

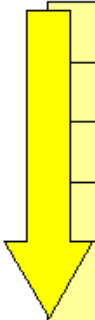
ADKAR®: Simple, Powerful, Action Oriented Model for Change

The ADKAR® model of change is a practical answer to effective change management for individuals and organisations. Built on practical research conducted in more than 900 organisations the model is simple to learn, makes sense, and focuses on the actions and outcomes required for change.

What really gives this model the edge is its emphasis on individual change.

While many change management projects focus on the steps necessary for organisational change, ADKAR® emphasises that successful organisational change occurs only when *each person* is able to transition successfully.

It makes sense then that this model, developed by Jeff Hiatt, CEO of Prosci® Change Management (www.prosci.com), and first published in 2003, focuses on 5 actions and outcomes necessary for successful **individual change**, and therefore successful organisational change.



A	Awareness of the need for change
D	Desire to support and participate in the change
K	Knowledge of how to change
A	Ability to implement the change
R	Reinforcement to sustain the change

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The ADKAR® model of change management

Hiatt refers to each of these five actions as building blocks for successful individual change, and therefore successful organisational change. As the graphic indicates the process is sequential. In other words each step must be completed before moving on to the next. Hiatt emphasises that it is not possible to achieve success in one area unless the previous action has been addressed.

The ADKAR® model consists of five sequential steps or actions:

1. **Awareness** of the need for change.

Understanding **why** change is necessary is the first key aspect of successful change. This step explains the reasoning and thought that underlies a required change. Planned communication is essential. When this step is successfully

completed the individual (employee) will fully understand why change is necessary.

2. Desire to participate in and support the change.

In this step the individual is able to reach a point where they make a personal decision to support the change and participate in the change. Naturally a desire to support and be part of the change can only happen after full awareness of the need for change is established. Building desire is partly achieved by addressing incentives for the individual and creating a desire to be a part of the change.

3. Knowledge on how to change.

The third building block of the model, providing knowledge about the change, can be achieved through normal training and education methods. Other methods of transferring knowledge, such as coaching, forums and mentoring, are equally useful, so don't limit this process to formal training. Two types of knowledge need to be addressed: knowledge on how to change (what to do during the transition) and knowledge on how to perform once the change is implemented.

4. Ability to implement required skills and behaviors.

In this model Ability is understood to be the difference between theory and practice. Once knowledge on how to change is in place (theory) the practice, or actual performance of the individual, needs to be supported. This can take some time and can be achieved through practice, coaching and feedback.

5. Reinforcement to sustain the change.

This final stage of the model is an essential component in which efforts to sustain the change are emphasised. Ensuring that changes stay in place and that individuals do not revert to old ways can be achieved through positive feedback, rewards, recognition, measuring performance and taking corrective actions.

This is often the part of change management that is most difficult as organisations are already moving towards the next change. For successful change, reinforcement is essential to ensure that changes are maintained and new outcomes can be measured.

Why use the ADKAR® model of change?

The primary reason I favour this model of change management is it's focus on individual change and ensuring each person makes the transition. This is more than a 'soft' approach - it has practical applications.

Most importantly, when you're focusing on the individual you're able to measure where they are in the change process and what is required to assist them. You are not simply relying on running a certain number of training programmes, or communicating a particular message, and expecting everyone to follow.

- The model directs change management activities. It's focused on outcomes, not tasks to be performed. Many change models describe *what* needs to be done - this model describes the outcomes (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement).
- Communication strategies can be focused.

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- The ADKAR® model helps to measure the effectiveness of the change process. Progress can be measured down to the individual level, gaps diagnosed, and corrective action is directed.
- Managers have a tool they can use. Each part of the model gives manager's a specific role. For example, an individual struggling with change may need knowledge on how to change or may lack the ability to implement necessary skills or behaviours. The manager is able to discern between the two and can provide training (knowledge and information) or work closely with the individual, coaching them to give them the confidence (and ability) to perform effectively.
- This change management model can be used for both project and non-project change, and is effective as a model of individual change outside of the organisational setting as well.

To really understand the ADKAR® model I suggest you read Jeff Hiatt's "ADKAR®: A Model for Change in Business, Government and our Community", published in 2006. The book starts with a short, effective summary of the model and then continues to describe each part in more detail. Many examples are used and each aspect of ADKAR® is explored in detail.