

Are You Experiencing a SHED Dilemma?

How to Lead Change When You Don't Agree With it Yourself



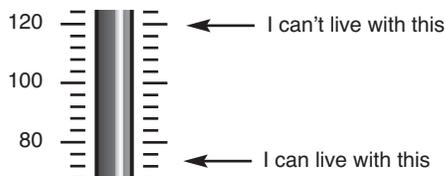
Here's a typical work scenario: In a meeting, your boss announces an upcoming company-wide change. You had little warning about the change and you don't have a lot of time to implement the change. You might have some reservations and may even be thinking, "Are you kidding me? You want me to do *what?*" But, no matter how you feel about it, you know you are expected to leave the meeting, announce the change to your team, rally them around the idea, and then get to work on making the change happen.

Effectively dealing with change is learning how to SHED - letting go of the old and embracing the new. Everything in life is built on this one essential process. The challenge is that we're human and we don't always agree with the changes put in front of us. If you have ever had a personal conflict over leading a change that you don't believe in 100%, then you've experienced a "SHED Dilemma."

A recent survey indicates that more than 50% of people resist change for one main reason: they don't agree with the change. So, what do you do if you face a SHED Dilemma? Ask yourself these six questions and let the answers guide your next steps.

1. Can I live with this? I live in Arizona. It gets a *tad* hot here in the summer. Some of my neighbors can't live with the heat — when the temperature gets over 100 degrees, they are out of here! Others, like me, love the heat and live in a ghost town for the month of August because so many people leave to escape the heat.

When it comes to change, everyone has a different tolerance levels that they must reach before they say, "I can't live with this anymore." Try this: visualize a "change thermometer" where 120 degrees is your boiling point. Then ask yourself these questions: "Is the proposed change something that is unethical, immoral, or against my values? Is it a big hassle? Or, is it a minor inconvenience?" Measure your responses on your change thermometer.



Everyone's reaction — their response on the "change thermometer" — is based on individual circumstances. If you are being asked to do something that's unethical or against your values and it's reaching your boiling point, you may have to SHED the job right away or start planning to get out. If you determine that the change is just a hassle or minor inconvenience, then you

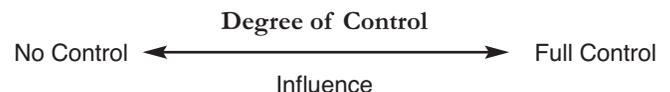
need to decide to SHED any negativity and move forward with implementing the change.

2. What additional information do I need? When change happens at a rapid pace, key communications are often left out. It's critical to ask questions so you have the information you need about the change. Even if you don't agree with the change 100%, understanding why the change has to be made will help you move forward. Being told, "Because I said so" by our parents may have worked years ago, but today's successful organizations find this short-term strategy ineffective in the long run.

3. What losses am I experiencing with this change? Before you can effectively lead change, you first need to deal with your own personal losses regarding that change. Start by identifying what the anticipated losses are with this change. Be honest with yourself about your feelings. Below are the stages most of us go through during change. Although they appear to be sequential, you may bounce up and down through these stages many times. Recognize that your change process may look more like an abnormal EKG. That's OK. In fact, it's normal. The goal is to: feel, function and keep moving forward.

- I. Loss
- II. Anger
- III. Discouragement
- IV. Acceptance
- V. Celebration

4. How much control do I have over the situation? The amount of control we have over a situation varies with each situation we experience. Identifying what situations you actually have control over will help you manage change and your energy most effectively. Imagine the amount of control as a continuum.



On one end of the scale you have full control, on the other, you have no control. Somewhere in the middle you may have some influence over a situation. The goal is to clearly understand what your degree of control is in each situation and then focus your energy on those things you can either influence

or control. Unfortunately, most people waste their energy on those things they can't control.

It's helpful to break down the change into smaller components. Based on your role in the organization and the situation, you'll probably evaluate the amount of control you have on these aspects differently.

Let's look at an example and see how you can evaluate your control over a change.

Situation: Your organization is merging with another company. That means you'll be managing a lot of change for yourself and your team. (See Table 1.)

5. How do I communicate the change to my team? We all SHED and respond to change in different ways. The four SHED Styles are Stabilizer, Hedger, Energizer and Driver. Each style has a correlating need regarding change. The Stabilizer needs stability, the Hedger needs order, the Energizer needs possibilities, and the Driver needs results.

We all have a primary style and tend to communicate in that style. But, in doing so, we are only 25% effective because we tend to overlook the other three styles. So when you communicate change to your team, you need to ensure you address all of the SHED Styles. This will help your team members who have different SHED Styles manage the change more effectively. Before you communicate with your team about a change, use the checklist below. It will help you lead change. For the best possible outcome, make sure you employ all of these approaches. (See Table 2.)

6. How can I bring as much joy to the situation as possible? Life is full of uncertainty. Our careers and our lives are a continuous journey of peaks and valleys. It is easy to be joyful in the peaks. (Don't we all wish we could stay there?) But the reality is that we learn most in the valleys where our strength and skills as leaders are built. If you focus your energy on bringing as much joy as possible to a challenging situation, you will reduce the sorrow of the valleys for yourself and your entire team. The goal: Happy Shedding!

Let's go back to our SHED Dilemma scenario. Your meeting with your boss is over. You know change is imminent and that your leadership is critical. Instead of brooding or worrying, set a 30-minute meeting with yourself and go through the six "SHED Dilemma" questions. The answers will empower you to lead change in an entirely different — and successful — way.



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TABLE 1

ANTICIPATED CHANGES	NO CONTROL	INFLUENCE	CONTROL
New name for organization	✓		
Move to new location	✓		
Change in reporting relationship	✓		
Benefits changes	✓		
New computer system	✓		
Recommendations to key decision makers		✓	✓
Restructuring in your area		✓	✓
Communication to my team		✓	✓
Increase in work demands		✓	✓
Increase in energy and emotional investment			✓
My attitude			✓

Here's a suggestion if you get stuck and need a jumpstart on developing this list. First, begin by identifying all the things about the change that you are complaining about. Then work on clearly understand where your degree of control is in each area. Evaluate all the areas. Ask yourself: do you have *no control, influence or control?*

TABLE 2

✓ COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	SHED STYLE	NEED
I am giving as much notice about the change as possible	Stabilizer	} stability
I am communicating what won't change	Stabilizer	
I am actively listening, not demanding and providing support	Stabilizer	
I am providing information about why the change is needed	Hedger	} order
I am communicating how the change will improve quality	Hedger	
I am playing the "healthy skeptic" and thinking about what could go wrong	Hedger	
I am identifying unlimited possibilities and benefits	Energizer	} possibilities
I am celebrating success in advance	Energizer	
I am identifying my energizers to help make change contagious	Energizer	
I am focusing on efficiency and results	Driver	} results
I am clearly and concisely communicating the change plan	Driver	
I am giving as many choices as possible to meet desired outcome	Driver	