

# Leading Major Change

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GATEWAY SEMINARY

# Leading People through Transition

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It's not the changes that do you in,  
it's the transitions.

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**William Bridges**  
*The Art of Managing Transitions*

# Change is Different than Transition

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Difference between change and transition:

- Change is the set of new circumstances introduced in an organization.
- Transition is the emotional, psychological, and spiritual adjustment people go through to accommodate the change.

# Change is Different than Transition

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Common leadership mistake – putting too much emphasis on change and not enough on transition.

- Christian leaders have a spiritual motivation to manage transition well – we care about people.
- Managing transition is a disciple making process – helping people learn and grow.

# Change is Different than Transition

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Three key aspects of managing transition:

- Transition involves managing grief.
- Strategy trumps spontaneity.
- Reluctance does not always equal opposition.

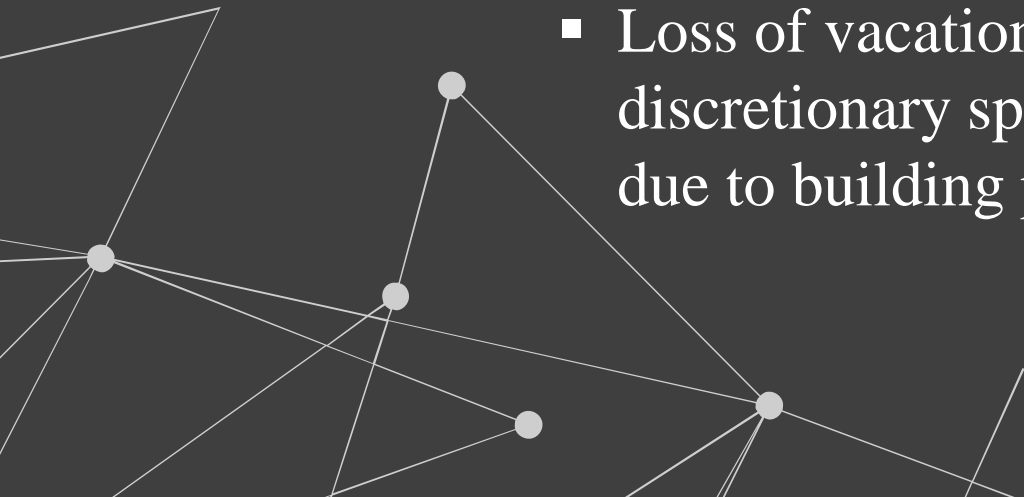


# Grief – Not Rebellion

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Change produces a sense of loss.

- People respond to change by going through a grief process.
- Examples of spiritual loss
  - Loss of spiritual confidence.
  - Loss of vacations and discretionary spending due to building projects.
  - Lost position.
  - Lost expertise.
  - Wasted Knowledge base.
  - Loss of spiritual heritage.



# Grief – Not Rebellion

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Loss is experienced as grief

- Stages of grief:

- shock
- bargaining
- anger
- exploration
- denial
- adjustment

- People process their losses at different rates and in different ways.

- People may be handling other losses simultaneously.



# Grief – Not Rebellion

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Managing organizational grief – pastoral care.

- Initiate pastoral care for people experiencing change.
- Initiate pastoral care by:
  - Talking with people pastorally.
  - Sharing information about the change and the grief process.
  - Recognizing grieving people process information poorly.
  - Creating dialogue opportunities.

# Grief – Not Rebellion


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Managing organizational grief – creating parameters.

- Create parameters for followers to understand and interpret the change.
- Create parameters to help minimize anxiety.
- Establish parameters carefully – be trustworthy and follow through on what you promise.

# Strategy – Not Spontaneity

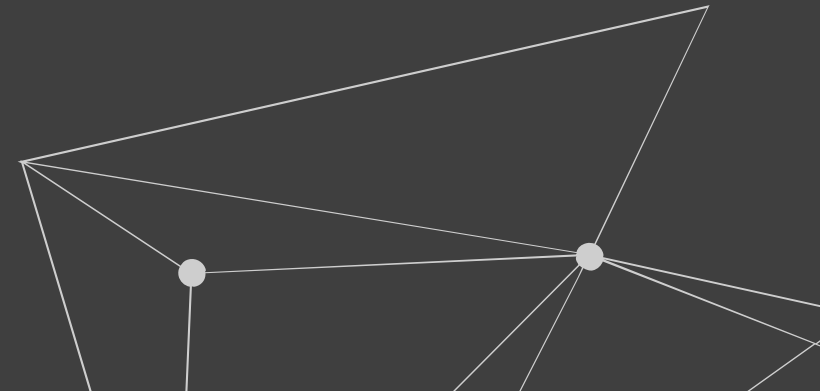
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- Strategic documents explain the change.
    - Detailed documents can be counterproductive.
    - An entire strategic document should be one to three pages.
  - Challenges to writing a strategic document.
    - It is easier to write longer than shorter.
    - Writing creates permanency and accountability.
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- An abstract geometric diagram in the bottom right corner, consisting of several white dots connected by thin white lines, forming a network of triangles and polygons.

# Reluctance – Not Opposition

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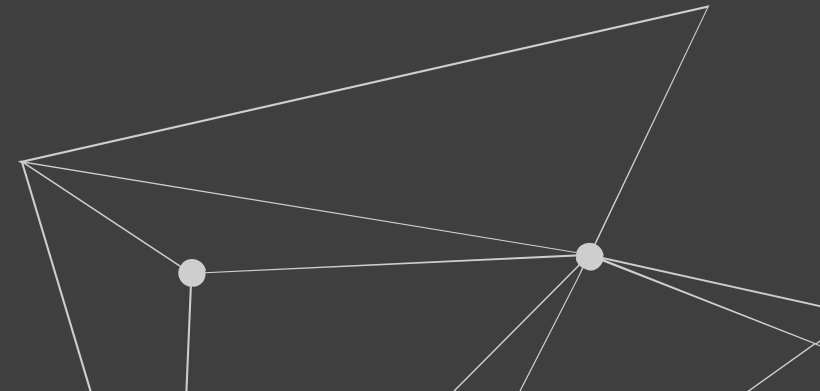
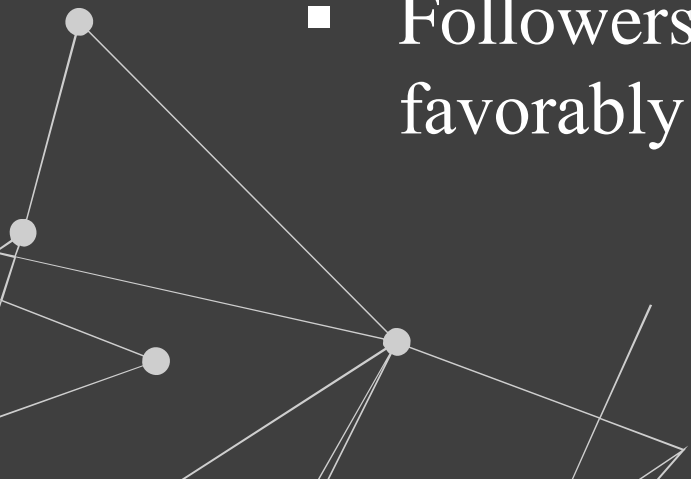
- Insecurity creates false dichotomies and wrong assumptions for leaders – internalizing and personalizing opposition.
- Leaders must allow followers time for:
  - Making a final decision
  - Developing communication avenues
  - Accepting the major change



# Reluctance – Not Opposition

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- Followers begin their process of acceptance when they hear the change communicated for the first time
  - How long does it take followers to agree with and support a major change recommendation or decision? - A few days to a few weeks
  - Followers want their leaders to succeed and generally want to respond favorably to their leader's initiatives.



# Reluctance – Not Opposition

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People who do not accept change.

- Non-supporters; non-adopters – passive people who can be ignored.
- Resolute opponents – cannot be allowed to derail major change since it strikes at the mission.



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