The change equation

A helpful model for explaining change is the change equation, developed Richard Beckhard and David Gleicher (ref)

In short, the equation says three factors must be present before meaningful change can take place:

\[ D = {\text{Dissatisfaction}} \text{ with the status quo. Continuing with things the way they are is not an option} \]

\[ V = {\text{Vision}} \text{ of what is possible. There is at least a vague sense of a better future.} \]

\[ F = {\text{First practical steps}} \text{ that can be taken towards the vision. These steps are concrete and acceptable.} \]

If any of these factors are missing then the others are cancelled out and you will not be able to overcome resistance. When planning for change you need to make sure all three factors are present before you start. When trouble-shooting during a change you can use the formula to work out why you may be having problems. It also provides a useful evaluation tool to assess the final outcome.

\[ D \times V \times F > R \]

Dissatisfaction with the current state

Vision of a positive future state

First steps in the direction of the vision

Resistance to change