

Change Book Summaries
By Janine Lim, Fall 2009

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Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership and sustainability*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This is my favorite of the books that I read on change because it focuses not just on change, but on sustainability. The book begins with a scenario of a reform program in the UK where results hit a plateau after a few years of success. After setting the stage Fullan spends the rest of the book going in depth with the eight elements of sustainability:

- public service with a moral purpose
- commitment to changing context at all levels
- lateral capacity building through networks
- intelligent accountability and vertical relationships
- deep learning
- dual commitment to short-term and long-term results
- cyclical energizing
- the long lever of leadership.

After explaining these, he shows how they apply at the school level, the district level, and the system level.

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

This Fullan book is good if you want both the education and business perspective. Fullan begins with a caution against superleaders, because sustained reform depends on many of us, not just the few. Fullan's framework for leadership begins with leaders who have a moral purpose, understand the change process, build relationships, create and share knowledge, and make coherence. These are not linear but instead are drawn within a circle encompassed by energy, enthusiasm, and hope. Throughout the book, he shares examples and details from both business and education. In the last chapter there are several strategies shared for learning within the context of work, and setting up the learning organization.

Pascale, R. T., Millemann, M., & Gioja, L. (2000). *Surfing the edge of chaos*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

I read this book after Fullan's book, and you could see that Fullan got some of his ideas from this book. Fullan's explanations were a lot easier to understand. This book takes the laws of nature in adaptation and change and applies them to change and business. The authors recommend that leaders should inspire change by disturbing the equilibrium, surf the edge of chaos, unleash self-organization and cultivate emergence, and disturb (instead of directing) the living system. Instead of trying to "manage" as

things, to realize that the organization and the people in it are living things. It's an interesting perspective and a deep read.

Patterson, J. (1995). *Upside down leadership: The rules have changed*. Menasha, WI: Transitions Press.

Patterson suggests that organizations should move towards being more open, which is tomorrow's organizational value: open to participation, to diversity, to conflict, reflection, and mistakes. He says that we must support the skeptics as well as the supporters and gives strategies for each area. I really like this idea of respecting and supporting the skeptics; I think it's important to hear and respect their view during change. To create a "preferred future", leaders should understand core values, decide where to start, develop additional values, make meaning from words, develop a shared commitment to the core values, and align practices with values. Another chapter addresses how decisions are made, and what values that states to the organization members. Finally, he ends with thinking about systems, and paying the price for organizational change. There are also several strategies and tools that can be used with groups in the appendix.