# **C:\Users\pwdas04\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.MSO\EFC722B1.tmp**

# **Theory of Transitions (Bridges)**

## **Navigation Tips**

### **Stage One: Ending, Losing, Letting Go**

* It's important to accept people's resistance, and understand their emotions. Allow them time to accept the change and let go, and try to get everyone to talk about what they're feeling. In these conversations, make sure that you listen empathically and communicate openly about what's going to happen.
* Emphasize how people will be able to apply their skills, experience, and knowledge once you've implemented the change. Explain how you'll give them what they need (for instance, training and resources) to work effectively in the new environment.
* People often fear what they don't understand, so the more you can educate them about a positive future, and communicate how their knowledge and skills are an essential part of getting there, the likelier they are to move on to the next stage.

### **Stage Two: Neutral Zone**

* Your guidance is incredibly important as people go through this neutral period. This can be an uncomfortable time, because it can seem unproductive, and it can seem that little progress is being made.
* Because people might feel a bit lost, provide them with a solid sense of direction. Remind them of team goals, and encourage them to talk about what they're feeling.
* Meet with your people frequently to give feedback on how they're performing, especially with regard to change. It's also important to set short-term goals during this stage, so that people can experience some quick wins; this will help to improve motivation as well as giving everyone a positive perception of the change effort.
* Also, do what you can to boost morale and continue to remind people of how they can contribute to the success of the change. If required, you may also want to help people manage their workloads, either by deprioritizing some types of work, or by bringing in extra resources.

### **Stage Three: New Beginning**

* As people begin to adopt the change, it's essential that you help them sustain it. Use techniques like Management by Objectives to link people's personal goals to the long-term objectives of the organization, and regularly highlight stories of success brought about by the change.
* Take time to celebrate the change you've all gone through, and reward your team for all their hard work. However, don't become too complacent – remember that not everyone will reach this stage at the same time, and also remember that people can slip back to previous stages if they think that the change isn't working.