The nature of project management is change. Even though all knowledge areas in the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) are rooted in controlling change, none of these areas specifically addresses the human elements of change. There is a significant distinction between directly controlling change relative to the nonhuman aspects of a project (change control) and effecting change in the human dimensions of a project through leadership (change leadership). This article characterizes the distinctive activities of change leadership and change control and their interrelationship throughout the project life cycle. Although distinct, change control and change leadership are interdependent and mutually supporting—both are needed to support project success.

DEFINITIONS
Change Leadership Versus Change Control
Project managers use tools and processes to control change. When referring to controlling change, project managers typically use the term change management. In a further complication of this topic, change management is also commonly used to refer to the human aspects of change. As we have already stated however, the human aspects of change require activities distinct from the activities of change control. Therefore, to clarify what is unique in the new knowledge area we are proposing, we are also proposing a specific term for the human aspects of change: change leadership.

Change Leadership
Change leadership refers to a set of principles, techniques, or activities applied to the human aspects of executing change to influence intrinsic acceptance while reducing resistance. Intrinsic acceptance is individual internalization.
of a change—a choice to move forward with the future state. Change leadership is guided coordination of the social ecology, focusing on the intrinsic motivation of the individuals (both staff members and leaders) who are subject to the change or defining the change. Expertly designed change leadership is a collaboration between leaders and staff in which they construct change together. If the design concept is shared between staff and leaders—rather than directed from the top—then acceptance and ownership will be embraced with less resistance.

Change leadership communication models are sophisticated approaches to creating ownership and shared meaning. Rather than a one-way exchange in which leaders inform staff, communication becomes an opportunity for leaders and staff to dialogue. In this collaborative model, leaders and staff share in creating and owning the future.

Change Control

Integrated change control is a concerted effort to coordinate changes across all knowledge areas referenced in the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMI, 2004). In the PMBOK the topic of change control falls under the project integration management knowledge area (see Figure 1). Change control, or change management (as some refer to the process), is called out as part of project integration and again in the project scope management knowledge area.

The project manager’s responsibility is to evaluate change across the whole spectrum of a project. A change in one area will influence change in another area. This concept reflects a triple constraint—a change to the budget, for example, requires the project manager to reassess the impact of change on the project scope, schedule, and resources.

The integrated change control process includes the following change management activities in differing levels of detail, based upon the completion of project execution:

- Identifying that a change needs to occur or has occurred
- Influencing the factors that circumvent integrated change control so that only approved changes are implemented

TERMINOLOGY CHALLENGES: WHAT DO THESE TERMS MEAN TO YOU?

The terms change control and change leadership are used in project management sometimes as synonyms and sometimes as terms with different meanings. The use of change management to mean either change control or change leadership adds to the confusion.

We are proposing the use of change control consistent with its current use in the PMBOK and in project management generally—that is, to mean project integration management. We are also proposing the use of change leadership to refer to intentional leadership over the inevitable stages of human reaction to change—such as that typically precipitated during the life of a project.

- Change control = project integration management (that is, scope change management).
- Change leadership = human aspects of change (that is, strategies to improve change acceptance).

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF CHANGE CONTROL AND CHANGE LEADERSHIP

Although change control drives the project scope, schedule, cost, quality, risk, and procurement, change leadership promotes project success by guiding those affected by the project through the inevitable stages of human reaction to change. The distinctly different purposes of change control and change leadership demand different activities and deliverables. John Kotter (1998) reminds us that the focus of change leadership is on crafting a vision and then aligning and motivating people affected by the change so that they are prepared to support and adopt it.

Key differences between change control and change leadership are reflected in how people use key terms that describe change (see sidebar Terminology Challenges). For example, an element of change control integral to the success of every project is a change control system, which defines how staff and leaders track, approve, and document
change. Successful application of a change control system requires due diligence to address the triple constraint and determine how change affects resources, schedule, quality, and cost. The inputs and outputs of the change control system vary, but the system remains consistent.

Change leadership, in contrast, involves application of principles, techniques, and prescriptions to influence key human aspects of executing major change initiatives (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2001). A key element of successful change leadership is two-way communication between leaders and key audiences through all project phases. The messages may vary depending on the audience but the communication should go beyond merely informing, or telling. For example, changes that require employees to assume new roles might necessitate a dialogue approach such as a town hall meeting or other interactive activity between staff and leadership.

Whereas change control typically invokes the same repeatable process from project to project, change leadership demands anticipation of and response to dynamic phases of human reaction to change—phases that tend to vary in duration, order, and occurrence, depending on the situation. Furthermore, as in soft-skill training, there are multiple correct ways to achieve desired outcomes (typically timely acceptance and promotion of required change). Table 1 compares project phases and change phases with possible deliverables.

For instance, every project should have a change control system, which defines how you track, approve, and document changes. In the PMBOK Guide each knowledge area addresses change control. Using a change control system requires due diligence to determine how change affects resources, schedule, quality, and cost. The inputs and outputs of the change control process vary, but the control process is consistent. Change control is an external process that can be directed or controlled from the outside.

In Table 2 the distinctive differences between change control and change leadership are demonstrated. Some examples of the different activities that change control and change leadership entail are displayed in the sidebar entitled Examples of Change Control Activities and Change Leadership Activities.
Change leadership is a set of principles, techniques, and prescriptions applied to the human aspects of executing major change initiatives (Ackerman, Anderson, & Anderson, 2001). The focus is not on the drivers of change but rather on ways to orchestrate the infrastructure so that individuals affected by the change are prepared to accept it (that is, to accept the new policies and procedures that support the change).

The ultimate source of success when implementing change is executing your change leadership process model by building a foundation early in the project life cycle. The best strategic planning is of no value if the organization is not ready to execute the strategy proactively through a timely and dynamic change leadership process. Kotter (1998) states that “fewer than 15 of the 100 or more companies I have studied have successfully transformed themselves.” He attributes mismanaging change to four particular mistakes: (1) not “establishing a sense of urgency”; (2) under communicating the vision; (3) “declaring victory before the war is over”; and (4) not recognizing that leaders just below the CEO are most likely to be obstacles because they have the most to lose. Table 3 shows some specific critical success factors that guide planning.

Further, as shown in Table 1, specific change leadership phases have specific deliverables. The activities or tasks that make up these deliverables vary in size, duration, or frequency depending on the scope of the change effort within the project.

Communication is the cornerstone of successful change. The constant throughout change leadership, as described earlier, is two-way communication with key audiences during all the phases.

In addition, Holt, Self, Thal, and Lo (2003) note three change message factors that are critical to reducing resistance during change. The first is appropriateness, or the extent to which the individual perceives that “the change will address salient organizational needs.” The second is valence, or the perception of personal benefit, and the third is the perception of formal and informal leadership support. Active engagement by staff in crafting the change also relates to a positive view of the change.

Early in a project’s life cycle the size and complexity of the project will drive the level of change leadership activities required. Once the level of change leadership is known—low, moderate, or high (as shown in Figure 2)—then appropriate planning, budgeting, scheduling, and resource allocation can be done. Therefore the size and complexity of a project will dictate strategy and tactics for the change effort. Human performance technology (HPT) professionals can employ Ackerman, Anderson and Anderson’s (2001) definitions of change levels to plan and to allocate resources appropriately when preparing the organization for the impact of a change.

The Ackerman Anderson and Anderson model places developmental change at the low end of the change continuum. Developmental changes are the smaller, less disruptive changes to processes. Transitional change builds on developmental change, adding an element of loss that can be more disruptive to the organization’s resources. Transformational change is the most disruptive level, requiring cultural and behavioral changes.

The following examples of the levels of change are drawn from the developmental to transformational leap that the banking industry has faced.
• Developmental or process (low-level) change: an improvement, such as increasing skills or improving performance of a business process. For example, multiple lines of customers waiting for tellers (a line in front of each window) were changed to one line (“take a number”).

• Transitional (moderate-level) change: a design and implementation of something different from what exists now. For example, banks designed and implemented drive-through banking.

• Transformational (high-level) change: a shift from an old state to a transformed state that requires a culture shift, a significant change of old behaviors, processes, and mind-sets. For example, banks shifted from traditional forms of banking to ATMs, electronic banking, and Internet banking.

### CHANGE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

Early in the project life cycle, the size and complexity of a project will drive the level of change leadership activities required. Although a shared and clearly stated vision may

---

**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGE CONTROL AND CHANGE LEADERSHIP: A COMPARISON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE CONTROL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration Change Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing change across all bodies of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope Change Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling changes to project scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling changes to the project schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling changes to the project budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring specific project results to determine if they comply with relevant quality standards, and identifying ways to eliminate causes of unsatisfactory performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Monitoring and Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring residual risks, identifying new risks, executing risk reduction plans, and evaluating their effectiveness throughout the project life cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defines the process by which the contract may be modified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INTEGRATED CHANGE CONTROL: INPUTS, TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES, AND OUTPUTS**

**Inputs**
- Project management plan
- Requested changes
- Work performance information
- Recommended preventive actions
- Recommended corrective actions
- Recommended defect repair
- Deliverables

**Tools and Techniques**
- Project management methodology
- Project management information system
- Expert judgment

**Outputs**
- Approved change requests
- Rejected change requests
- Project management plan (updates)
- Project scope statement (updates)
- Approved corrective actions
- Approved preventive actions
- Approved defect repair
- Validated defect repair
- Deliverables

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS</th>
<th>1. PROCESS CHANGE</th>
<th>2. TRANSITIONAL CHANGE</th>
<th>3. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Definition and examples of success factors | An improvement  
*Example, increasing skills or improving performance of a business practice* | A design and implementation of something different from what exists now  
*Example, loss that initiates grieving process* | A radical redesign or reengineering of the way we do business  
*Example, initiating losses with a significant shift in culture, behavior, process, and mind-sets* |
| Stated vision or goals | Goals that set the direction and parameters (answer why) for people affected are clearly stated | Goals that set the direction and parameters (answer why) for people affected are clearly stated  
Losses recognized and validated | Goals that set the direction and parameters (answer why) for people affected are clearly stated.  
Losses recognized and validated  
Culture-required behaviors described |
| Defined roles | Project team roles defined and communicated | Project team roles and change consultant role defined and communicated | Project team, process team, and change leadership team roles defined and communicated. Method to coordinate and communicate across the teams is in place |
| Leadership guidance or commitment | Leadership approves changes, may or may not be a recipient of outcome, and may not have ongoing involvement | Leadership approves, is supportive, understands the potential ramifications of transitional change for staff, and has ongoing involvement, but is not required to be a driving force | Leadership commitment is a driving force; leadership is involved in the initial planning and communication process, approves redesign of policies, procedures, resources, and technologies |
| Multilayered communication | Project team has plan for communicating status, issues, and updates to leadership  
Communication can be one-way telling | Communication paints a picture of the future; describes the plan (step-by-step roadmap); defines roles (what individuals can do to help us get there)  
Need for two-way dialogue investigated  
Emotional impact validated | Establish multiple levels of communication; create two-way dialoguing opportunities; describe specific behaviors required and give feedback about them |
| Training | Training required where new process affects workflow | Training addresses how the losses created by change may affect people | Retraining for new role assignment may be required |
| Human resources | Early adopters rewarded  
Resistant behaviors identified and addressed  
Performance measured | Reassignment, relocation, or counseling offered for job termination | Reimbursement plan required for new roles and responsibilities |

Source: A synthesis of ideas influenced by change thought leaders, including Bridges (2003); LaMarsh (1995); Ackerman Anderson & Anderson (2001).
be critical in developmental change, transitional change requires vision, clearly defined roles, and an effective communication plan. Transformational change also requires that all of these elements be in place, but leadership commitment is by far the most critical element of this most complex level of change (see Table 3). Without leadership commitment, especially at the supervisory and managerial levels, developmental change and transitional change can be successful, but transformational change is not likely to succeed.

SUMMARY
Change is inherent in project management. This article
• Describes the vital relationship between project management and proactive change leadership throughout an active project
• Proposes the addition of a knowledge area that addresses change leadership from a conscious perspective
• Proposes concrete deliverables that can be created and used in alignment with the phases of the project life cycle, and distinguishes the deliverables of change leadership from those of change control

Transformational change occurs when forces in the environment cause an organization to radically redesign its business. The change process is messy, confusing, and at times chaotic. The journey toward achieving transformational change does not take a linear path. The depth of transformational change is significant, and the leaders in the organization must begin the change journey long before a detailed understanding of the destination can be determined. Large-scale transformational change in organizations is difficult when a change leadership process has not been consciously considered. Through the integration of project management and change leadership, we can approach change armed with a concrete set of deliverables that can guide our decisions and actions.

Since the spirit of human performance technology encourages interventions that draw from multiple disciplines to achieve measurable organizational benefits, a partnership between change leadership and project management can bring together two powerful disciplines that will further enhance products and services for our customer organizations. ★

Note: The authors give special thanks to Michael C. Cooper, PhD (statistics) for his contribution and support.

References


BARBER GRIFFITH-COOPER, MEd, has served the health care industry for 16 years as a consultant, adviser, trainer, mentor, and change agent. From her graduate studies in human and organizational development, she draws on a wide range of interventions from multiple disciplines, including instructional systems design, organizational development, human resource management, and behavioral psychology. Bea has published The Theory of Variation: Making Sense of Process Improvement Data (workshop manual) and Introduction to Profound Knowledge (course pack). She may be reached at bargriffincooper@learnsmith.com.

KARYL KING, PMP, has 15 years of leadership experience in project management, specifically in developing project management methodologies in the new product development and health care industries. She is experienced in leading and working collaboratively with team members to complete projects in new product development, quality enhancement, rapid tooling, and information technology development, using the Toyota lean methodology for process improvement. She may be reached at karylking@sbcglobal.net.