

## 25. Everest Model of Change

What are the main hazards of organizational change for which I need to watch out?

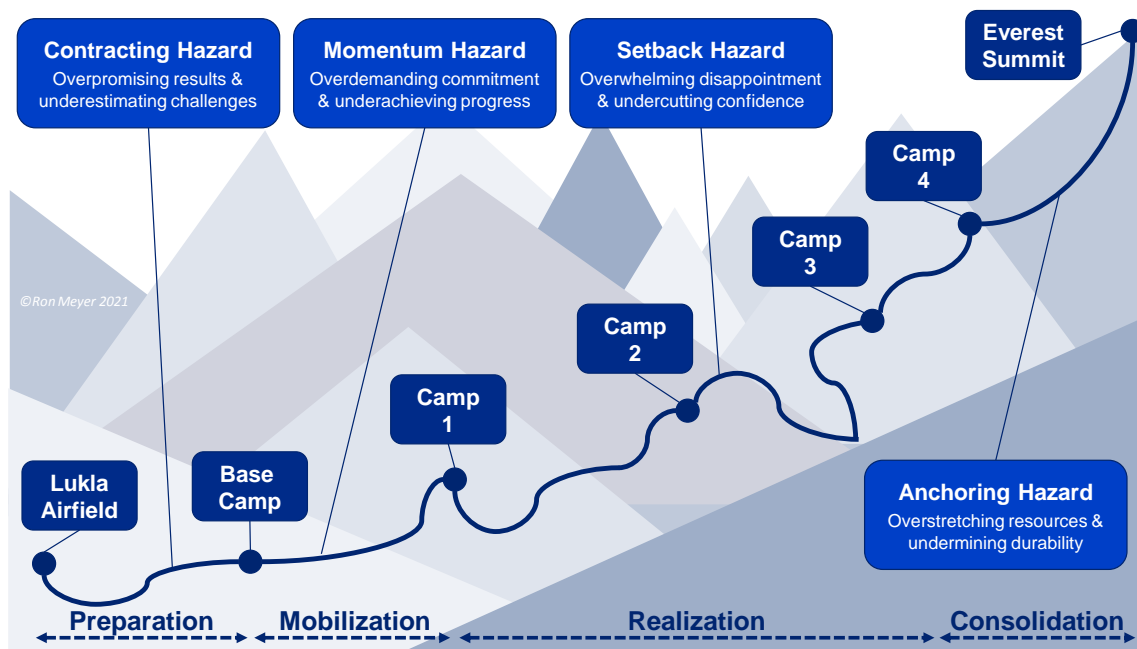
### Key Definitions

Pursuing a large organizational change is not a stroll in the park but a challenging journey from the current situation to a desired state. When going on such a strenuous expedition, you need to know both the route to be taken (the *change path*) and travelers coming along (the *change participants*). These are also called the *project-side* and *people-side* of organizational change.

As on any major trek over rough terrain, there are plenty of hazards along way. Having a *change guide*, who knows where to go and is aware of the inherent dangers, can increase the chance of successfully reaching the intended destination.

### Conceptual Model

The *Everest Model of Change* uses the metaphor of climbing Mount Everest to explain the four main hazards people need to deal with when engaging in large-scale organizational change. Climbing Everest is a major endeavor, with the same four phases as in any change project: first comes *preparation*, during which a plan is made, resources are assembled and people are readied to get started; second comes *mobilization*, during which the group launches on its path; third comes *realization*, during which the largest part of the journey is completed; and fourth comes *consolidation*, during which the change is embedded and secured, so the organization doesn't slide back into old behavior. In each phase there are multiple hazards, but one sticks out as the most treacherous to deal with.



### Key Elements

The four main hazards (one per change phase) are:

1. **Contracting Hazard.** Once the decision to climb the mountain has been made and the plane arrives at Lukla, agreement must be reached on the route and speed of the ascent

and what the team can expect from one another. This is creating a social contract – which promises do we make to each other? Later frustration isn't due to difficulties or a lack of progress, but to more difficulties and/or less progress than anticipated. Therefore, it is *crucial to set realistic expectations*. But decision-makers tend to underestimate challenges, while change guides overpromise results because they want the project too badly.

2. **Momentum Hazard.** What seemed like a thrilling adventure at Base Camp, quickly becomes a hard slog once the team starts up the mountain. As realism sets in, people begin to wonder whether they can trust each other, and the climb will be a success. If progress is slow, the sceptics will voice their doubts, further undermining confidence and commitment to the journey, potentially triggering a downward spiral. In this early part of the trek, it is *crucial to build team confidence* by showing the team they are making progress, celebrating these successes, and reinforcing belief in each other and the plan.
3. **Setback Hazard.** Making headway on the mountain will sometimes be fast and other times slow, until suddenly disaster strikes. When things go horribly wrong you are confronted with a moment of truth. Knocked to the ground, the team will either give up or pick itself back up. It is *crucial to manage disappointment*, giving room to be frustrated, but avoiding finger pointing, while getting the team to recommit to the goal and to each other. It helps if you have worked on team resilience along the way, creating awareness that setbacks are part of the process and developing the flexibility to find new solutions on the fly.
4. **Anchoring Hazard.** With the summit in sight, weariness sets in and resources become depleted. As the climb was long and exhausting, many people are satisfied enough with the result and want to quit – isn't the journey more important than the destination, they tell themselves. But stopping before the entire change is secured would put all efforts to waste. Therefore, it is *crucial to maintain discipline*, focusing the team on finishing the task. The last steps to the summit seem like details, while requiring extraordinary effort, but they are the difference between 'nice try' and 'top of the world'.

## Key Insights

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- **Change journeys are like climbing Everest.** Ascending to the top of Mount Everest is a powerful metaphor for the challenge of achieving large-scale organizational change. The climb is an arduous journey from Lukla to the summit, requiring teamwork and overcoming difficulties. The big difference is that on Everest you can usually pick your own team.
- **Change journeys are about the climb and the climbers.** The project-side of change is concerned with the *path* that needs to be followed (the climb), while the people-side of change focuses on participants (the climbers). Change guides need to watch both.
- **Change journeys go through four phases.** Moving up the mountain, the climbers go through the four phases of change: *preparation* before the start, leading to *mobilization* of the team, then *realization* of most changes, followed by *consolidation* of the results.
- **Change journeys encounter four main hazards.** Each change phase has its own main hazard: during preparation there is a danger of setting unrealistic expectations (*contracting hazard*), during mobilization the team can fail to build up sufficient confidence (*momentum hazard*), during realization adversity can lead to crippling disappointment (*setback hazard*), and during consolidation the discipline to finish can diminish (*anchoring hazard*).
- **Change journeys benefit from a Sherpa guide.** Just as on Everest, having a guide who knows the way and understands the climbers is highly useful. Such a change guide doesn't "do it to" the team, doesn't "do it for" the team, but "does it with" the team.

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## **Meyer's Management Models**

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#### **Publication Schedule**

<b><i>July 2019</i></b>	<b><i>Mind the Gap Model</i></b>	<b><i>Change Management</i></b>
<b><i>August 2019</i></b>	<b><i>Digital Platform Map</i></b>	<b><i>Digital Strategy</i></b>
<b><i>September 2019</i></b>	<b><i>Interaction Pressure Gauge</i></b>	<b><i>Interpersonal Interaction</i></b>
<b><i>October 2019</i></b>	<b><i>Revenue Model Framework</i></b>	<b><i>Revenue Model Typology</i></b>
<b><i>November 2019</i></b>	<b><i>House of Engagement</i></b>	<b><i>Organizational Engagement</i></b>
<b><i>December 2019</i></b>	<b><i>Confidence Quotient</i></b>	<b><i>Trust Building</i></b>
<b><i>January 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Competition Tornado</i></b>	<b><i>Competitive Strategy</i></b>
<b><i>February 2020</i></b>	<b><i>11C Synergy Model</i></b>	<b><i>Corporate Synergy Management</i></b>
<b><i>March 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Leadership Fairness Model</i></b>	<b><i>Leader-Follower Interaction</i></b>
<b><i>April 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Strategic Agility Model</i></b>	<b><i>Strategy Process Approach</i></b>
<b><i>May 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Control Panel</i></b>	<b><i>Corporate Control Dimensions</i></b>
<b><i>June 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Rising Star Framework</i></b>	<b><i>Talent Management</i></b>
<b><i>July 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Strategy Development Cycle</i></b>	<b><i>Strategy Process Steps</i></b>
<b><i>August 2020</i></b>	<b><i>7I Roles of the Corporate Center</i></b>	<b><i>Corporate Organization</i></b>
<b><i>September 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Storytelling Scripts</i></b>	<b><i>Leadership Communication</i></b>
<b><i>October 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Strategic Bets Framework</i></b>	<b><i>Strategic Decision-Making</i></b>
<b><i>November 2020</i></b>	<b><i>Rebound Model of Resilience</i></b>	<b><i>Organizational Resilience</i></b>
<b><i>December 2020</i></b>	<b><i>4C Leadership Capabilities</i></b>	<b><i>Leadership Competences</i></b>
<b><i>January 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Digital Product Model Dial</i></b>	<b><i>Digital Strategy</i></b>
<b><i>February 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Digital Distribution Model Dial</i></b>	<b><i>Digital Strategy</i></b>
<b><i>March 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Empowerment Cycle</i></b>	<b><i>Employee Empowerment</i></b>
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<b><i>May 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Knowledge Sharing Bridges</i></b>	<b><i>Best Practice Sharing</i></b>
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<b><i>July 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Everest Model of Change</i></b>	<b><i>Change Management</i></b>
<b><i>August 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Fruits &amp; Nuts Matrix</i></b>	<b><i>Priority-Setting</i></b>
<b><i>September 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Deft Dialogue Model</i></b>	<b><i>Interpersonal Communication</i></b>
<b><i>October 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Strategy Hourglass</i></b>	<b><i>Strategy Process Timing</i></b>
<b><i>November 2021</i></b>	<b><i>Powerhouse Model</i></b>	<b><i>People &amp; Organization Strategy</i></b>
<b><i>December 2021</i></b>	<b><i>New Pyramid Principle</i></b>	<b><i>Presentation Approaches</i></b>
<b><i>January 2022</i></b>	<b><i>Corporate Value Creation Model</i></b>	<b><i>Corporate Level Strategy</i></b>
<b><i>February 2022</i></b>	<b><i>Team-Building Cycle</i></b>	<b><i>Team-Building Process</i></b>
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<b><i>April 2022</i></b>	<b><i>Customer-Centricity Circle</i></b>	<b><i>Organizational Design</i></b>
<b><i>May 2022</i></b>	<b><i>Partnership Distance Model</i></b>	<b><i>Interorganizational Relations</i></b>

June 2022

Levels of Strategy Model

Strategic Plan Content