

**Figure 3.6: Adaptive Change Process—  
Aligned With the Cultural Guardian**

<b>Adaptive Change Process: Aligned With the Cultural Guardian</b>			
<b>Steps</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1. Assess current alignment.	Begin by clearly identifying how the proposed change aligns with the organization's cultural values and norms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a quick review of the organization's vision and core values to confirm the alignment.</li> <li>Engage in discussions with key stakeholders, like leadership teams and cultural guardians, to ensure the proposed change is truly aligned with the current culture.</li> </ul>	The change results in a clear statement outlining the alignment between the change and the organization's culture crafted in collaboration with key stakeholders and formal leaders.
2. Communicate the change.	Communicate the change in a way that reinforces its alignment with the culture, reducing resistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frame the change as an enhancement or natural extension of the existing values.</li> <li>Throughout the entire change process, use storytelling to show how the change supports the organization's long-standing practices and norms.</li> <li>Throughout the entire change process, use both formal communication (memos, meetings) and informal communication channels (hallway conversations, staff huddles) to reinforce the message.</li> </ul>	The change results in constant communication regarding the change throughout the change process. The change is presented not as something new or disruptive but as a reinforcement of what already exists.
3. Empower stakeholders to lead.	Engage cultural sentinels and key influencers (scouts) within the organization to be champions of the change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify staff who are enthusiastic about the change and have a good reputation within the culture. Empower these individuals to lead discussions, workshops, or feedback sessions on the change.</li> <li>Offer leadership opportunities for employees to take ownership of aspects of the change, ensuring buy-in at all levels.</li> </ul>	The change results in a distributed leadership model where staff members feel ownership of the change.

# REPRODUCIBLE

Steps	Objective	Key Actions	Outcome
4. Leverage existing practices and rituals.	Build momentum by embedding the change into existing routines and practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify current processes, meetings, or traditions in which the change can be incorporated.</li> <li>If the organization already has regular check-ins, team meetings, or professional development sessions, use these to reinforce the aligned change.</li> <li>Celebrate existing behaviors that exemplify the change.</li> </ul>	The change becomes naturally embedded into the existing fabric of the organization.
5. Provide tools and resources.	Ensure employees have the resources they need to support the change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training or development courses that focus on how the change can be executed.</li> <li>Make sure staff have access to the tools or systems that make the change easy to implement.</li> <li>Offer continuous support, such as question-and-answer sessions or office hours, where employees can come and seek advice about incorporating the change.</li> </ul>	Employees feel equipped and confident in making the aligned change work.
6. Monitor and adjust as needed.	Track the progress of the change to ensure it stays aligned and on track.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use informal check-ins and pulse surveys to get feedback from staff about how the change is being integrated.</li> <li>Be flexible and willing to make small adjustments based on this feedback. Since the change is aligned with the culture, any resistance should be minimal, but monitoring will allow for quick troubleshooting.</li> <li>Set clear benchmarks or indicators to measure the success of the change.</li> </ul>	Staff have a clear understanding of the change's effectiveness, along with the ability to quickly pivot if necessary.

Steps	Objective	Key Actions	Outcome
7. Celebrate and recognize progress.	Celebrate successes that reinforce the aligned culture and the change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicly recognize individuals or teams who have successfully implemented the change in a way that aligns with the organization's values.</li> <li>Use both formal celebrations (awards, recognition at staff meetings) and informal acknowledgments (thank-you emails, personal notes).</li> <li>Tie the celebration to the organization's broader cultural values to reinforce how the change aligns with those values.</li> </ul>	Staff maintain the momentum and view the change as a success.
8. Sustain the change with continuous feedback.	Ensure that the change becomes part of the long-term culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Throughout the entire change process, set up regular feedback loops where employees can provide their thoughts on how the change is working in practice.</li> <li>Continuously relate the change back to the organization's core values to maintain alignment.</li> <li>Encourage leadership to model the change through their behavior and language, showing that the change is not a one-time event but a continuous effort.</li> </ul>	The change is not only implemented but also sustained as part of the organization's long-term culture.

#### Example Prompts for Leaders to Use in Discussions:

- How does this change reflect the core values we've always had?
- How can we use our current practices to make this change feel natural?
- In what ways can we empower staff to take ownership of this change?
- What resources or tools do we need to ensure the success of this change?

Source: Adapted from Hubbart, J. A. (2023). *Organizational change: The challenge of change aversion*. Administrative Sciences, 13(7). <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci13070162>; Kotter, J. P., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1979). Choosing strategies for change. *Harvard Business Review*; van Dijk, R., & van Dick, R. (2009). *Navigating organizational change: Change leaders, employee resistance and work-based identities*. Journal of Change Management, 9(2), 143–163.