

# CHANGEOCITY

When has our business environment ever been more complex, global, demographically diverse, or technologically advanced? When have companies ever been more vulnerable to unknown, unexpected sources of competition? When have things ever changed at a faster pace?

As business leaders, it's difficult not to feel like we are being carried away by a tsunami of unpredictable and unprecedented change. Given these challenges, the traditional, complex and consultant heavy approach to "change management methodologies" no longer works. Change Leadership in this environment can't be about models, theories, and methodologies. Theories don't make change happen. Leaders do. The ability to anticipate, adapt to and lead change must become more natural, accelerated and repeatable - and excelling at this capability can be a sustainable competitive advantage.

Tom Simon's Changeocity offers the Vowels of Change - A, E, I, O, U and always Y - and a simple, five-step Change Acceleration Model to help you:

- Create a change playbook to lead your organization from "here" to "there"
- Create a clear, concise and compelling case for change to engage others
- Overcome obstacles and resistance to change
- Understand the role of culture in leading change
- Learn the attributes of Great Change Leaders and the "deadly sins" that lead to failure

Using the method provided in Changeocity, you will build your organization's readiness to successfully navigate change faster and more effectively than your competition. Wherever or whatever your "there" is, Simon's Changeocity will help you get there faster, with less disruption and fewer casualties.

To learn more about our available tools, resources and leadership workshops, visit us at [changeocity.com](http://changeocity.com).



**TOM SIMON** specializes in business transformation. Having been a lead actor in, an advisor to, a beneficiary of, and a victim of dozens of change initiatives for nearly three decades, he has distilled his experiences into a simple, proven and practical set of tools and insights to successfully lead enterprise-wide change initiatives and advise business executives from companies of different sizes and industries to transform their businesses, their cultures, how they sell and how they lead.



CHANGEOCITY



TOM SIMON

# CHANGEOCITY

## Change with Velocity

**A Leader's Guide to Getting THERE Faster,  
with Less Disruption, and Fewer Casualties**



**TOM SIMON**

# *CHANGEOCITY*

**By Tom Simon**

Digital | 978-1-7332618-0-7

Soft | 978-1-7332618-1-4

Copyright © Omobono Books, 2019

All Rights Reserved



[www.omobonobooks.com](http://www.omobonobooks.com)

*You don't need a master's degree or a Ph.D., nor do you need to dedicate your life to the study of change management theory to lead through change.*

*—Tom Simon*

## INTRODUCTION

*“When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation.*

*When I found I couldn’t change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn’t change the town, and as an older man, I tried to change my family.*

*Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation, and I could indeed have changed the world.”*

*—Unknown monk*

**W**hen has our business environment or our world ever been more complex, more global, more demographically diverse, or technologically advanced? When have things ever changed at a faster pace than they’re changing today? Do any of us expect the pace of change to lessen in the future? This reality about how change is impacting business, and even more, how it is accelerating, makes it our challenge as business leaders to continuously find ways to keep pace, stay relevant, and remain competitive.

The marketplace is evolving so quickly and unpredictably we’ve even labeled it with a new acronym—VUCA.

VUCA stands for “Volatility,” which speaks to the rate of change; “Uncertainty,” being unclear about the present; “Complexity,” a high volume of interconnected parts and variables to process; and “Ambiguity,” a lack of clarity about the meaning of events.

---

*When has our business environment or our world ever been more complex, more global, more demographically diverse, or technologically advanced? When have things ever changed at a faster pace than they’re changing today?*

---

When in history have companies been more vulnerable to unknown, unexpected sources of competition through new entrants and shifting business models? Is any industry or organization immune from this unprecedented rate of change?

We’re immersed in a world ripe with information-rich content. But, because of the sheer volume of information, everyone is dealing with what’s called “content clutter.” To be more specific, there was a time in the not-so-distant past when our challenge was finding the information we needed in order to learn about a topic or make an intelligent decision. Today, we have so much information available at our fingertips, our challenge is not finding it, rather making sense of it.

Our objective is not to collect the most data or volumes of information, but to extract meaning

form the data we have. It's the context, the message, the insights we glean from that information that hold the real power. No one cares, for instance, that the average car emits approximately six tons of carbon dioxide every year.<sup>i</sup> What they care about is what that emission means, how it affects them, and why it matters.

With that in mind, we have to search through endless amounts of information to find the nuggets that we need to create those meaningful and relevant stories. This is why it's hard to distinguish the valuable information from the noise. To make a lasting impact we need to be able to condense trillions of pieces of information into one or more meaningful, memorable insights that people can use to change their work, their world and themselves.

With this immense amount of information swirling around us, and things moving so fast, it's difficult not to feel like we're being carried away by a tsunami of unexpected, unpredictable, and unprecedented change. It can be mind-numbing.

If you want some researched statistics on the pace of change, take a look at a recent post from Gartner's website regarding change today:

“The average organization has undergone five enterprise changes in the past three years. Seventy-three percent of organizations expect more change initiatives in the next few years, and only a small minority expects the pace of change to decelerate. Unfortunately, many organizations fail to implement change effectively. In fact, only a third of change efforts are clear successes, 16 percent show mixed results, and half are clear failures.”<sup>ii</sup>

It is within this context that, as leaders, we attempt to personally navigate change while leading individuals and organizations through it all. We don't have to look far for examples of the consequences of poor change leadership.

## **Change: Embrace It or Be Left in the Dust**

Business books are littered with examples of organizations that no longer exist because their leaders failed to anticipate, embrace and adapt to change. The inability to forecast and evolve in a changing landscape has made substantial, formerly successful organizations completely irrelevant. Many of those that survived have been barely able to maintain minuscule remnants of their former greatness. They have met their demise from organizations within their existing competitive landscape, as well as from new market entrants or whole industries that have emerged to destroy their market value.

We often talk about these organizations as if they are living organisms that caused their own demise. But, in fact, they merely fell victim to leaders who were not able to anticipate and adapt. These leaders failed to influence the right people, so they could adopt the necessary changes to meet the challenges imposed on them by outside forces.

It's not difficult to find myriad examples of organizations whose leaders were incapable of leading through the requisite transformation to stay afloat in a fast-paced world. Sears is one of the

companies at the top of this list. How was Amazon able to replace this company, an organization that was a retail and business leader in so many ways? At one point, the Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog contained everything necessary to build every scrap of a house, and everything that goes in it. Indeed, they even sold houses consumers could order from the Sears catalog and build themselves. Sears sold the equivalent of more than 70,000 of these houses over the years!<sup>iii</sup> All that was missing was the Internet, which came much later. Why was Amazon, and not Sears, able to use the internet as a sales tool?

Similarly, what prevented Motorola and Nokia from creating the iPhone? Why did it take Apple to do that? In addition to missing the iPhone revolution, Motorola at one time owned the technology for all dot matrix printers but allowed HP to dominate that market. At one point, they were \$10 million away from an acquisition that would have created what later became Cisco. Additionally, they allowed Nokia to own the move from analog to digital cell phone technology.

But don't think Nokia cornered the market on disruption after their move to digital technology. They may have made the smart decision to lead the move from digital cell phone technology, but industry experts cite "inferior technology, a lack of vision, and arrogance of top-level managers" as the reason Nokia's market value fell 90 percent in less than six years.<sup>iv</sup> Even if an organization makes one smart decision, it doesn't mean all their decisions are as sound, especially if they involve change, and people, which I'm confident all of them did.

For that matter, why didn't Disney create Pixar, which they eventually purchased for substantially more than it would have cost for them to start it from within? What did Napster see in streaming music services that Sony missed? It virtually replaced old-school music distribution—records, cassettes, and CDs, all of which required physical boom boxes or players. A similar trend caused the demise of Blockbuster and the rise of Netflix.

Another older example of a large corporation that missed the boat on great opportunities is Western Union. They claim they could have pioneered the telephone, radio and then television. But they passed on all of them. Why?

All of these former giants were similarly usurped by organizations that they never imagined might become their competition. The question is, why were new entrants to an industry able to capture the market and take that away from entrenched incumbents?

Granted, I was not part of those internal debates while their leaders watched their competitive market positions erode. However, from my experience with how people, organizations, and leaders respond to and resist change, I can confidently say they either feared moving away from what made them successful in the past, or any thought of departing from their known path was too foreign of a concept to even contemplate. It appears that their inability to envision themselves becoming obsolete is exactly what led to their obsolescence. In the words of Andy Grove, former CEO of Intel Corporation, "Only the paranoid survive." In these examples, a bit more paranoia, and a greater understanding of change and how to lead their employees into a new future may have led to a more desirable outcome.

Clearly, the leaders of the organizations that destabilized these incumbents saw the threats and opportunities through a different lens. While those who thought they had more to lose held on to the status quo with a death grip, the visionaries advanced quickly and confidently. As Paul Jarvis, Blockbuster's CEO, shared in his book, "Neither Redbox nor Netflix are even on our radar in terms of competition."

In 2006, Ed Zander, CEO of Motorola, once said about the Apple iPod, "Screw the Nano. What the hell does a Nano do? Who the hell listens to a thousand songs?" Darryl Zanuck, co-founder of Twentieth Century Fox stated, "Television won't be able to hold any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night." All famous last words!

We know that those who built these new, displacing technologies had to learn a new way. But, unlike their counterparts in the existing organizations, they didn't have to first "unlearn" what they used to build previous generations of products and services. The bottom line is this: *Why does it seem easier to enter a market or industry than to pivot within it? Why does building the new sometimes seem faster and more successful than changing the old?*

I won't get into the psychology behind human behavior, I'll let others tend to that. Suffice it to say Caroline Dweck's book *Mindset*, a book about "growth mindset versus fixed mindset" is a great place to start if you're curious about the psychology of change. What I know, and what I will focus on here is this formula: "When leaders do or don't do X, Y does or doesn't happen." I will include examples that show why it's so painful when leaders aren't able to lead through organization and market challenges. Their inability or unwillingness to do so causes their company's strategy to fail. That failure begins when their mindset locks them into a narrow view of who they are and what they're capable of becoming.

If we cannot and will not put our current situation at risk to move to a better, more sustainable, rewarding future, we become irrelevant and will undoubtedly be replaced. Our own successes often foster our greatest failures. And, even if we're able to see the threat or opportunities, we still need the resolve, skills, and tools to move the organization to follow.

---

*Our own successes often foster our greatest failures.*

---

While it's hard to predict the timing and ultimate demise of a company or industry, if we look at what's already happening in retail, apparel, print and newspaper publishing, physical book stores, office supplies, stationary and a myriad of others – we can only wonder what conversations are being had, if any, about the next steps the leaders of companies in these industries should be taking to reinvent themselves.

This book is written by a Change Leader for Change Leaders. I have been a lead actor in, an advisor to, a beneficiary of, and a victim of dozens and dozens of change initiatives for nearly three

decades. My point of view on change has emerged from decades of personally leading numerous, small-scale and enterprise-wide transformation efforts inside well known, successful, and not-so-successful organizations. I have also advised leaders, like you, on simple tools and techniques to “get there from here” and I’ve benefited from successes, but even more from witnessing, and making my own mistakes.

I’ve worked alongside a number of outstanding change leaders who have shown me that change leadership should be a true enabler of success, not another job or set of activities on top of the transformation they’re leading. If you’re like these great leaders, you have a low tolerance for complexity and process for the sake of process.

In the hundreds of hours it has taken to write this book, my objective has repeatedly been honed and focused. I’ve attempted to cut through the multitude of theories, models, methodologies, language, science, opinions, and perceptions about change to create something simple, easy to understand, and easy to implement.

The good news is that through a collection of simple frameworks distilled from practical application, you’ll realize you don’t need a master’s degree or a Ph.D., nor do you need to dedicate your life to the study of change management theory to lead through change.

You will find a number of practical models to help you along your journey. However, unlike many out there, the models I offer you pass the “napkin test,” meaning they can be briefly explained by drawing them on a napkin to capture their essence and get the point across. Simple. Proven. Practical.

After reading *Changeocity*, you’ll have new insights, tips, tools, and techniques at your disposal to lead others through change more easily and quickly. I hope you will often say to yourself, “This is really simple. This is common sense,” and “I can see us getting better results with this approach.” Simple and intuitive is more effective than complex and burdensome.

My goal is to help you become an impactful, agile change leader with the mindset, skill set, and tools you need to navigate change more quickly, effectively and successfully. Given the pace of change outlined above, I hope you agree that leading change is not a project, not something you do only periodically or just when the need arises. Rather, it should be what you do to help your organization continuously evolve. It’s how we lead people into the future to sustain success and stay relevant in the marketplace.

Change Leadership should become second nature to you in the same vein as other basic leadership capabilities like good decision making, visioning, listening, and communicating.

So, let’s join forces and achieve the goal of a successful change initiative together.

To make your job as easy as possible, I will share with you simple yet very useful, memorable metaphors to help you learn and then most effectively set and achieve your change initiative goals. For example, one such mnemonic device uses the vowels A, E, I, O, U and always Y, as a simple but powerful playbook to help you more easily lead change initiatives.



At the end of each chapter, I will suggest three simple ideas to practically incorporate “Changeocity” into your leadership actions and behaviors.

## What Is Changeocity?

The big question is: If we have a compelling reason to endure a change journey, there must be some highly valuable benefits on the other side of the change. So, if we’re going to change, why not change with velocity? In other words, why not get “there” faster?

While we’re trying to move through the change quickly, we know asking people to think, act, work, and lead differently will likely result in some loss of productivity. Our challenge as change leaders is to get “there” *with less disruption*.

Finally, while change brings opportunity, with change often comes confusion and discomfort. We can’t expect that everyone who needs to embrace change will be ready, able, and willing to do so. As change leaders, a major objective is to complete our change journey *with fewer casualties*.

---

*Changeocity is about getting there faster, with less disruption and fewer casualties.*

---

---

<sup>i</sup> “Global Warming and Your Car,” *Car Talk*, <https://www.cartalk.com/content/global-warming-and-your-car-0>.

<sup>ii</sup> Gartner, “Help Optimize Organizational Change,” <https://www.gartner.com/en/insights/change-management>.

<sup>iii</sup> Timothy Dahl, “Sears Sold 70,000 Homes from Their Catalog. Are You Living in One?” *Popular Mechanics*, May 16, 2016, <https://www.popularmechanics.com/home/how-to-plans/a20859/sears-sold-70000-homes-from-their-catalog-are-you-living-in-one/>.

<sup>iv</sup> Why Did Nokia Fail, and What Can You Learn from It?” *Multiplier*, July 24, 2018, <https://medium.com/multiplier-magazine/why-did-nokia-fail-81110d981787>.

---

## BEFORE YOU GO

We hope you enjoyed your free sample of *Changeocity* by Tom Simon.

Please consider purchasing a copy or leaving a review on [Amazon](#).



<http://www.tannintalentadvisors.com/book>

[hello@tannintalentadvisors.com](mailto:hello@tannintalentadvisors.com)

**Thank you for your support!**

