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Getting
people
ready for
change

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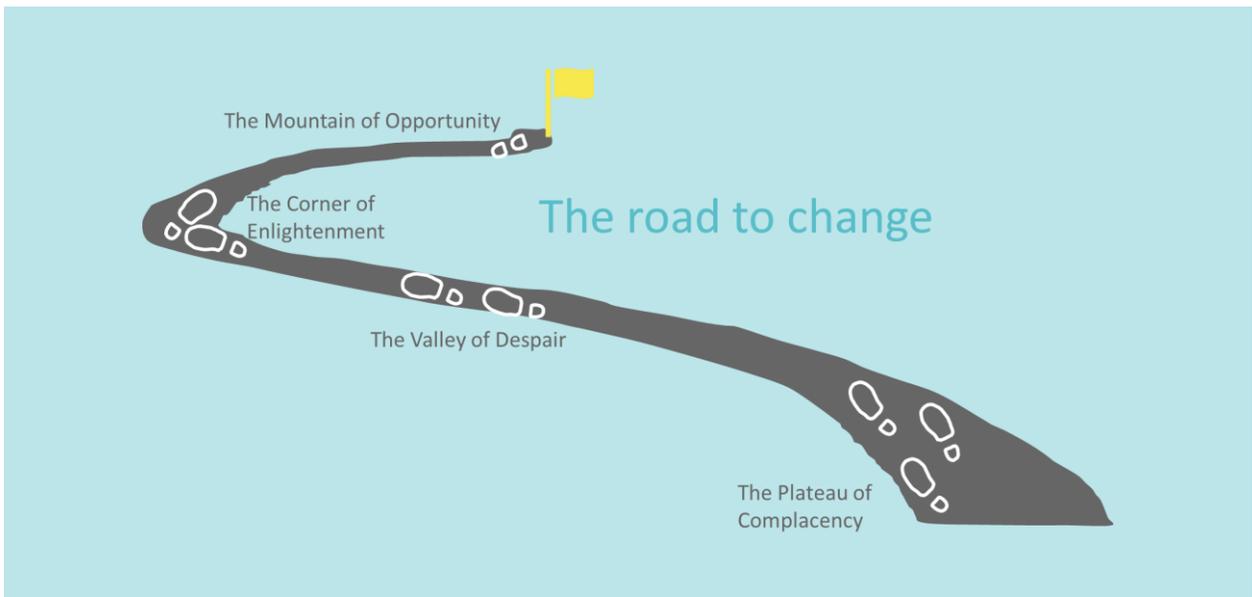




Getting people ready for change

Here's a fundamental truth; people will only willingly do something if they can see what's in it for them. When it comes to changing behaviour, people have to first recognise that there is a problem **within themselves**, and then move to a point where they want to do something about it. So, getting ready for change is a process or a journey.

The Road to Change illustrates the journey that people go on as they move towards a place where change becomes possible. Recognising where people are on the road can help you and them recognise what needs to happen for them to embrace the process of change.



The Road to Change has three key sections: The Plateau of Complacency, The Valley of Despair and the Mountain of Opportunity. Between the Valley and the Mountain lies a key point on the road – the Corner of Enlightenment. Only people who have turned the corner and can see the way up the mountain are ready to embrace change. They have moved from the negative mindset that we find in the Valley to the positive mindset we find on the Mountain. George Kohlreiser et al (2012) in their book *Care to Dare* describe this as the Mind's Eye moving from a focus of pain to gain. They regard this focus on gain as essential to leading people to perform effectively.

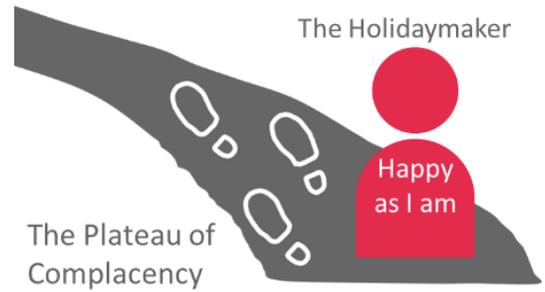
Let's look at these three key sections of the road in detail and the characters that we find here.



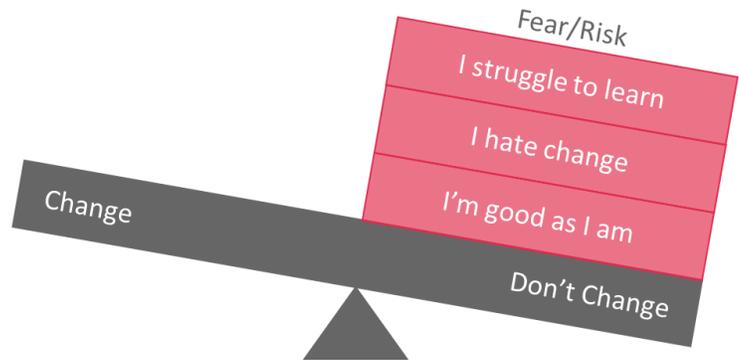
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The Plateau of Complacency

On the Plateau of Complacency we find the Holidaymaker. This person is perfectly happy as they are. They have no problems or desire to change. If we look at the balance between Change? or Don't Change? for this person we can see that all they can see are reasons to stay exactly as they are.



For the Holidaymaker to take their first steps on the road they have to first see that there is a problem, or a very good reason as to why they should change, or try something new. We call this finding a "trigger for change".



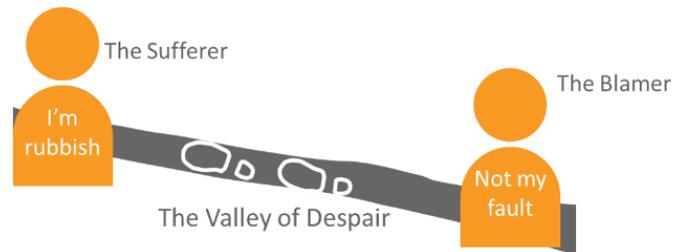
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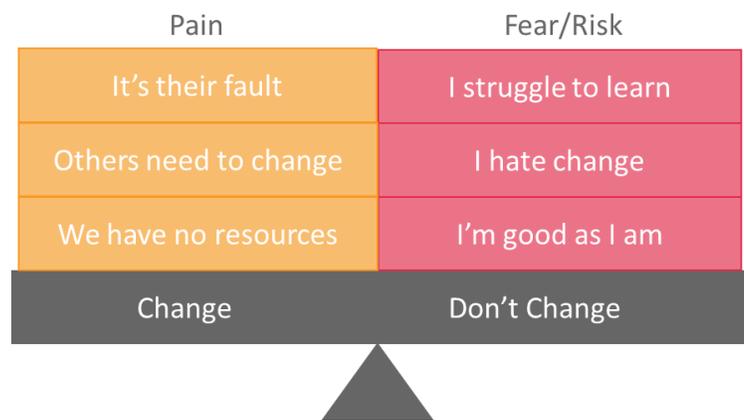
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The Valley of Despair

The Valley of Despair is where people come up against problems. We have two characters here – the Blamer and the Sufferer. You will probably hear both of them moaning, but for different reasons. For the Blamer everything is everyone else’s fault.



The Blamer is the salesperson who moans about Marketing not giving them good enough leads. Or the CEO who says that everyone else in the company needs to buck up their ideas. Deep down the Blamer will know that they are part of the problem, but their ego is usually too vulnerable for them to admit it. The challenge with the Blamer is to help them feel safe enough to be able to admit that they might also need to change.



The Sufferer on the other hand sees the problem as being with them. So the Sufferer is the person who is worried about their results being lower than everyone else’s. Or the manager who confesses that they simply don't feel able to motivate their team. However, this does not mean that the Sufferer is ready to try something new. People will live with problems. The challenge with the Sufferer is to stop them looking at the negative and help them start to think positive. Again, they need a safe environment for this to happen.

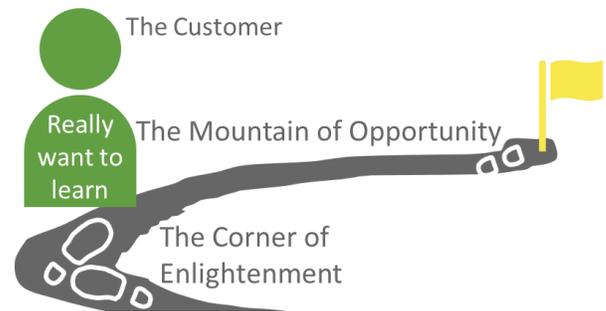




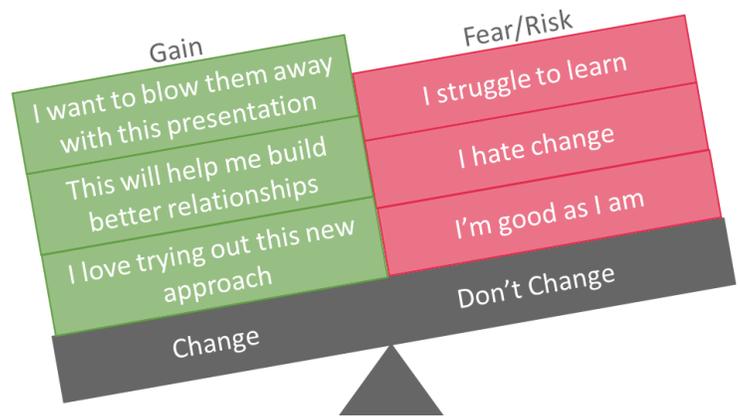
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The Mountain of Opportunity

At the Corner of Enlightenment something changes. Here we find a different character, whom we call the Customer. They are starting to climb the Mountain of Opportunity. The Customer has a different mindset from the characters in the Valley of Despair. They are looking towards a bright new future and are ready for change. They have goals and a vision and can see the **value** of changing.



The Customer talks in terms of what they want or desire, rather than in problems. It's about gain, rather than pain. The Customer is the person who is desperate to try out a new approach, or the manager who has signed up for a coaching course so that they can have different conversations with their team members. The Customer is inspired to change because of the vision they have of how things could be different. This is what makes it worth going through the potential pain of learning something new.



To get people to a stage where they are ready for change they have to become Customers. Hence the need for an inspirational vision and purpose in any company. These then become the motivator for change.



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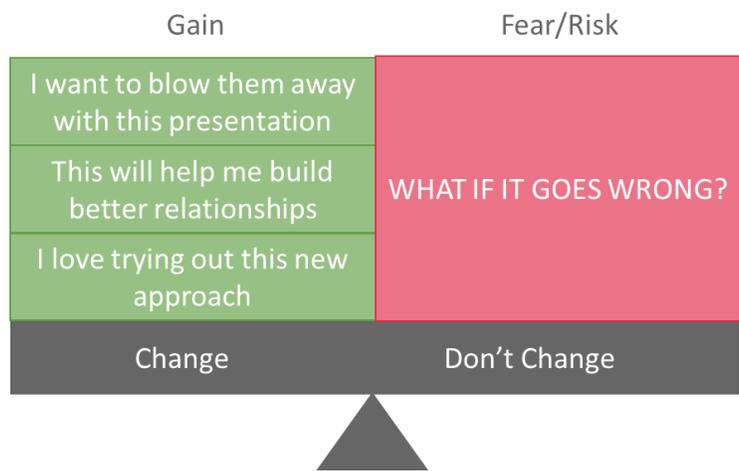


One more character.....

There is one more character that we can find on the road to change. They sound like Customers in that they show lots of enthusiasm for anything new. They may be the first to want to get involved but invariably you will then find them making excuses. We call this character the Blusterer.

The Blusterer is the person who will sign up for a new course and say lots of positive things about it. But somehow, every time that you watch them in action you will see them sticking to their old ways. Or the manager who will compliment you on your new initiatives and offer their support but then always has an excuse for not seeing something through. Suddenly there are other priorities.

The problem the Blusterer has is that they are fundamentally scared of trying something new, because of the risks involved. They typically have a fixed mindset, in that deep down they believe that their talents are fixed and they can't change them. So learning something new is a threat and likely to end in failure. The challenge with the Blusterer is to get them to see beyond the risk and take small steps forward to learning something new.



Summary

Of all these characters only one is ready to embrace change – the Customer. The others will show resistance in various ways. Identifying where a person is on the road to change helps you to understand where they are coming from and what is driving their behaviour. A useful exercise is to map out the road to change characters on the floor and get people to stand on the character that they can relate to the most. This helps to start a conversation around what needs to happen within the organisation to get people to the point where they are ready to embrace change.

Contact your local Lysna consultant for more details on how we can help you become an organisation full of Customers for Change.

