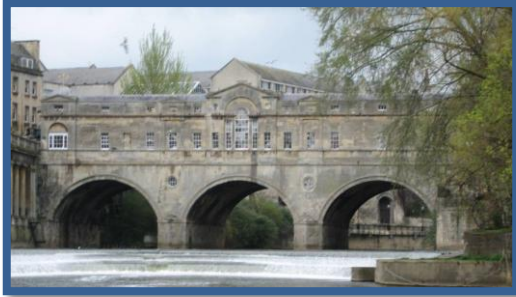


YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 17

To make change stick you need certain things in place and also, you learn better if you do more of your own thinking....

Make Change Stick...

"In this world of change, naught which comes stays and naught which goes is lost" Anne-Sophie Swetchine ~ Russian hostess



"Bath today"

How can you make change stick?

The family visited the Roman baths in Bath last week, learning about the Romans in Britain. I never realised that Julius Caesar's army came and left, the Romans not returning for 100 years. Were they hoping the weather might change?

I also didn't realise how abrupt their departure was after they did settle. They took over the country for four hundred years, and then they left. After a while, it was like they had never been. That may be a simplistic view, but all of their brilliant engineering, sewers, water supplies, buildings and roads (even if the route was there), that brought major benefit to the country rotted away or were destroyed. How could that happen?

I wondered if the Romans could settle and rule a country for 400 years and leave almost no trace of their settlement, how difficult must it be to

cement change in organisations, even if it is for the good of the company?

There's a temptation here to reach for the textbooks and see what Kotter and other change gurus would say. But let's try some thinking first, consider what might have been needed to make the Roman way of life stick and see what conclusions we can draw for ourselves about change.

I think:

- The Romans enslaved many of the indigenous people who did not benefit as much from the changes, so there would be little urgency to maintain the status quo
- The Romans probably took with them many of the "better" slaves and servants, so there would be fewer potential leaders
- The people left behind would have little knowledge of how to maintain buildings and works, let alone the money to do it
- The Romans took their culture and values with them and those who stayed behind or invaded later never shared their values

SO

If we take those four characteristics, what might we deduce about cementing change? My deductions are that you need to ensure:

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 17

- Those involved in change will enjoy the benefits of the change
- There are people in place capable of sustaining the change (especially if you have used that blue chip "Roman Consulting Company" to implement it)
- Everybody involved in change is skilled and knowledgeable in the new ways of working
- There is sufficient budget to maintain the new order
- That everybody really does share the culture and values required to cement change

ACTION

1. Add some ideas to mine
2. Think of other examples where great civilisations have left no trace. Are there any lessons we can learn from them?

TO CLOSE

I went back to my Kotter textbook [John P Kotter; [Leading Change](#)], which is a good read. His formula for cementing change is, in my words:

- Make the changes then change the culture, not the reverse
- Demonstrate the change is better than the past
- Keep supporting people through the change and after it
- Remove key people if necessary to cement change
- Promote those who demonstrate the new way of working

Take a look back at my "So" paragraph and compare and contrast those thoughts with Kotter's. What's your view? I know I have learned more from doing a bit of my own thinking first.

Enjoy life and if you can, visit Bath.

[John Brooker](#) | *Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.*

This article features in Book 1 of the Open University MBA programme B822 Creativity, Innovation and Change.



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