

Change Capacity Model

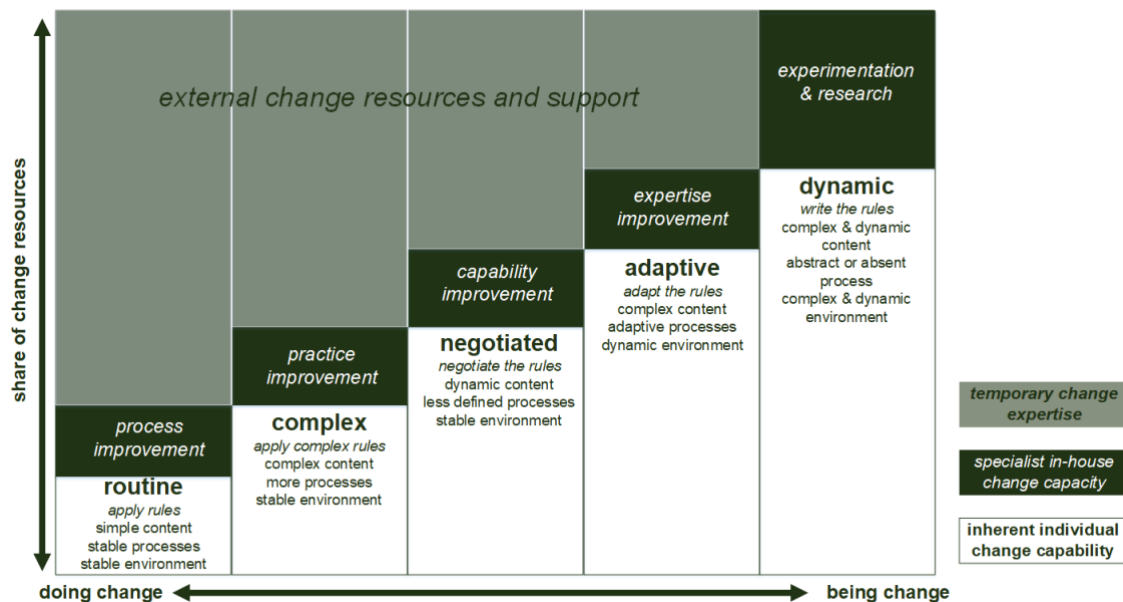
The rate and scale of change in publicly funded organisations is increasing. We often talk about changing processes, content, and even work environments with minimal disruption, as if being good at change always means the same thing. It does not. Some work is dynamic and fluid. For other work, consistency and safety are paramount. A change journey should start from wherever you are and continue until you reach your destination.

Inadequate change management has, sometimes dramatically, prevented worthwhile initiatives from achieving good outcomes. This growing recognition has encouraged efforts to build change maturity, with the goal of making whole organisations more agile.

But the percentage of people who will enthusiastically embrace uncertainty and ambiguity is small. To develop this characteristic and associated skills in an entire workforce would be costly, difficult, disruptive, likely unnecessary, and almost certainly doomed to fail. It might even be counterproductive for some staff whose day-to-day work is built around repetitive tasks.

Change readiness and change capacity are contextual. CCM conceptualises approaches to change as a spectrum, with the best fit approach varying according to the nature of the work, the workforce and the change required.

At one end is “doing change,” where professional change managers apply change management techniques to help transition from one steady state to another. At the other end is “being change,” where change readiness and change capabilities are an inherent requirement of a workforce defined by highly dynamic work.



CCM categorises types of work according to content, processes, and environment, represented in the image above. For example, complex work is characterised by complex content and a large range of processes. Teachers and nurses do this type of work, applying broad skills to rich content. Adaptive work is characterised by adapting processes in a dynamic environment. First responders to emergencies and special military forces do this type of work, relying on expert knowledge to rapidly adapt and operate effectively in novel, often high-risk circumstances.

Although most organisations will benefit from ongoing efforts to identify and implement incremental changes, the primary focus of these efforts will vary with the nature and needs of the organisation.

For routine work, continuous improvement effort tends to analyse and refine repeated processes and tools. For negotiated work, it tends to build relevant capabilities in the workforce. For work that is dynamic, it tends to focus on experimentation and research.

Different approaches to implementing change are appropriate for different workforces. This is particularly true for transformational reforms, where the work will change from one type to another.

It is usually not efficient or effective to develop high adaptive capability in routine workers. By contrast, it is not efficient or effective for a workforce without these skills to attempt dynamic work. The CCM framework helps organisations to target their approach to managing change by starting from where they are.

To find out more about how you can use this approach in your organisation, contact us: info@h4consulting.com.au
Find additional resources at www.h4consulting.com.au/resources