

'We will succeed in changing this world only if we can think and work together in new ways. We don't have to let go of what we believe, but we do need to be curious about what someone else believes.'

Margaret J Wheatley



## False Evidence Appearing Real?

On a leadership course recently, leaders shared stories of difficult situations they had faced in which they had managed to make a positive difference.

One theme was fear. Leaders had been faced with people acting from a (usually unspoken) sense of fear or anxiety, such as feeling that their competence, responsibility area, reputation or position were under threat. Beneficial outcomes came when the leader avoided reacting from a fear or anxiety of their own, such as also feeling their competence was challenged or worrying that they didn't have an answer. They stuck with the discomfort until they understood enough to give a **response** rather than a simple **reaction**.

In our current turbulent times, many people in workplaces are feeling a degree of threat. The outcomes of this can range from localised behaviours, such as withdrawing goodwill, to organisational behaviours such as choosing actions based on what the papers could say if the activity were to be misinterpreted. These are reactions rather than responses. The cuts may indeed be real, but fear and anxiety as reactions don't help. What DOES help is to work WITH what is changing and support your more adaptable self.

### RESPOND, DON'T REACT

Research shows that anxiety can lead to a reduced set of behaviours that we choose from. And this can also narrow our opportunities. Consider scapegoating, for example, when organisations reactively find a scapegoat to blame rather than responsively addressing accountability in their system. It's hard to know the realities from the outside looking in, but consider situations in which individuals have been cast out but the problem keeps coming round - child protection perhaps, issues in our prisons. **What keeps coming round in your organisation after an individual carried the can, and what would be helpful action now?**

### TOP TIPS FOR YOUR RESPONSE-ABLE SELF

1. Speak from enquiry, not judgement, as this often supports others' capability and prevents unhelpful defensive cycles.
2. Give yourself suitable food, exercise and rest. Without these, even your biochemistry can start to work against you.
3. Stop taking it personally. Stuff happens and it's information - not the one truth for ever.
4. Give up knowing what other people should do. Just be clear about what's yours to do - connect with your purpose.
5. When you feel fear or anxiety, ask if it's needed right now. Fear usually concerns things that haven't happened yet and may well never happen.
6. If you don't already have a meditative, mindful or centering practice, seek out one that's right for you.
7. At the end of each day, review what worked. Something always has. Be glad and build on it.

To explore how you might become more response-able and build resilience in your organisation, contact [Julie@irvingallan.com](mailto:Julie@irvingallan.com).

### 2-for-1 Offer

## Managed Change™ Workshop 13 & 14 October 2010, Central London

There has rarely been a better time to ensure your expertise in working with change.

This workshop is suitable for anyone responsible for designing, planning or implementing organisational change, including project managers, implementation teams, change leaders and consultants working in a support capacity.

### What will you gain?

- A practical introduction to Managed Change™ - a simple, proven and robust approach to managing change, through and with people
- Full implementation guide with key tools provided electronically
- Significant progress with your current change challenges
- New perspectives, greater clarity and renewed energy

For further information visit:  
[www.irvingallan.com/learning\\_events](http://www.irvingallan.com/learning_events)

*'Great couple of days! The workshop challenged my thoughts and expectations and it's really going to benefit my practice as an OD practitioner, thanks' 'The workshop helped me order the chaos. It was an amazing opportunity to make specific change management plans' 'Lots of epiphanies' 'Very professional course - high quality and valuable, practical content'*

Total price for 2 participants:  
£960 plus VAT

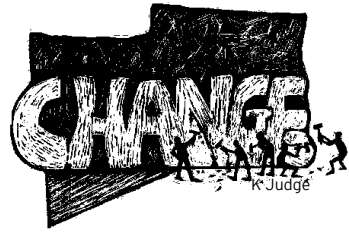
2-for-1 offer ends 6 September

To learn more, to book a place on one of our workshops and to discuss your change challenges, contact us via:

[Enquiries@irvingallan.com](mailto:Enquiries@irvingallan.com)

See pages 2 & 3 for more on Story and Work We're Busy With

## High Performing Change Agents Enable Organisational Success



Change Agents are tasked with delivering expected benefits, on time, to budget and usually with as little disruption as possible to the rest of organisational life. Their role is critical to organisational success yet often they don't feel sufficiently skilled or confident to play their change roles as effectively as they, or their organisations, would like.

**'Achieve greater clarity, focus and impact'**

Combining our psychological expertise with the Managed Change™ framework and approach, we enable Change Agents to build their capability and contribute more fully.

**Our new Change Agent 360 process** combines online assessment with face-to-face feedback and development planning structured around a 90 day plan. Its designed for anyone whose role involves significant change agency, including HR, Talent and OD professionals, project managers and members of dedicated transformation teams.

### What do Change Agents gain?

- Focused feedback from key stakeholders of their choice
- Clarity about what successful change agency involves
- Insight into their current strengths and development needs
- A comprehensive 360 report combining scores with rater comments
- Staged development planning, including face-to-face time with a skilled coach
- A realistic development plan focused on them as a Change Agent

**For teams,** *Change Agent 360* can be run as part of a whole team development process. It provides a powerful opportunity to develop a shared understanding of what change agency involves and to develop team strength.

### Change Agent 360 – 50% discount

If you want to build change agent capability in your organisation and think our structured profiling and development process could be of benefit, contact [Kirstin@irvingallan.com](mailto:Kirstin@irvingallan.com) for an informal discussion.

To take advantage of our **50% discount** on the usual per person price of £700 plus VAT make sure to **contact us by Monday 6 September**.

*'Thanks for being such a superb conscience and for giving such excellent incisive guidance.'* *'Thank you for today - your coaching really helped me get my arms around where to start.'* *'Thanks for an excellent session this week. It consolidated some of my thinking, and gave me some really useful new techniques to experiment with.'*

### Coming Soon! Online Self-Assessment for Change Agents

Our online self-assessment tool provides a time- and cost-effective solution, helping change agents gain clarity on their strengths and development needs for success in their role. If you're interested in building capability for change in your organisation and think self-assessment could be a good starting point, contact [Kirstin@irvingallan.com](mailto:Kirstin@irvingallan.com).



## The Scapegoat, the Trickster and You

Whether you sit in HR, OD, Learning and Development, or elsewhere, working with organisational characters to deliver an expected happy ending is a challenge.

Our Learning Arena session at CIPD's HRD 2010 exhibition was designed to explore and provoke debate on the role and value of different organisational characters. Here are some of the headlines:

### Tricksters

Annoying, cheeky, troublesome, wise, cunning. . . these characters are here to trouble us, often by exposing our follies and foibles (although they have plenty of their own). If we allow them a place in organisational life we can gain a helpful poke in the ribs, courage and a challenge to deal well with the unpredictable. In return we may need to give up complacency, having the answer and life being cosy.

**Do you know any Tricksters? Perhaps you are one? The Trickster you know might point to something you shouldn't forget – a pearl of insight that will serve you well. What does the Trickster have for you?**

### Scapegoats

Once, in Jewish tradition, a symbolic goat would be released into the wilderness, having been symbolically loaded with the sins or wrongs of the village. This was at Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

While the faith position may be about repentance, the organisational scapegoating we may encounter has some other kind of qualities. It's more about refusing to accept it's 'us too' and finding someone to blame. The casting out does nothing to sort out the situation.

**Have you met or been a Scapegoat? What were the consequences for the individual or the organisation? What character could have saved the day? How could you be like that character?**

### Sage

As someone faced with the challenge of keeping your character safe and effective while helping others make the journey and navigating a changing landscape, how might you create your own success story to ensure you're the wise Sage, not the Scapegoat?

**Describe your Sage character. What does successful change look like? Who or what is helping? Who or what is getting in the way? How are you using what's around you to overcome obstacles? What's the outcome?**

**To learn more, to book a place on one of our workshops and to discuss your change challenges, contact us via:**

**[Enquiries@irvingallan.com](mailto:Enquiries@irvingallan.com)**

## What We're Busy With . . .

Our current work is even more diverse and exciting than usual and we're privileged to be working with clients making significant progress in challenging times. Here are some headlines . . .



### Leading UK Retailer: HR as Change Agents

With large scale change being implemented across its business, this retailer recognises the significant change agent role of its HR team. As part of a strategic approach to enhancing change capability, more than 100 HR professionals have attended our 2 day Managed Change™ programme. As well as gaining a toolkit and shared language for implementing organisational change, they make progress with live change challenges.

Project groups across the business are now also starting to engage, to develop change capability and team strength.

Comments from recent workshops include:

*"Excellent to work on a current live project with team members rather than a fictional case study" . . .  
"Really great facilitator with a good depth of knowledge" . . . "An excellent course" . . . "I have used the models today in discussions with store managers; it has changed the way we are going to work."*

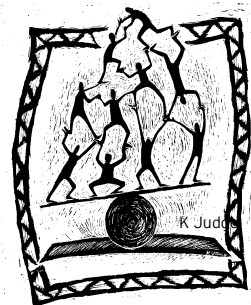
We're now starting to collect change agent success stories. Watch this space to learn more about the impact of their enhanced capability on key organisational outcomes.

### Culture and Creativity in the Lives of Young Children

Using our storycatch approach, we have been working with artists and early years practitioners across the UK on a project funded by the organisation Creativity, Culture & Education (CCE). The aim is to promote wider knowledge about the important benefits of culture and creativity in the lives of young children – and also offer practical support for arts and early years practitioners.

Despite being faced with the potential for fear-inducing restrictions to their budgets and activities, storying is helping the practitioners celebrate their successes, share excellent ideas, and demonstrate how response-able they really are.

The UK-wide resource of caught stories is being put together at the moment and it's fantastically exciting to see the fruits of the practitioners work – written, illustrated, photographed, audio and even filmed stories created with small budgets and large ideas and talent. Watch this space for news of where to find the website when it goes live in the autumn.



### County Council: Service Modernisation and More

Having created a framework for managing change well this large council is beginning to see the benefits. Leaders at all levels are developing a common language, seeing more clearly how things connect and feeling increasingly able to tackle the significant change challenges they face.

During a recent workshop – just a few days after major service changes were announced – managers came together with Irving Allan to share and learn how they could play their leadership role well while being personally impacted by the changes. People valued the toolkit for managing change and the opportunity for open and honest discussion.

*"Thank you once again for yesterday, your skills were most appreciated at this difficult time."*

Behind the scenes our client lead and highly skilled change agent continues to build momentum for well-managed change, working to ensure people are properly equipped for the challenges they face.

*"I have had brilliant feedback from both recent events. Lots of people spreading the word . . ."*

## What We're Reading . . .

***The Responsibility Revolution: How the Next Generation of Businesses Will Win*** by Jeffrey Hollender and Bill Breen

This is a highly stimulating read, exploring what corporate giants, big brands and emerging companies are doing to commit to socially and environmentally responsible business. Key themes include purpose, community and responsibility. One of the brilliant questions posed – and one of the tricksters currently playing in Irving Allan – is: **"What does the world need most that your business is uniquely able to provide?"**. If you're interested in building a better future and a business that will thrive in this new era of sustainability, this is a great read.

## Want to Make a Difference?

So do we. If you are responsible for an organisational change project with sustainability and responsibility at its core, and would like to work with us to ensure full benefit is gained, email [Kirstin@irvingallan.com](mailto:Kirstin@irvingallan.com) or [Julie@irvingallan.com](mailto:Julie@irvingallan.com).