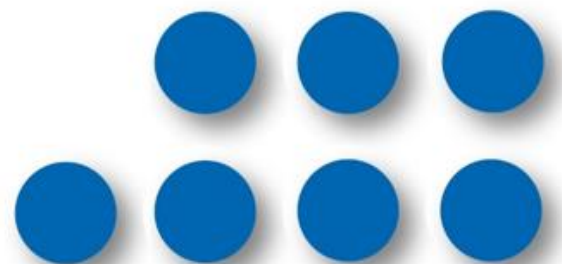


**PROMETHEAN PLAY**

*building better outcomes for organisations*

# Creating commitment for change – the Ideation Igloo™



Implementing change requires shifts in commitment. The extent of this is determined by many factors. It is one of the main reasons why change fails and can be considered at the individual, team, or enterprise level.

Organisations too often default to managing change, treating it like a linear process with the Kubler-Ross change curve overlayed to at least demonstrate some human understanding. They don't seek ideas from people closest to the problem or opportunity.

We see change management as done to others where problems are identified from a distance and solutions decided in isolation. If the approach to change is taken from an inclusive position, involving those that the change ultimately impacts, better solutions and a higher level of commitment will result. This approach can take longer and may be frustrating for some senior leaders who think they know best, but what results is motivation to deliver intended outcomes, and this pays dividends.

If the environment is created where real involvement can happen, then arguably, organisations would be anticipating problems before they became something that require a reactive approach. This drives more efficiency.

People need to be saying "I feel safe" and "I belong". If leaders want to hear what is really happening, there should be no fear or repercussion for someone honestly sharing their ideas, thoughts, and feelings, even if laden with subjectivity.

We use a metaphor to sense check the conditions for collaboration, involvement and embracing ideas. The Ideation Igloo™ represents 5 observations which help create the space to liberate ideas, thoughts and feelings. Translated to an organisational setting, it ensures success and greater commitment, avoiding false empowerment, the illusion of control, and fake inclusion. These things are culture killers and culture determine performance.

### The Ideation Igloo™



1. an igloo is built when the snow is suitable.
2. it's designed to serve a distinct purpose.
3. it creates a safe space from the harsh, hostile, and volatile environment.
4. it's paradoxical in that it can be -45 degrees on the outside and up to +16 degrees on the inside.
5. igloos become shorter over time as the snow compacts and melts as one.

Just as an igloo is built when the environment is favourable, leadership must be ready to engage with team members and release control. It starts here. If leaders are not comfortable surfacing and discussing issues, challenges, opinion, and allowing teams to help craft solutions, there is no point building an 'igloo'. It won't last. *Leaders must want to change, or don't waste the effort trying.* Practically, the organisation system must be able to cope too e.g., have capacity and capability.

The igloo is built for a reason. In an organisation the metaphor relates to intention – leaders creating the space to truly hear, and act, on what others think or feel. If individuals' sense 'tick box' activity and pre-determined solutions and decisions, the igloo will not be inhabited and won't be of value. *Focus must be on co-construction not consultation and culture is manifested by interaction.*

An igloo creates safety. Organisations must work hard to demonstrate a 'no fear' environment. That's not to say conflict and disagreement will not exist but people must feel safe to share what's on their mind. Just like an igloo may be filled with warm blankets for its occupants, embrace, reward,

and recognise individuals who step up, challenge authority, and disrupt the status quo. *The answers are already in the system.*

It's paradoxical that a structure made from snow can be so warm inside. Leaders and vested stakeholders of organisations push for pace and urgency with unintended consequences being re-work, short-term decision making and siloed priorities or activity. The paradox in this case is that when organisations stop and invest in hearing every voice, considering the full system, they can move forward better and faster. Things surface that would otherwise never have been noticed until it became too late. *Don't wait for things to go wrong before you stop and look for interdependencies.*

As time passes the igloo strengthens and the bond between the ice blocks intensifies. It's the same in organisations if leaders adopt a consistent, repeatable, and transparent approach to involving people, however small or large the initiative or situation is. Barriers that exist break down and trust is formed. This results in even greater input and 'cutting through' more quickly to establish root cause or solutions. People feel happier and more engaged, supporting what they have helped create. The traditional 'download' of information, with leaders deciding on plans and telling teams to deliver, is seen across many organisations and sometimes has a place e.g., with regards to health and safety or non-negotiable compliance issues. However, applying that as a broad approach across the enterprise does not foster commitment for change or help create a movement that positively drives what and how things are done. *A PowerPoint presentation doesn't change anything, people do, and the best strategy goes nowhere unless you build commitment.*

The Ideation Igloo™ applied to organisations can therefore be summarised as:

1. **an igloo is built when the snow is suitable** – leadership and the organisation is ready to engage.
2. **it's designed to serve a distinct purpose** - the organisation true intention is to hear, and act, on what others think/feel.
3. **it creates a safe space from the harsh, hostile, and volatile environment** – individuals and teams feel psychologically safe to help address challenges/opportunities.
4. **it's paradoxical in that it can be -45 degrees on the outside and up to +16 degrees on the inside** – the organisation recognises that by stopping and investing in hearing every voice, they can move forward better and faster.
5. **igloos become shorter over time as the snow compacts and melts as one** - the organisation sees the value surrounding relationships that span normal boundaries, recognising that stronger and closer bonds form the more time is invested in collaborative efforts.

Simply put, if time and resources are invested to include, connect, and engage every voice, in an environment where people feel safe and willing to collaborate, commitment levels increase. When this is acted on, time and time again, the narrative is strengthened and sustained.

All aspects of the Ideation Igloo™ are important and how they interact determines the extent at which people want to get involved, feel it worth contributing and accelerate shifts in commitment. If one part crumbles, it impacts overall commitment to change.

Whether applied at an organisational level, complex change, or the seemingly small, local decisions made by a manager, it's relevant. Start here and other aspects of engagement like how to motivate, keeping people energised and well, work rituals and routines etc. can then be designed in a way that make a real difference and grease the cogs of change.

## Further reading

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