

# Change – building the Commitment Igloo™

Change is the manifestation of the actions and behavioural shifts required when solving for problems and opportunities. Facilitating groups of people to find solutions for problems and opportunities brings about change. It isn't just about leading workshops, drawing up action plans, or herding stakeholders into a room. It's about shifting commitment — real, sustained, personal and collective commitment. This is the messy, emotional, and absolutely necessary territory where change either takes root... or dies a slow death behind a glossy PowerPoint deck.

One of the biggest reasons change fails is that organisations **underestimate how hard commitment is to build** — or they treat it like a compliance exercise. They default to managing change as a linear, mechanistic process, often with the Kubler-Ross change curve slapped on to give the illusion of psychological sophistication.

Worse, they treat change as something to *do to people*, rather than *with them*.



## The facilitator's role: creating conditions, not just conversations

As facilitators, our job is not to "deliver change". It's to **co-create the conditions** where change can thrive — and that means creating environments where:

- People closest to the problem or opportunity are **heard early**;
- Fear doesn't shape the conversation;
- And inclusion is **real**, not performative.

Enter the metaphor I use to guide this process — **The Commitment Igloo™**.

It's a way to sense-check whether we're really ready for deep involvement, creativity, and emotional risk — or just pretending.



## The Commitment Igloo™ – a metaphor for facilitated change

### 1. An igloo is only built when the snow is suitable.

Just like you can't build an igloo from dry powder, you can't facilitate meaningful change if leadership isn't ready to release control. The system itself — capacity, capability, maturity — must be ready to engage. As a facilitator, it's crucial to surface this early: *is the environment actually ready for co-creation?*



### 2. It's designed to serve a distinct purpose.

No one builds an igloo for decoration — it's functional. Likewise, facilitators must uncover the *true intention* behind the change and reason for involvement. If it's a tick-box exercise, people will sniff it out in five minutes. Purpose drives participation. Make it real.

### 3. It creates a safe space from a volatile environment.

Psychological safety is non-negotiable. This isn't fluff — it's structural. If your sessions don't feel safe, people won't speak freely. Your facilitation must help leaders *create and protect that space*, especially when the heat is on.

#### 4. It's paradoxical: -45°C outside, +16°C inside.

Here's the kicker: the world might be chaotic, urgent, and cold — but inside the igloo, it's warm, focused, and human. Effective facilitation holds that paradox: *slowing down to speed up*. Getting everyone's voice before diving into action. It might feel inefficient... but it's actually essential.

#### 5. It strengthens as it melts and compacts.

Over time, igloo walls settle and tighten. Similarly, repeated cycles of honest dialogue, inclusive decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving *strengthens trust and commitment*. As a facilitator, your job is to build rituals and rhythms that make this reinforcement repeatable.



#### Why it matters: commitment can't be forced

Facilitators often face the tension of helping teams that want results *now*, but haven't invested in the conditions to make it possible. They want change, without change. They want speed, without the upfront slowdown that makes speed sustainable.

This is why the Commitment Igloo™ is so helpful. It allows you to:

- Diagnose readiness and resistance;
- Focus on environment, not just content;
- Hold leaders accountable for inclusion, not just output.

Because *you can't fake commitment*. And the best-designed change strategy goes nowhere without it.



#### Three questions to guide facilitators in building commitment

These aren't just reflective prompts — they're heat checks for your igloo:

##### 1. Are we involving the people closest to the challenge — or just informing them after the fact?

Commitment doesn't come from being told. It comes from being trusted to help shape what matters.

##### 2. Have we created a space where people feel safe to speak up — and confident they'll be heard?

If people are filtering their truth, you're facilitating in the dark. Psychological safety isn't soft stuff — it's systemic.

##### 3. Do our actions reflect genuine intent to co-create — or are we stuck in tick-box territory?

You can't fake inclusion. People know. If the igloo isn't warm inside, no one's staying.



#### Final thought for facilitators

Whether you're facilitating large groups dealing with transformative initiatives, helping an Executive team navigate pain points in their organisation, or working with a small group on how they get stuff done — start with the **Commitment Igloo™**.

It's not just a metaphor. It's a method for making sure the *emotional architecture* of change is in place before you try to build anything on top of it. Because no matter how shiny your slides, change doesn't stick unless people feel a part of it.