

ADAPTIVE RESILIENCE **Bend & adjust.** Flexing through change rather than resisting it. **Survival of the most adaptable,** and the route to post-traumatic *growth*, not just recovery.

- We operate in a VUCA world. Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous.
- Anxiety thrives in ambiguity: less clarity means more resistance.
- TRADITIONAL RESILIENCE (toughing it out unscathed) in reality is stubbornness.
- Everyone knows about post-traumatic stress disorder, the worst-case scenario but no-one knows about **post-traumatic growth**, the best-case scenario.

The tools

WHAT IT IS · WHY IT WORKS · HOW TO USE IT · FROM THE TALK · AT THE TABLES

 <h3>Hope</h3> <p>Spot & address hopelessness first - before anything else.</p>	<p>WHAT Hopelessness sets in when change feels permanent, personal, or pervasive.</p> <p>◆ FROM THE TALK Seligman's dogs stopped trying once they'd learned the button did nothing, lost hope kills effort, so catch it early.</p>	<p>WHY Without hope, people stop trying, even when a fix is within reach.</p>	<p>HOW Reframe with impermanence, shared experience & context.</p> <p>■ AT THE TABLES Watch for learned hopelessness early. Keep the framing simple: "this will pass" and "we're in this together."</p>
 <h3>Ownership</h3> <p>Be an agent of change beats change happening to you.</p>	<p>WHAT Three zones: Control (you), Influence (others), Acceptance (the rest).</p> <p>◆ FROM THE TALK Within research on a four-day-work week, happiness hinged not on the result but on whether people felt they had a voice in the decision.</p>	<p>WHY People are happier when they had a say, whatever the outcome.</p>	<p>HOW Sit in control, lead from influence, don't fight acceptance.</p> <p>■ AT THE TABLES A strong pick. Teams want to understand what they can influence vs control, and to feel agency rather than have change happen to them.</p>
 <h3>Meaning</h3> <p>A personal why carries people through.</p>	<p>WHAT Challenge without meaning feels like suffering; with meaning, feels like growth.</p> <p>◆ FROM THE TALK A tech-averse colleague moved from resisting AI to embracing it once "why" led to <i>more time with my kids</i>.</p>	<p>WHY We move on emotion, not logic. The why must be personal.</p>	<p>HOW Ask "why does this matter to you?" ~5 times, to a real answer.</p> <p>■ AT THE TABLES The "why" often isn't explained well, and must be personally meaningful, not corporate-speak. What's the purpose? The end result?</p>
 <h3>Perspective</h3> <p>Channel the negativity bias, don't fight it.</p>	<p>WHAT Brains default to worst-case thinking. It's wired in, not a flaw.</p> <p>◆ FROM THE TALK A post-merger team voiced worst and best in equal measure, named the realistic middle, and left calmer and more constructive.</p>	<p>WHY Fighting the bias fails; a fuller picture settles it.</p>	<p>HOW Map worst/best/most-likely, then nudge most-likely up a notch.</p> <p>■ AT THE TABLES One of the most popular. Weekly check-ins can drift into a "negative rant" flip it by asking "what's still going well?"</p>
 <h3>Gratitude</h3> <p>Aim for consistency, not perfection.</p>	<p>WHAT A daily practice of noticing the good.</p> <p>◆ FROM THE TALK Hand-written gratitude cards to 20 people who shaped their year. Moved several to tears, small acts travel far.</p>	<p>WHY Minds race past good moments and marinate in hard ones, this rebalances.</p>	<p>HOW Note one moment, one person, one thing about self that you are grateful for. Then ask why this matters to you.</p> <p>■ AT THE TABLES The simplest to start. Take it beyond a quick "thank you" into genuine team practice. Small moments can be hard to spot under pressure.</p>

WHAT THE ROOM IS TAKING BACK

Perspective & Gratitude were the clear favourites across tables, with **Ownership** close behind. Make safe space to talk through change honestly and framing it as something teams face **together**, rather than avoiding the hard parts.

MASTERING CHANGE: Why it's a capability, not a crisis

- **Reframe the language** we use: we talk about "managing" and "driving" change, which makes it feel like something being done to us. Instead, think about living through change, something that nourishes an organisation and **takes us into the future**, rather than something to merely survive.
- Work has already transformed completely, from dictaphones and typing pools to where we are today. Change isn't new or unprecedented; **we've lived through it before, and we're better for it.**
- Change doesn't have to mean "more on top of more." It's not extra fatigue layered onto an already stretched team, it's **an invitation to work smarter, learn new skills, and do things differently.**
- **Change is a mindset and a behaviour**, something that shifts the whole ecosystem of an organisation.

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The Change Map

WHAT

4 part framework for pulling any change apart:

1. Source (why is this happening),
2. Layers (what's really shifting, systems or behaviours),
3. Impact (what does this mean for people),
4. Time (how long the consequences actually play out).

WHY

Not all change is the same. Naming the source and impact early removes ambiguity, and people are already silently asking "am I losing my job?"

Avoiding the question, doesn't make it go away.

HOW

Before launching any change, map it across the 4 parts.

Speak openly to both the harder parts (redundancy, role change) and opportunities (re-skilling, new capability)

◆ FROM THE TALK

The AMP demerger during the UK equity crisis, an external, "done to us" event. Cut the company from 10,000 to 3,000 people. Despite the scale and grief, honest communication, including admitting "I don't know, but I'll find out," delivered 98% retention of critical talent and some of the highest engagement scores ever recorded.

■ AT THE TABLES

Tables consistently flagged communication breakdowns as change filters down. Juniors are often last to understand what change actually means for them, with the message diluted by the time it reaches them. Several tables also noted a disconnect between global and local leadership on what's changing and why.



The Hope Gap

WHAT

The gap between the original vision for change, the "gold standard", and the point where hope quietly drains away as reality and fatigue set in.

WHY

Every change starts with hope; no one proposes a change believing it will make things worse. But somewhere between the pitch and the lived day-to-day experience, that hope is often lost.

HOW

Keep returning to the original "why" throughout the change, not just at launch. Check in on where hope is leaking out before fatigue takes hold.

◆ FROM THE TALK

The hope gap opens because we measure change in quarters or years, while its real consequences play out over decades. Short-term reporting can brand a change a failure before its benefits even appear.

Norway's sovereign wealth fund, built for generations not yet born, counters this: "planting trees you'll never sit under," doing right today for a benefit you may never see.

■ AT THE TABLES

Hope was one of the most-discussed table themes.

Comments ranged from "every change starts with hope, sometimes we get lost" to the importance of regularly revisiting the why and the purpose. Not just at kickoff.



The Living Ecosystem (the tree)

WHAT

A diagnostic across five layers:

1. Roots (leadership and tone)
2. Soil (context and environment)
3. Trunk (systems and structure)
4. Branches (team dynamics and communication)
5. Leaves (individual experience).

WHY

Change is a living ecosystem, not a project plan. Most organisations over-invest in the trunk. It's visible, measurable, and easy to justify.

While under-investing in leaves and branches, the layers that determine whether people actually thrive.

HOW

Use the tree as a regular diagnostic: ask which layer is healthy and which is starved of attention, and shift conversations from status reports to "how does this change actually feel?"

◆ FROM THE TALK

Live exercise with the room, and the pattern played out exactly as predicted: most tables had invested heavily in the trunk (systems), while leaves (individual experience) and leadership wellbeing came through as the most neglected.

■ AT THE TABLES

The trunk and roots consistently got the most attention because they're measurable and easy to justify, while leaves and branches were repeatedly flagged as neglected. Leaving juniors feeling unheard. Several tables specifically called out the need for "space and trust" for honest conversations, not just more systems or memos.

WHAT THE ROOM IS TAKING BACK

Mastering change means treating it as a living ecosystem, pull it apart, keep returning to the why, and invest in your people as deliberately as your systems.