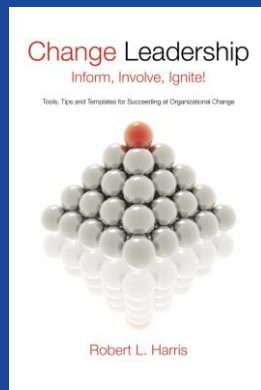


Strategic Influencing – Advocating for Change

How to Engage Others and Get Needed Outcomes



Robert Harris
Presentation to Northwestern Ontario Municipal
Association
April 24, 2015

Getting Agreement Isn't Easy

- Most people see more reasons why not
- Stability is preferred to uncertainty
- “Culture (politics) trumps Strategy”



80%

Start in “Resistance”



“Whatever it is... I’m against it!”

(Groucho Marx)

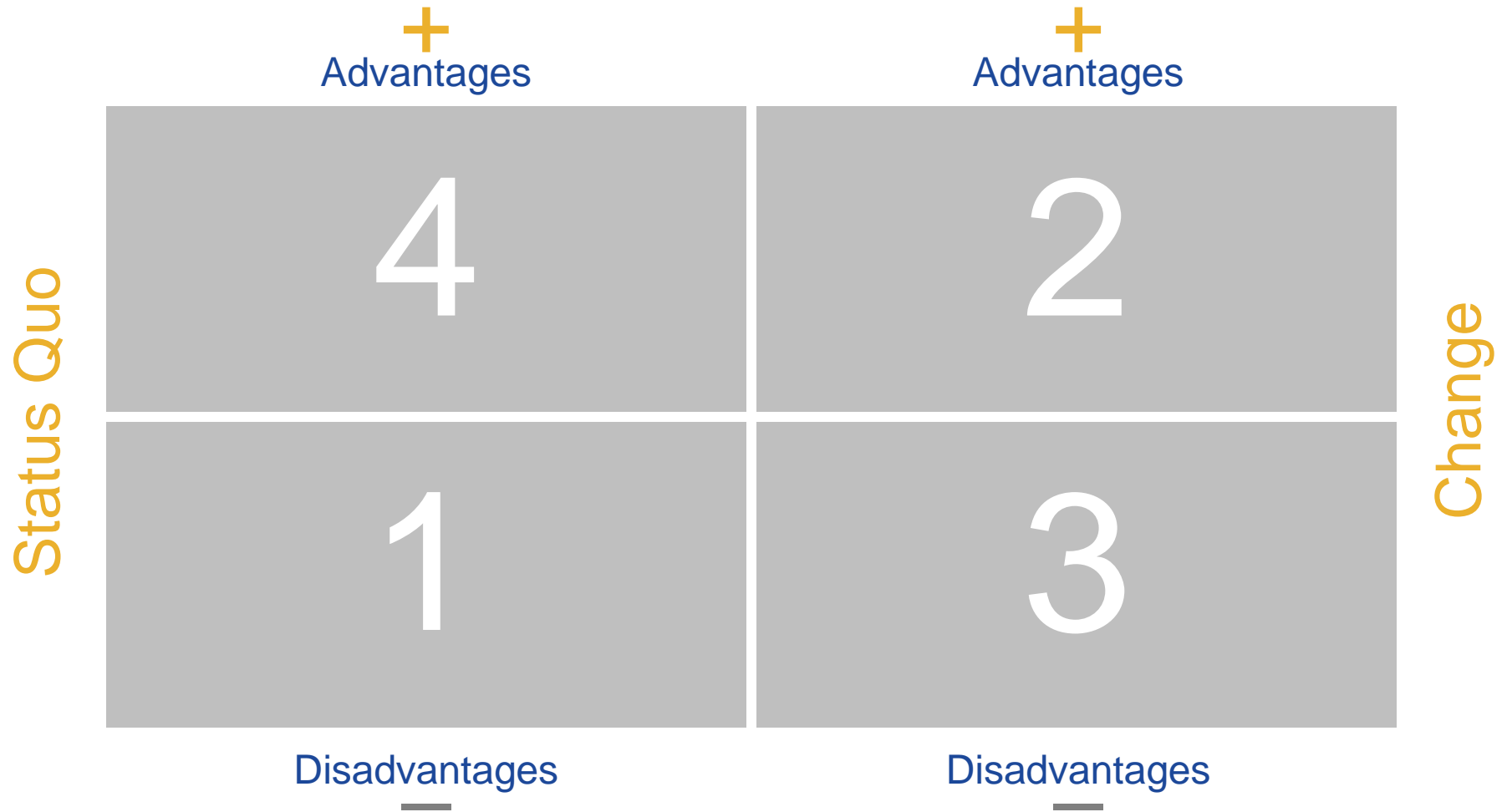
This Session Illustrates a...

4-Step Model for How To:

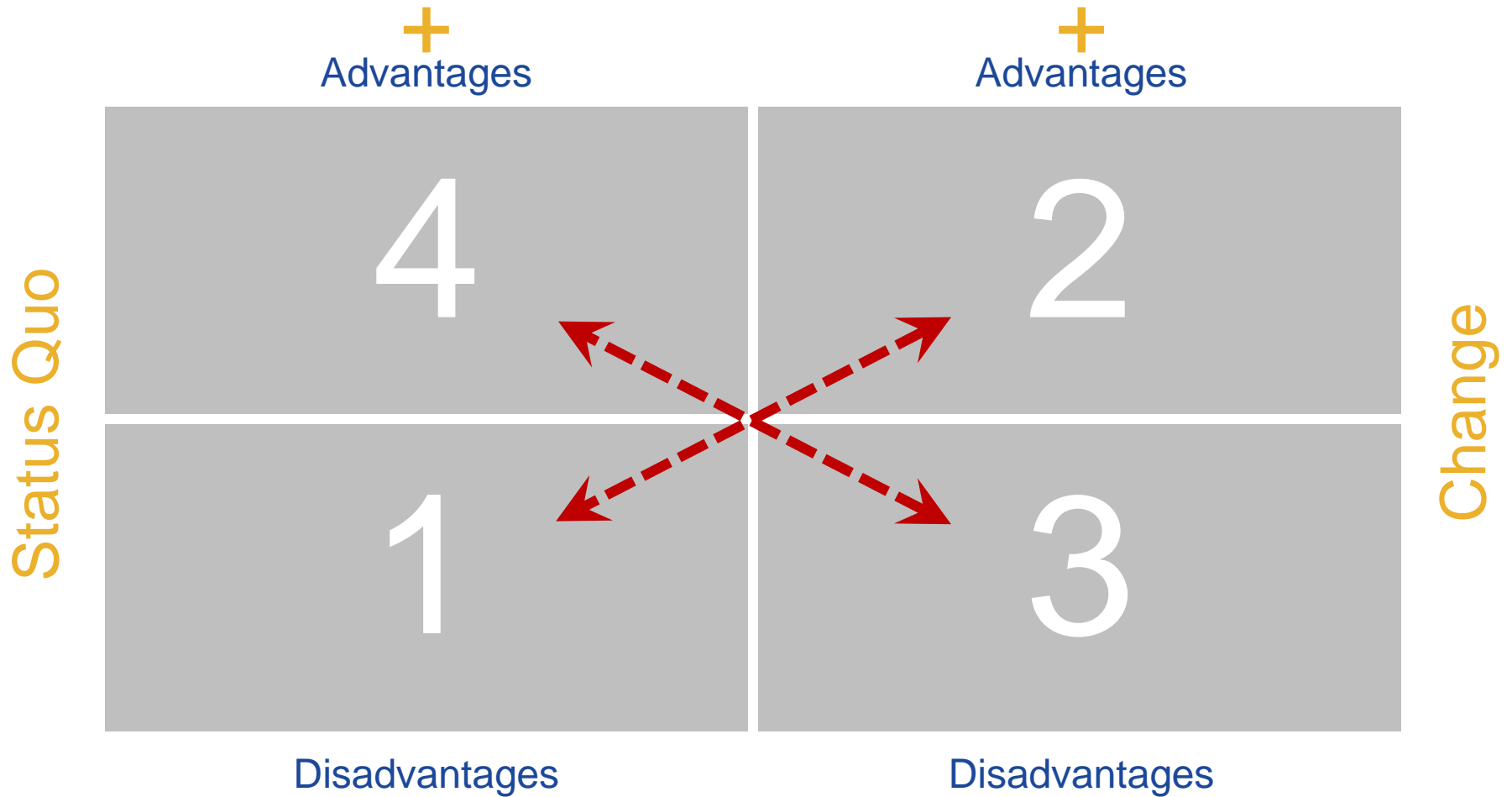
- Plan and communicate change news
- Advocate effectively
- Ensure stakeholder involvement
- Reconcile polarized viewpoints
- Preserve your credibility
- Build trust



Change Communications



The Natural “Disconnect”



- The “natural” persuasion pattern is to present only quadrants #1 and #2
- The “natural” thought pattern for others is to focus on quadrants #3 and #4

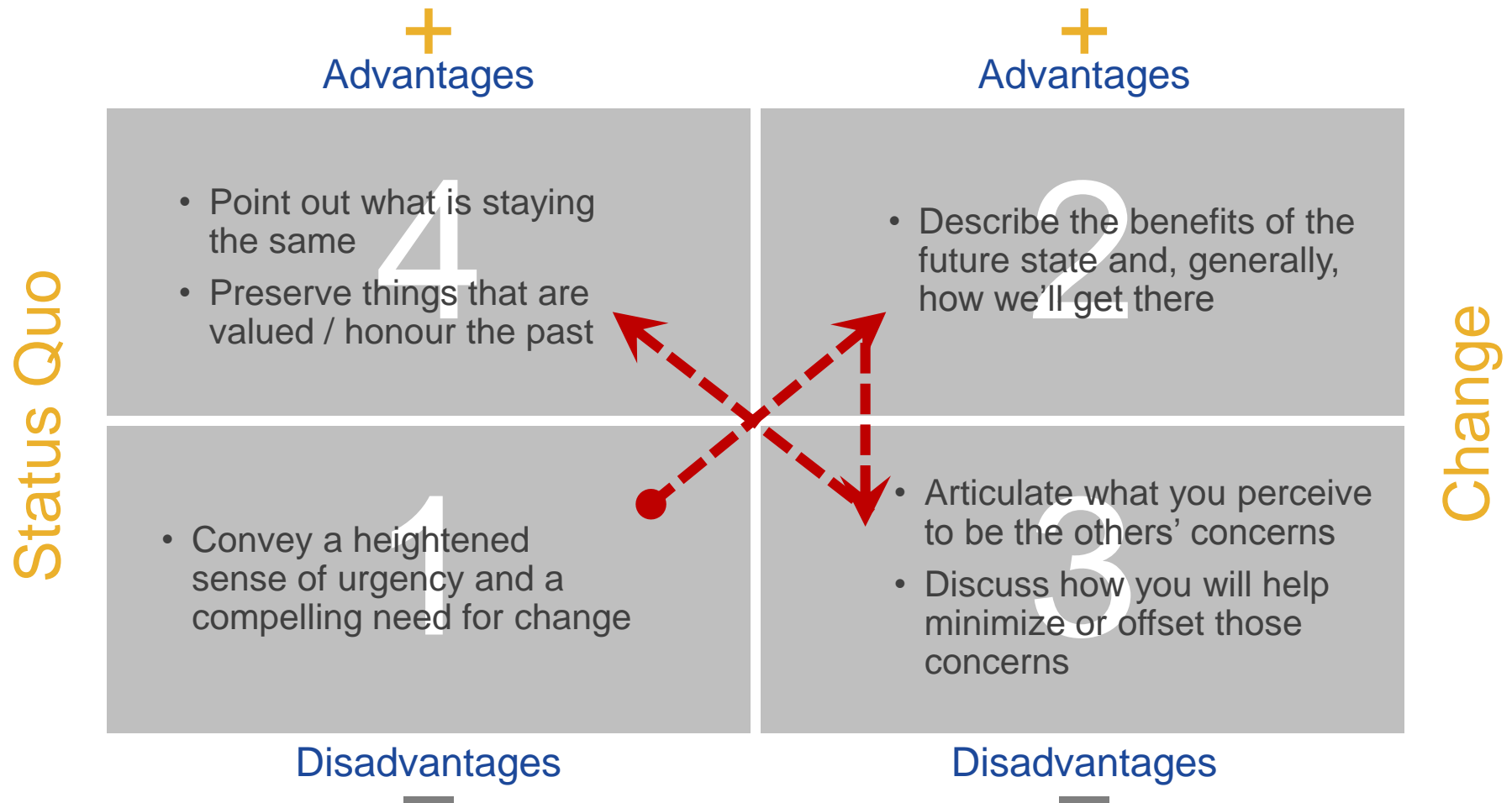
Why Bother...

“The clearer you are about the ‘truth’ of your point of view, the clearer I am that you don’t have a clue about the truth of my point of view”

(Barry Johnson)



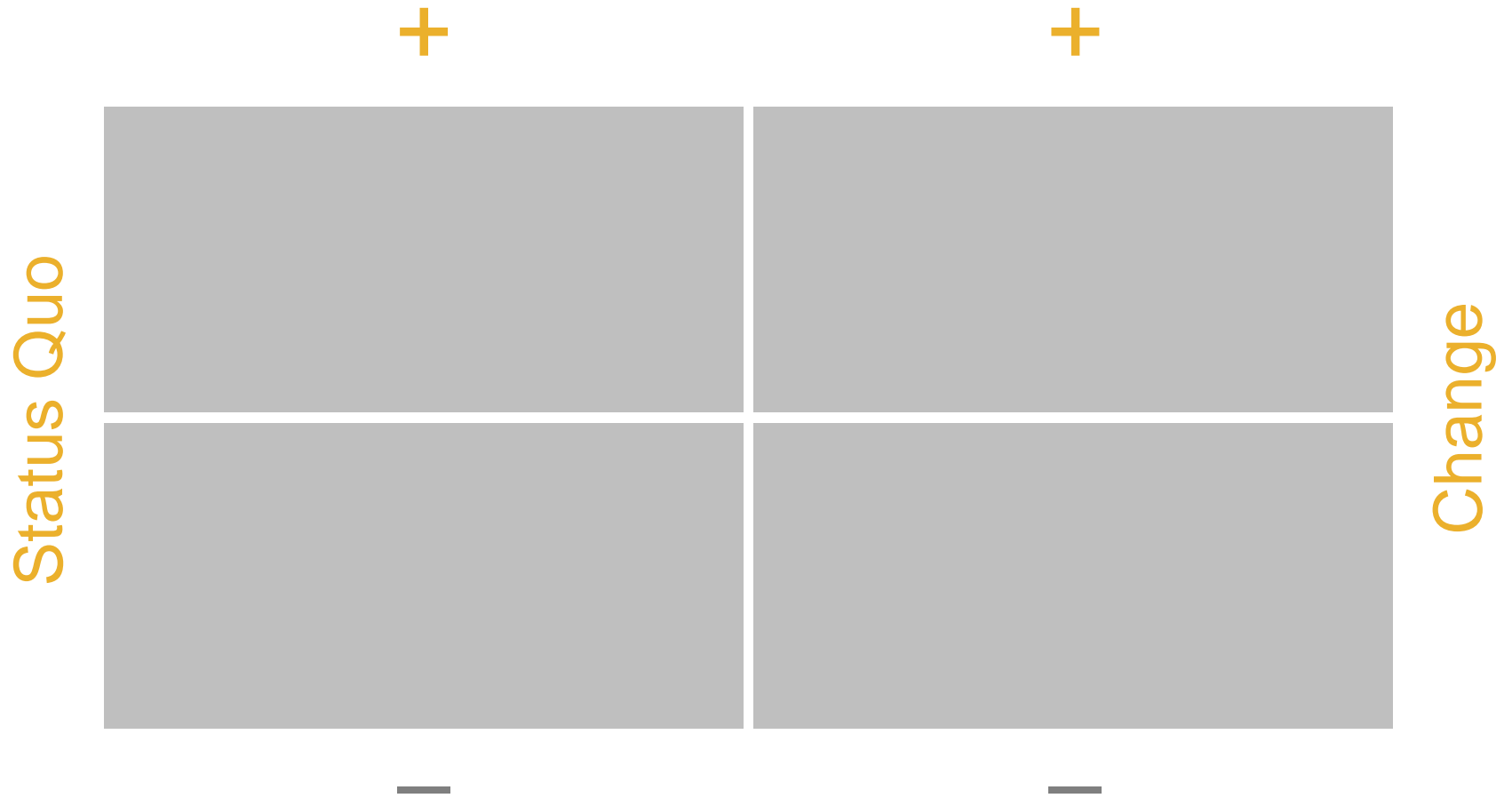
Strategic Influencing (4-Box) Model



Applying the 4-Box Model...

1. Identify some municipal change that you are familiar with, that you might be presenting or advocating to others. Ideally, this might be a somewhat contentious issue where there are differing perspectives.
2. Using the worksheet provided, capture your group's ideas regarding what content would go into each box. Specifically:
 1. **What is wrong with maintaining the status quo** / why do we need the change – what would be the downside “pain” if we continued with the same?
 2. What are some **anticipated benefits** of making this change?
 3. Why would the stakeholder group being **not want this change** – what would be their concerns (sources of “resistance”)? Is there anything we can do to **help offset or lessen** these concerns....?
 4. What are the things the stakeholder group **values that won't be impacted even after** the change is undertaken?

Worksheet



Tips for “Box #1”

- **Don't underdo Box 1** – it is important to present a compelling case for “**why** change”
 - “**Ground it**” (Don't hover at 10,000 feet)
 - Use **facts and examples** that would resonate with those being asked to change
 - **Cascade** your examples to the ground level by asking..., “the **implications** of which are...?”
- Never make it “**personal**” – focus on the **problem**, not people
- Recognize that **others may need much more convincing** than what you require
 - Spend **significant time and effort** on Box 1



Tips for “Box #2”

- **Don't overdo Box 2** – remember that about **80%** of your audience is **least motivated** by this box
 - By “cheerleading” this box, you risk **losing the attention and trust** of most of your audience
- **You can return to Box 2 later – i.e., as “Box 5”**
 - There are benefits worthy of discussion but the key is to **ensure your audience is listening**
 - Once the audience has thoroughly explored boxes 1, 3, and 4, **they will bring their attention to Box 2; i.e., ... “Tell me a bit more about this change...?”**



Tips for “Box #3”

- **You don’t need all the answers!**
 - In fact, they don’t want you to have all the answers – that would **impede their ability to input and influence** how the change is carried out
- There is a **“Psychological” benefit** to Box 3
 - It **demonstrates positive intent** and that you have made efforts to **understand their needs and concerns**
 - It provides a **“safe” climate** for others to raise issues
- You **don’t need to be an expert** to come up with 90% of the key Box 3 issues



Tips for “Box #4”

- **Box 4** has a “**calming**” effect
 - In Without Box 4, employees will go to a **worst-case scenario** (“catastrophizing”)
- **Box 4** crystallizes **what needs to be preserved** (i.e., **not** changed)
 - “Don’t throw out the baby with the bath water!”
 - Box 4 reassures employees that **leaders value current elements** that are important and need to be maintained
- **Box 4 is critical** when the focus is on **cost-cutting** and finding “**efficiencies**”



Other Insights to the 4-Box Model...

- The two most critical boxes, initially, to employees are **Boxes 1 and 3**
- If **Box 3 exceeds Box 1** – and you have a choice – seriously consider **whether the change is needed now**
- When **Box 1** is legislated or a political decision, then spend most of your efforts on **Boxes 3 and 4**

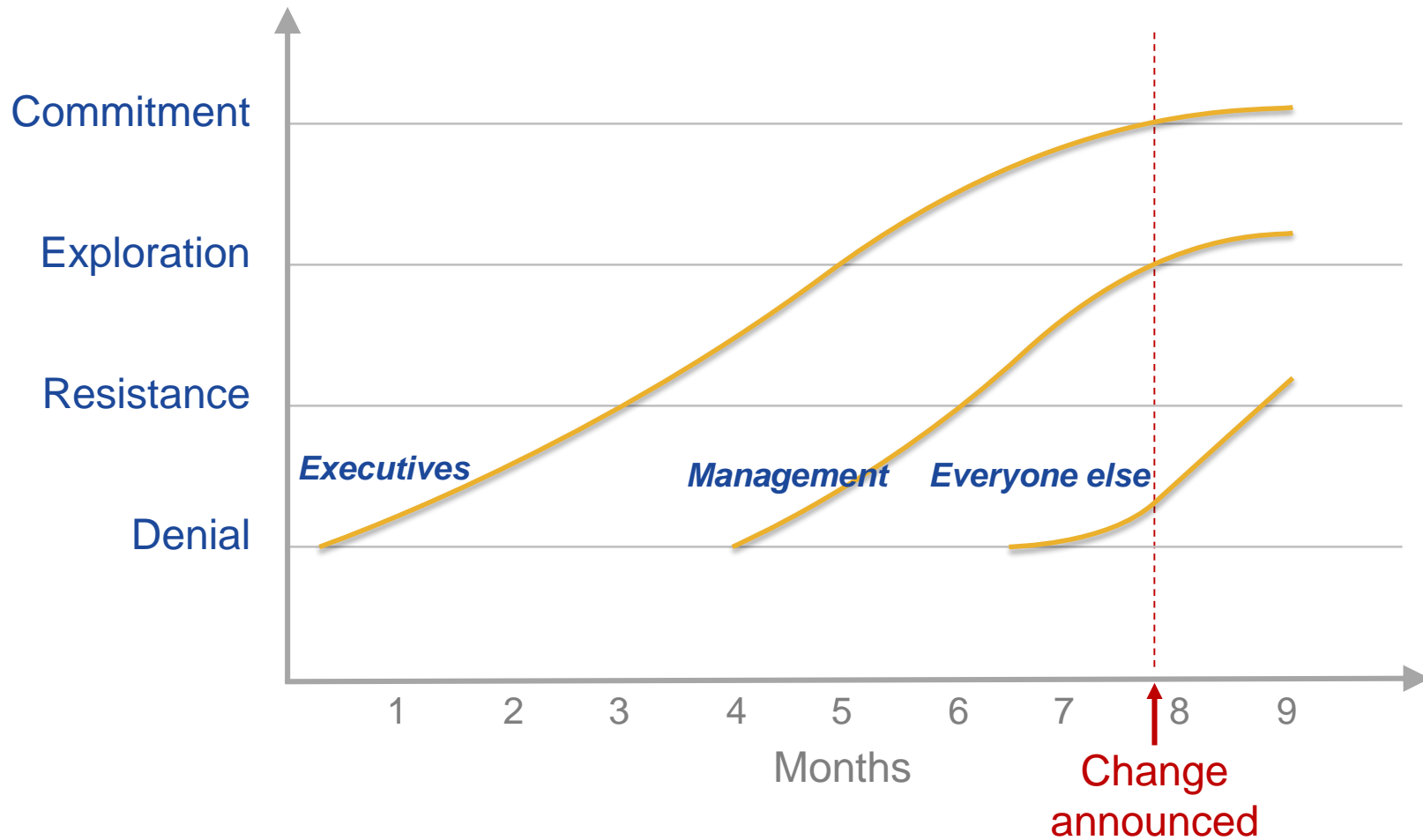


Leaders often get a “Head-Start”

Management typically has a “head start”, is privy to more information and sooner, and has more direct influence on the change – they need to take this into account when gauging the reactions of others



The “Marathon Effect” (Bridges)



Message from “Marathon Effect”

Talk with people **where they are at, not where you are at** – this leads to personal credibility, trust, and engagement.

(Remember...you may have had a “head-start”)



Thank You



About the Speaker – Robert Harris

- Robert Harris is President of Robert Harris Resources Inc (RHR Inc.), an organization focused on enhancing leadership and organizational effectiveness.
- Robert started his career in Alberta and British Columbia. Robert then joined the Ontario Government, working for two ministries. Subsequently, Robert held management roles in the healthcare, high technology, and beverage industries. As Director of HR for Molson Breweries, Robert was on the steering team that coordinated the merger of Molson with Carling O’Keefe Breweries. Following Molson, Robert became a partner in a Canada-wide consulting firm and subsequently established Robert Harris Resources Inc.
- RHR Inc. provides consulting and training in change leadership, conflict management, negotiating and influencing, consulting skills, career management, individual and team effectiveness.
- Robert Harris is also a frequenter presenter at conferences and delivers keynotes on a number of leadership related topics. In 2007, Robert’s most recent book – *Change Leadership: Inform, Involve, Ignite!* – was published.
- Robert has published numerous articles in the business press and is the co-author of “*Global Impact – Award Winning Performance Programs from Around the World*” and “*Navigating Your Career*”
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