improvement and sustainment, rather than passing appraisals**

- **Reward mature processes development and sustainment rather than individual heroics**

  – Tell me how you will reward me, and I'll tell how I will behave

When Faced with Unexpected Resistance

Stop

- The **natural tendency of many people is to respond immediately, with an authoritarian or angry response**

- This may generate sympathy for the resist̶ galvanize the resistance, and/or make it c̶

Look

- **Pause, assess the situation, and diffuse the emotion**

- **What is the person's emotional state?**

Listen

- **Is this a misunderstanding or a legitimate concern?**

- **What does their message say about their underlying beliefs, values, goals, perceptions, potential, triggers?**

Principles of Influence

- **All interpersonal behavior involves exchange**
  - "Paying" others for what we request; being paid for what we do
  - You have influence, insofar as you can give others what they need, in exchange for what you need

- **To have influence, you must:**
  - See the other person as a potential ally
  - Clarify your goals & priorities
  - Diagnose your ally's goals & priorities
  - Possess resources to help your ally
  - Negotiate the exchange

Possible "Currencies" to Exchange

Inspiration

- Vision
- Excellence
- Moral/ethical correctness

Task

- Resources
- Challenge/learning
- Assistance
- Organizational support
- Rapid response
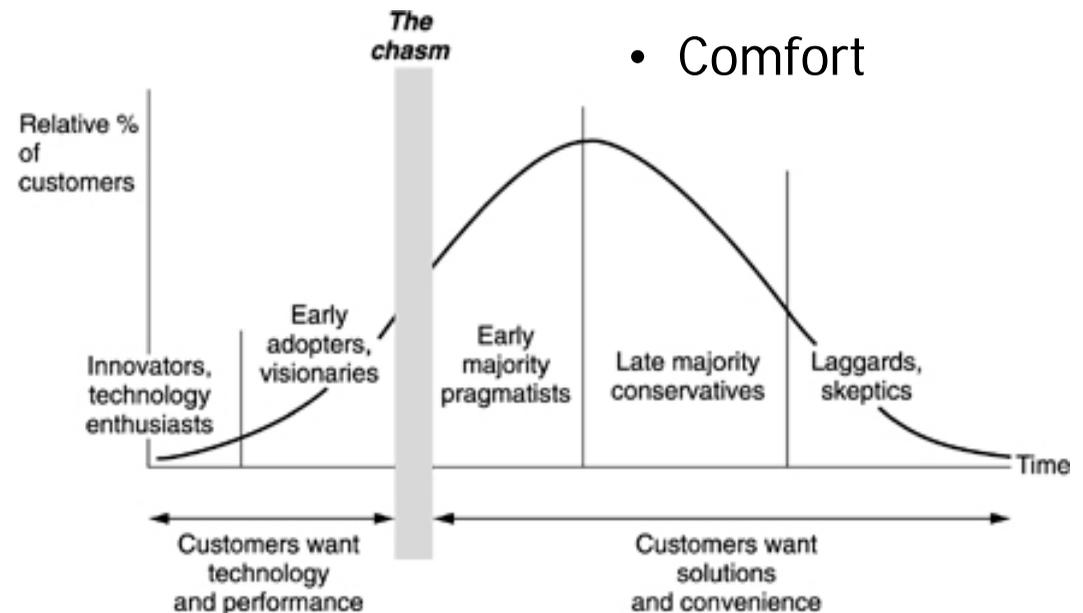- Information

Position

- Recognition
- Visibility
- Reputation
- Importance
- Contacts

Relationship

- Acceptance
- Understanding

Personal

- Gratitude
- Self-concept
- Comfort

The chasm

Relative % of customers

Innovators, technology enthusiasts

Early adopters, visionaries

Early majority pragmatists

Late majority conservatives

Laggards, skeptics

Time

Customers want technology and performance

Customers want solutions and convenience

Barriers to Seeing the Value

"Sometimes you have to believe it to see it."

- **Practitioners may not have worked in an environment where the practice was performed**

- **Practitioners may have worked in an environment where the practice was performed poorly or in a non-value-added manner**

- **Believing the practice is an improvement may require an action the practitioner is not willing to take**

  – Awkwardness of doing something new

  – Admit they've been doing it wrong

  – Loss of personal power when perceived to be an expert in the current approach

"The Fundamental Value of Every Single CMMI Practice",
R. Hefner, Wednesday, 9:15-10:00am, Mesa Verde

Summary

- **Successful change requires the right combination of strategy, structure, and support**

- **Your chances of success depend on your current culture, the desired end state, the resources available, the past response to change, and your ability to recognize and address resistance**