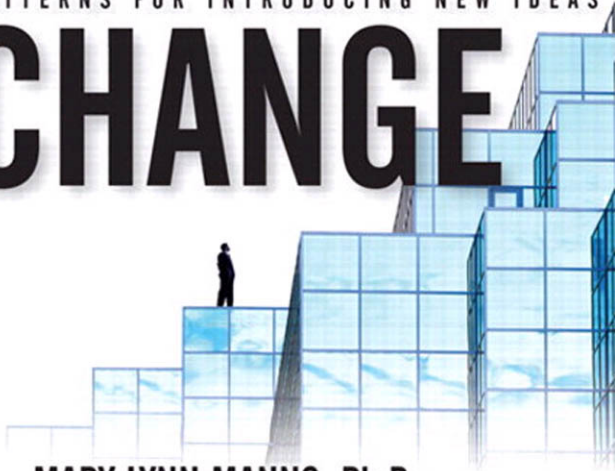




# FEARLESS

PATTERNS FOR INTRODUCING NEW IDEAS

# CHANGE



MARY LYNN MANNS, Ph.D.  
LINDA RISING, Ph.D.

A large, light gray decorative swirl graphic that frames the text. It starts from the bottom left, curves upwards and to the right, then loops back down and to the left, ending near the top right.

Fearless Change

fluence of a movie star is curious. I didn't ask for it or take it; people gave it to me. Simply because you're a movie star, people empower you with special rights and privileges."

Big Jolt does not suggest that you bring in a movie star! You just need to look for someone who will capture the attention of the people you want to influence in your organization. We have seen interest and inquiries increase significantly after a visit by a well-known person who supports a new idea. It seems obvious, but be aware that the same credentials will not impress everyone. Different visitors may be needed to influence the different target audiences: technical people, business people, managers, and executives.

When you combine a Big Jolt visit with the pattern Royal Audience(210), you provide the opportunity for people to personally interact with the famous visitor. This allows you to thank some of your supporters as well as influence newcomers. A prominent visitor who is willing to meet with team leaders, managers, and executives can help win support for decision makers at all levels.

We heard a little of Linda's story in the previous chapter. When she became a Dedicated Champion her responsibilities changed, but she also acquired resources and management support. Here's what happened next.

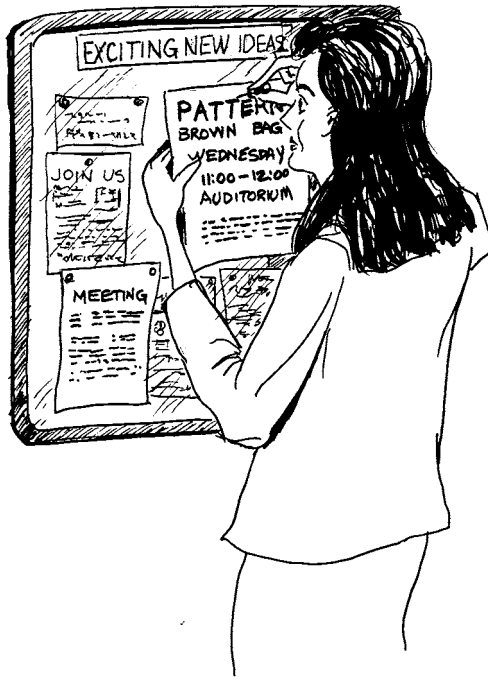
*I got a request from the vice president. He was still excited about patterns, but his staff wanted a little more evidence. Each of his executives had named a department member to be on an evaluation team for the new idea. They wanted me to give a short course in the material and outline some ideas about how it would apply to our business. I was happy, but a little afraid to get up in front of that gathering of gurus. As it turned out, they were open and listened to what I had to say. I suggested that some of them just try a few patterns and see how they worked.*

*About this time I was lucky enough to run into a fellow at Bell Labs who offered to visit and give a talk about what his department was doing with patterns. Since my company was a partially owned subsidiary of Lucent, that talk had considerable impact on the gurus, the management, and everyone else. What really helped was having the Bell Labs guy hang around after the talk and have lunch with some interested folks and, later, a bunch of us went out for dinner. The results of the evaluation went well. I'd like to think it was my presentation, but I think it was really the guy from Bell Labs!*

You're on a roll now! If you've been enlisting the help of gurus and inviting famous Big Jolt speakers, your change effort has really taken off. The next chapter presents a handful of patterns that document influence strategies. Again, they require some effort. Because you're now a Dedicated Champion, remember to keep your initial enthusiasm and concern for the benefits to individuals and your organization as you apply these patterns.

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# More Influence Strategies



Even though you now have resources, your enthusiasm will still be tested daily. So you will need to continually expand your bag of influence strategies. In this chapter we introduce Hometown Story(164), Smell of Success(219), Just Enough(180), In Your Space(167), Token(243), and Location, Location, Location(189) to add to your toolbox.

A wise observer once said, “People will always do what you want them to do if what you want them to do is what they want to do.” But if you are proposing something that people aren’t eager to do, the act of convincing may mean you must present a logical argument with cold hard facts. Unfortunately, research has shown that most of us make decisions based on emotion and then justify those decisions with facts. Your effectiveness as a change agent will rest on more than your ability to talk to people, whether you’re doing that one-on-one using the pattern *Personal Touch*(198) or in front of a group using the pattern *Brown Bag*(113). You’ll also need to learn as much as you can from the successes of others.

Leonardo da Vinci cautioned, “Flee the advice of these speculators whose reasons have not been confirmed by experience.” Everyone likes to hear stories of risk-taking and will take them to heart if they respect the teller. This is especially true for people who are in the *Early Majority*(141). When they hear what others are trying, they think to themselves, “This is what some people are paying attention to; maybe we should, too!”

In Chapter 9, you learned how to convince teams to do a *Trial Run*(245) so you might have some *Early Adopters*(138) who have tried the innovation. Take advantage of their experience and use the *Hometown Story*(164) pattern. Ask people to share their story in an informal forum where they can just talk about their experience and then interact in a question and answer session.

We have seen amazing things happen at these sessions. Some people who have been holding back will suddenly perk up because they see that their colleagues have tried the new idea, survived, and found real benefit in it. As the saying goes, “Nothing succeeds like success.”

The *Smell of Success*(219) pattern recognizes that people will be drawn to the innovation when they hear about positive results. Thus there will be an increasing number of people who will have questions and requests for more information. Most of us have seen those movies about someone who has a good idea but is not having much luck convincing others. The innovator may even be seen as crazy in the beginning. But then the plot takes a turn, the new idea solves a big problem—maybe the whole town or the company is saved—and things start to look up. Skeptics are suddenly interested and new supporters step forward.

Okay, your experiences are not likely to be as dramatic, but even when small successes appear, people will take notice. They will want to find out what’s going on and become a part of it. The pattern *Smell of Success* advises you to treat

their inquiries as a “teaching moment.” You can apply the pattern *Personal Touch*(198) to help them understand how the new idea can be useful for them.

The other pattern to keep in mind during these encounters is *Just Enough*(180). You’re not talking to Innovators or Early Adopters at this point. The new arrivals are typically members of the Early Majority. They are a bit more reluctant. They’re not resistant, just hesitant, and there’s probably a good reason for that. Maybe they’ve been burned in the past. Maybe they’re just too busy to follow every promise of another so-called silver bullet.

As the Dedicated Champion, your job is to tell them what they need to know when they need to know it; no more, no less. Don’t browbeat or overwhelm them. Encourage and support them. As Hall of Fame basketball coach Morgan Wootten has said, “A lighthouse doesn’t blow a horn, it shines a light.” Do the same for all those struggling to understand the new idea. Give them just enough information and let them know you’ll be around when they’re ready for more.

### Keep Things Visible

When people are asking questions and things are happening, it’s a good idea to keep the work-in-progress visible using the pattern *In Your Space*(167). Making sure the new idea is seen throughout your organization will have a positive impact on the rate at which people adopt it. There are many ways to do this. Mary Lynn posted a small sign outside her office that said “Ask me about patterns.” That prompted quite a few questions! She also put a whiteboard in a high traffic area and displayed the “Pattern of the Week.” The space was an active one because it included some room for anyone to record comments and questions. One week they played “Pattern Jeopardy” on the board. The postings drew attention to the patterns effort and stimulated conversation as people passed by.

The popular book *Fish!* describes the best practices of the successful Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle. The importance of play in the workplace is emphasized as a core value. The book tells a story about a company that tried to bring more playfulness into the workplace by starting a “Joke-of-the-month” contest on its own bulletin board.

Another Evangelist who devised a new process for prioritizing work in the company used a corkboard to display cards with major tasks. The board was placed in a central location so that anyone in the office could see the plan at any time. It was portable so it could be carried to a weekly team meeting.