Lewin's Three-Step Model

WORKSHEET

The oldest change model in the book: destabilise the current pattern of group behaviour, move to the new one, then anchor it so the group does not snap back. Lewin sketched it in 1947; later writers tidied the sketch into the staple that every change model since descends from.

PREPARED BY _____ DATE _____

1 UNFREEZE

Destabilising the existing equilibrium: building shared recognition that the current pattern cannot continue, reducing the restraining forces, and creating the safety needed for people to give up what they know.

2 CHANGE

The move itself: the group transitions to the new pattern of behaviour through trial, participation and rapid adjustment, with an expected and openly acknowledged dip in performance.

3 REFREEZE

Anchoring the new level: formal structures, incentives and social norms are rewritten so the new behaviour is the path of least resistance, and the group's equilibrium re-forms around it.

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