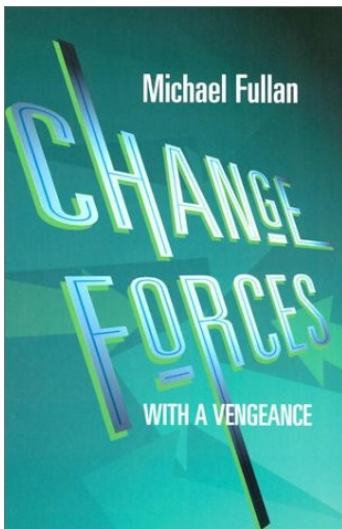


Executive Book Summary

Change Forces With a Vengeance by Michael Fullan



The final addition to the Changes Forces family of trilogies, *Change Forces with a Vengeance*, brings Fullan’s arguments regarding complexity theory and large scale educational reform to a defining end. He walks the educator and policymaker through a set of carefully constructed set of arguments which stand in sharp contrast to the realities of the chaotic world which he attempts to tame. Fullan admits that the book marks a shift away from complete focus on system based concerns, to finding a broader deeper meaning in the world of sustainable reform. He hopes that this last addition to the series has answered the question: *what would the larger system look like if it did know what it was doing?* Fullan challenges educators and policy makers reconstruct our educational contexts—to envision *changing* our contexts. While simultaneously requesting a greater attention to re-contextualizing, Fullan uses the concept of reframing to draw the readers attention to his main arguments. Like an excellent photographer, Fullan has a way of focusing the lens of his analysis in a way that results in sharper vision for the viewer / reader. The Change Forces landscape includes broader horizons and vistas than other reform advocates have dared to paint. He encourages his reader to think beyond the success of literacy and numeracy and dig deeper. The success of modern reform are celebrated and then carefully deconstructed for further insights and meaning. With a firm understanding of the old and new lessons of complexity theory, Fullan’s new horizon agenda is achievable through an attention to the tri-level reform (school, district, state), moral purpose and passion and an evolution in leadership. Fullan has provided the educator and policy maker with a clear vision of sustainable educational reform. There is hope that a large scale sustainable reculturalization of our schools is possible.

What new horizons should we be striving for to improve learning for all children? How can we achieve large-scale reform and do it in a way that the conditions for sustainability are enhanced? What policy levers are needed, and what is the role of new leadership in accomplishing sustainable, comprehensive reform?

Fullan, Michael (2003). *Change Forces with a Vengeance*.
RoutledgeFalmer: New York.

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“Sustainable system change is the agenda, and we are at the very early stages of an exciting journey.”

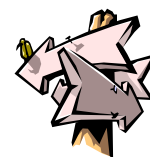
New Horizons...

In this chapter Fullan examines the accomplishment and scope of large scale reform initiatives. He uses the British Literacy & Numeracy efforts, of which he was instrumental, to help contextualize and frame his expectations and hopes for large scale improvement. He categorizes the efforts of the Literacy and Numeracy initiative as *new horizon one*. Without diminishing the accomplishments of the British scenario in which it lowered the gap of 11 year old performance, he challenges educators and policymakers to examine the need to go farther – to indeed seek out more meaningful *newer horizons*. For Fullan, high powered learning environments which are intensively learner centered, knowledge centered and assessment centered require great capacities and commitment from the entire teaching force and its leadership, and thus will require different strategies from the ones currently employed to address literacy and numeracy. In an interview with Dennis Sparks for the Journal of Staff Development, Fullan synthesizes his vision: these deeper changes involve closing the achievement gap between high and low performers, developing students' thinking and problem solving skills, attending to students' social and emotional development and fundamentally changing the culture of schools. According to Fullan assessing the history of reform is key to any forward movement since the new, more meaningful horizons will require educators and policy makers to shift from an *informed prescription* mode of thinking to *informed professional judgment*. Required in advancing a new mode of thinking and operating vies a vie large scale reform, is David Hargreaves' *new lever test*. Hargreaves contends that while many initiatives act like levers, propelling us forward to change, it is possible to push an old lever to unnatural limits. The new levers test therefore begs the interrogation of the limits of levers possible replacements. For Fullan, the challenge of developing new levers is in unleashing the energy, commitment, resources and learning of stakeholders on a very large scale.



Pursuing new horizons is an intellectual journey of the highest order.

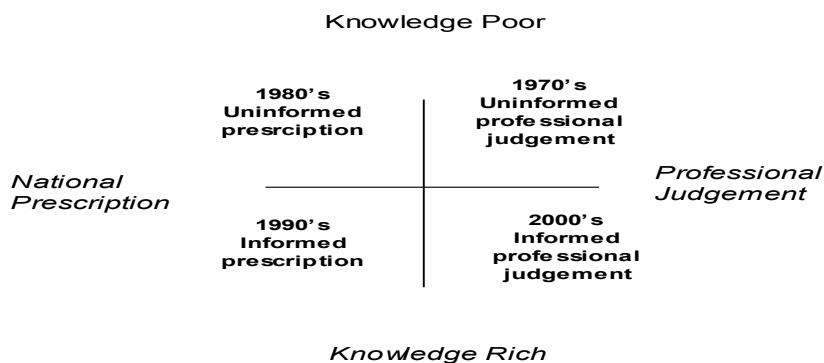
We may know what new horizons look like, but the pathways for getting there will be enormously complex.



Characteristics of New Horizons

- ⌘ They are large in scale, have a *systemness* quality and attempt change.
- ⌘ Often valuable horizons *may only be a first order* accomplishment.
- ⌘ Ultimate horizons have to do with deep *transformations* and *sustainability*

Educational Reform Historical Matrix



Moral Purpose Writ Large

A sense of moral purpose and intrinsic motivation have been the causality of uninformed and informed prescription. Fullan contends that policymakers and others need to find ways of reintroducing this source of motivation in the new horizons agenda. Despite citing Paler Palmer as a starting point for teacher's to revisit their moral purpose, Fullan suggests that moral purpose needs to go beyond the individual and become more larger and more collective in nature. The purpose of reconnecting to the undercurrent is for educators to change their contexts. Although not all individual teachers can influence *all* contexts, policymakers and educators *must* alter context (within the class, across classrooms within the school and across schools) in order to reduce the gap between high and low performers, and to reduce gap by monitoring and taking appropriate action. A third ally to policy makers and educators not yet mobilized is the public. Fullan reminds the reader not to underestimate the depth of moral purpose inherent in the public psyche. Increasingly the real public opinion story is more about changed expectations than decay in the system. Fullan declares that the highest form of moral purpose is altruistic martyrdom but a mixture of self-ish and unselfish motives. It is possible, then for all educators, the public, all of us to have *mixed motives*. Fullan believes this is just fine, in fact, he claims that the increased presence of altruistic motives in a manner that does not lessen, nay enhance, selfish satisfaction is needed. New Horizons will require greater alliance and triangulation of the pluralistic motives of the public, educators and governments. In the course of pursuing new horizons we need to 'create the space for longer discussions



Essential Moral Arguments

- ♥ **MORAL PURPOSE**—defined as making a difference in the lives of students & is therefore a critical motivator for addressing sustained complex reform
- ♥ **INDIVIDUAL & BEYOND**—will not add up if left at the individual level
- ♥ **REDUCING THE GAP**—between high and low performers is the key to system breakthroughs
- ♥ **MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL**—seeing the bigger picture and thus focusing on the gap is the moral responsibility for all educators
- ♥ **TRI-LEVEL SOLUTION**—a combination of the school, district and state are required
- ♥ **SOCIAL COHESION**—reducing the gap is part and parcel of societal development in which greater social cohesion, developmental health and economic performance are at stake
- ♥ **PUBLIC'S MORAL PURPOSE**—untapped and immobilized alliance greatest advances to the cause



Parker Palmer *Courage to Teach*

1. Why did I become a teacher in the first place?
2. What do I stand for as a teacher?
3. What are the gifts I bring to my work?
4. What do I want my legacy to be?
5. What can I do to keep track of myself—to remember my own heart?



We need a modern version which includes, but goes beyond the individual. It is larger more collective which individuals are motivated to make their own day-to-day contribution, while at the same time seeing themselves connected to others, not just locally, but beyond. It is in one word, moral purpose writ large.

Core Concepts in Complexity Theory

- **Non-linearity**: don't expect reforms to unfold as intended
- **Unpredictability**: surprises will happen as a result of dynamically complex interactive forces
- **Interaction or correlation**: a key element of moving towards order
- **Auto-catalysis**: occurs when systems interact and influence each other toward new patterns
- **The edge of chaos**: when systems avoid too little and too much order
- **Social attractors**: compelling social motivators – can extract periodic patterns of order as complex systems dynamics unfold
- **Butterfly Effects**: when a small number of key forces coalesce can have disproportionately huge effects
- **A complex adaptive system**: consists of high degrees of internal interaction, and interaction externally with other systems in a way that constitutes continuous learning

We need to step back and consider new insights about the process of dynamic, complex, non-linear reform.

New Lessons for Complex Change

LESSON 1: Give up the idea that the pace of change will slow down.

LESSON 2: Coherence making is a never-ending proposition and is everyone's responsibility.

LESSON 3: Changing context is the focus.

LESSON 4: Premature clarity is a dangerous thing.

LESSON 5: The public's thirst for transparency is irreversible.

LESSON 6: You can't get large-scale reform through bottom up strategies—but beware of the trap.

LESSON 7: Mobilize the social attractors—moral purpose, quality relationships, quality knowledge.

LESSON 8: Charismatic leadership is negatively associated with sustainability.

What distinguishes the NEW LESSONS FOR CHANGE from other sets of complexity theory teachings?

- ⌘ New Lessons are more amenable to **action, design & strategizing**.
- ⌘ New Lessons assume **large scale reform** is goal.
- ⌘ New Lessons pursue ultimate goal of **sustainability**.

PHASE I SOLUTIONS:

- ⇒ impose order on unproductive chaotic system
- ⇒ for example, informed prescription

PHASE II SOLUTIONS:

- ⇒ require creative thinking of complex theory
- ⇒ vast majority of system people must end up owning the problem

How to create greater ownership?

How do we own the problem?

- MORAL PURPOSE**: key problems, desirable directions, don't lock in
- COMMUNITIES**: form interactions around these ideas
- QUALITY INFORMATION**: infuse interactions and related deliberations with this
- PATTERNS**: look for promising patterns, consolidate gains and build on them



Tri-Level Reform: The School

Fullan insists that sustainable educational transformation is only achievable with a tri-level solution; he proposes the school, the district and state must work in unison to move the new horizon agenda forward. The message of the tri-level case is that *you cannot do it alone*. Each level will have to initiate exchanges within and across their level for the full compliment of interactions to have effect. This resultant synergy is of course the complexity theory concepts of correlation and auto-catalysis at work. Essentially at the school level Fullan calls for a reexamination of the cultures of schools. He sees the implementation of professional learning communities as potentially offsetting habituation and an uncritical stance. Fullan argues that it is difficult to hold teachers accountable for their effects on student learning if they haven't been provided with the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills. Professional learning communities can build confidence, competence and reinforce the power of reaching out beyond the individual. Ralph Stacey, a complexity theorist, finds that new knowledge and change are deeply embedded in human interaction and relationships. Building and developing authentic relationships is an integral step to re-culturing schools. Despite the attraction of learning communities, Fullan warns that they can become sterile. Research indicates that even the most collaborative of learning communities can actually serve to reinforce ineffective practices. That is why effective learning communities consistently monitor and problem solve for efficacy. In this model of behavior you need energy and the fostering of energy all over the place – what is called distributed leadership.

Communities of Practice

(McDermott & Synder)

Communities of practice are groups who share a concern, a problem, or a passion, and who deepen their knowledge in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. It is defined by 3 fundamental elements:

- A. Domain
- B. Community
- C. Practice

Role of Knowledge

(Brown & Duguid)


1. Knowledge lies in people.
2. People decide on meaning.
3. Social system – people, organizations and institutions – are important.
4. Knowledge is something we digest rather than merely hold.

Culture of Knowledge Sharing


Value One: Every individual in organization is responsible for seeking new knowledge on a continuous basis.


Value Two: The same individuals are responsible for sharing what they know or contributing to the knowledge of others.


In conclusion...


 **NEW SOLUTIONS** - major innovations are needed in schools

 **UNCERTAINTY** - what could these new alternatives look like?

 **ANXIETY** - channel our angst in positive manner

 **QUESTIONS** - consistently ask troubling question

 **NEW IDEAS** - social attractors direct our questions

 **RESULTS** - accumulation of results energizes people to go further



It is a theoretical certainty that we need systems (schools, districts, states) operating in interaction over time where they influence and learn from each other, improving their capacity not to panic in the face of disorder while they periodically consolidate the gains of new patterned breakthroughs.

Why do we need new cultures in school systems?

- ? *A great depth of knowledge is required to go to new horizons.*
- ? *We cannot sustain our efforts unless educators pour in purpose, passion and energy!*



The kinds of schools we are talking about confront reality and inadequacies of the status quo.

Tri-Level Reform: The Role of the District

In the tri-level argument, each layer—school, district, state—is help or hindered by the layer above it. For Fullan the role of the district is the most intriguing model of autocatalysis (how systems can learn from and influence each other). A critical distinction for Fullan prior to examining the role of the district is to distinguish theories of education and change. This delineation is important for it clarifies the roles and agendas, and subsequent limitations, districts adopt. Through the case studies of Memphis, New York, San Diego and England Fullan defines or refines his vision of the role of the district.

What is the difference between a theory of education & a theory of change?

		Theory of Education	
		Weak	Strong
Theory of change	Weak	Drift	Superficial change
	Strong	Change for the sake of change	Deep Change

Districts Do's & Don'ts

- ☞ Engage in *collective capacity building*.
- ☞ Change the culture of the profession.
- ☞ Let moral purpose be your guide.
- ☞ Have a deep conception of what you are doing.
- ☞ Be cognizant of initiatives' timing.
- ☞ Integrate the three policy levers of *Curriculum, Assessment & Teacher Learning*.
- ☞ Rely heavily on external models of reform.
- ☞ Be cautious of scaling up too quickly with a visionary pacesetter leader.
- ☞ Engage in tightly controlled strategies because they are not suited to long term gain.
- ☞ Neglect the energy, intrinsic motivation and commitment of teachers.

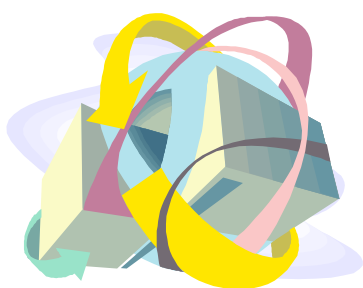


New horizons, moral purpose, the eight lessons for complex change all provide compelling rationales and ideas for interaction with external entities and larger networks. System transformation requires that all levels see themselves as part and parcel of a larger learning enterprise.



Common advice among horse trainers is that if the horse you are riding is dead, it is a good idea to get off.

The traditional organization of the school is education's dead horse.



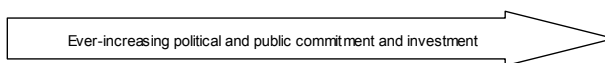
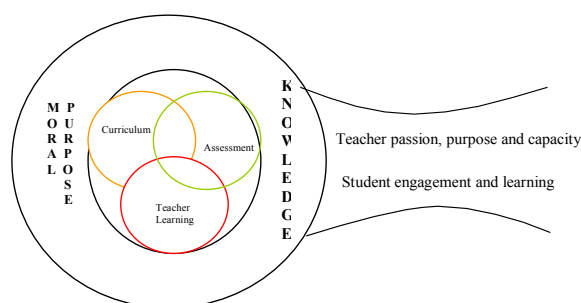
How can a government move in the direction of informed professional judgment?

- A **deep conception** of what is meant by informed professional judgment.
- A clear, public value statement that endorses this direction.
- A **variety of strategies** that create opportunities for teachers to learn and that create disciplined collective action.
- A firm commitment to providing resources in a **quid pro quo** manner (quality reform gets more resources).
- An **invitation** to the profession to engage in dialogue and problem-solving about how to implement this new direction in an accountable, energizing manner to recreate the teaching profession.

Tri-Level Reform: The State

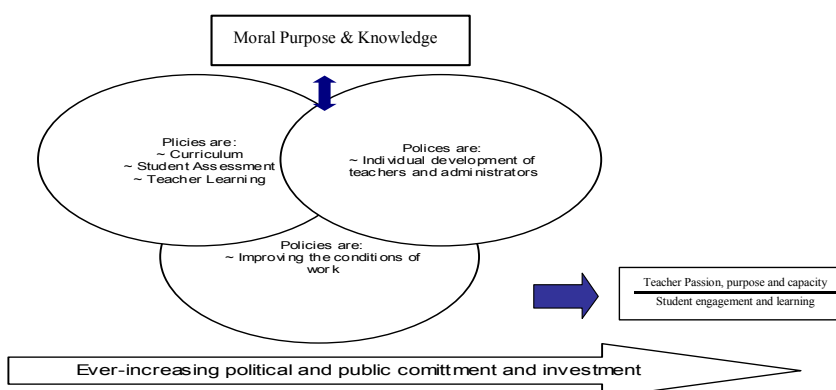
In this chapter, Fullan readdresses the eight new lessons of complexity theory with an eye to the role of the policymaker. These new insights combined with a discussion on a theory of education compatible with complexity theory set the stage for some of Fullan's policy suggestions for the state. Fullan admits that these segments of the tri-level argument may indeed be the most complex change suggested in the book. What will be required he suggests, are policymakers who have a strong underlying conception of the future role of public schools (which in effect is the conception that underpins and cuts across the three policy sets), and who are adept at complexity theory and practice, i.e., at working through the politics of capacity building. Capacity building, does not however, negate the need for leadership at all levels, in fact he believes that the fostering and development of distributed leadership was a missing factor in the reform agenda of the 1990's. Fullan writes optimistically of the growing efforts of the state level. He concludes by stating that although the demands of the state contribution to change are monumental, that in carrying out this agenda, complexity theory encourages us to believe in the power of interacting systems guided by moral purpose and best knowledge.

Generic Theory of Education



To overstate slightly: never send a changed individual into an unchanged environment

Educational Transformation



Three policy Sets for

Leadership & Sustainability

Fullan passionately argues that while standards can act as minor levers, leadership is the one pivotal lever that is required the kind of educational transformation that he envisages. He admits that although the nature of leadership is becoming clearer, it is of the daunting variety. Fullan considers three areas: the new nature of leadership; new leadership in action and developing new leadership.

The New Nature of Leadership

Fullan encapsulates his vision of a new leader in the following statement – *the more sophisticated the system, the more sophisticated the leader*. Leaders in the new educational order are not merely instructional leaders. That preexisting definition is too narrow for the change that Fullan envisages. Rather, leaders that can create fundamental transformations in the learning cultures of schools and the teaching profession itself are required for the monumental task of modern change. Leaders must also be adept at functioning on all levels of the tri-level reform, in other words, they must be able to not only function effectively within their level but also in interactions with the other levels. Beyond these abilities in interactions, Fullan believes the leaders of the future require specific mind set. Specifically, Fullan sees effective leaders combining a strong *moral purpose*, an understanding of *change dynamics*, great *emotional intelligence*, a commitment to *new knowledge* and a capacity for *coherence making*. He recognizes that these qualities are not expected to be innate, but rather learned. Finally Fullan argues that leaders must be enormously sophisticated about team development and creating the conditions for team effectiveness.

Leading in the Swamp

Fullan warns leaders not to interpret the new nature of leadership as a panacea. There are dangers inherent in its' actualization. Fullan defines the swamp as the area where people are guided to, but where they would prefer not to go. Leaders, in other words, have to lead people through a process of doing something that they are not particularly good at, and don't want to do. Fullan cites the work of Heifetz and Linsky in identifying five strategies for staying the course through reform and change: *getting on the balcony*; *thinking politically*; *orchestrating the conflict*; *giving the work back* and *finally holding steady*. For Fullan, these lessons help guard

against such pitfalls as charismatic leadership, dealing with anxiety and fear and relationship building with only the like-minded. Fullan expects that the leaders of tomorrow will have to re-define there sense of self around success and recognize that genuine success is not a state but a never ending process. In this regard the lessons of quiet leadership by Badaracco have some place in the leaders of the future.

Cause & Effect Conditions

Fullan identifies five interrelated themes that have cause and effect properties that directly impact the chances of sustainability.

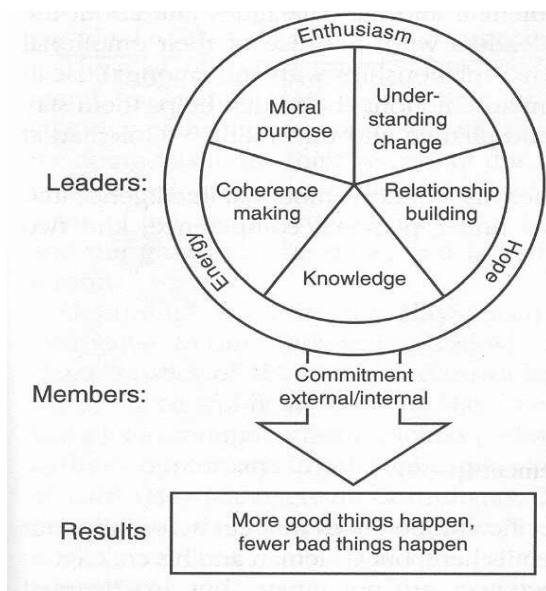
- I. Opportunity and depth of learning**
- II. Individual, Standards-based development**
- III. Opportunity to change contexts**
- IV. Leaders at many levels & Succession**
- V. Working Condition of Teachers**



It is not so much a matter of going down the road less traveled, but rather going down one never before traveled because it has not yet been made.

Travel and make the road. Make the road and travel. The edge of chaos or the edge of order. You pick. And then go for it!

People are always looking for shortcuts and quick fixes to complexity. For that reason learning on the dance is just as important as having the bigger picture in mind. The two together—powerful concepts and learning in the swamp—define leadership for complexity.



What 'standards' were to the 1990s, leadership is to the 2000s.

