

10 TIPS

is a series of pocket-size booklets, that will inspire you and make you reflect. To develop yourself, your service, your leadership and the business you represent.



Kenth Åkerman

You will find themes that include change management, service, active complaints management, coaching, goal setting and mental training.

Want more inspiration?

Go to: www.relationsbyggarna.se

Kenth Åkerman, speaker, leadership expert and mental coach.

Certified NLP Trainer and author. Studied Business Administration with specialization in marketing. Has a background in banking, travel and advertising. Business coach to leaders and management. Is one of the best speakers for groups of 20 as well as 400 people. He has worked with strategic and tactical marketing, business development and management as a consultant and educator since the late 80's. He is passionate about creating perspective and new behavior, with business in focus. Trained by Anthony Robbins, Robert Dilts, Michael Neill and Jim Rohn among others. As a speaker he inspires and educates thousands of employees and managers annually, in Sweden and all over Europe.

The main topics are motivation, change, coaching, customer service, winning attitude, company culture, mental coaching and job satisfaction.

Leadership in change

The keyword is Why?



www.rbpublishing.se

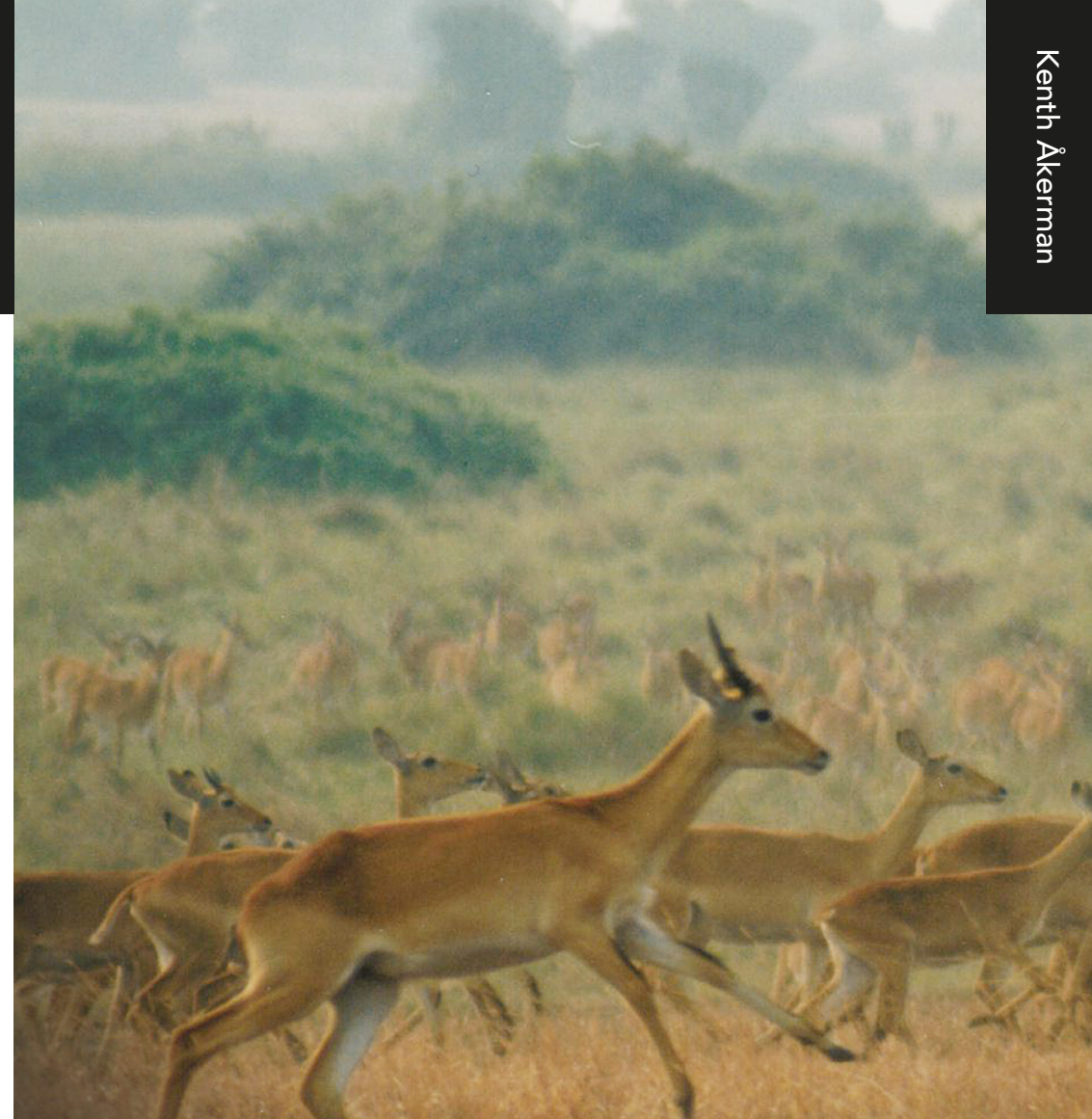
Your seminar was a total success. You mediated such a wonderful energy. Everybody is really pleased with the kick-off, and most of all with your session.



9 789186 439330

ISBN 978-91-86439-33-0

Price: 28:- (SEK excl. VAT)



Kenth Åkerman

10 TIPS

Leadership in times of change

At full speed.

10 TIPS

Leadership in times of change

At full speed.

“It must be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old institution and merely lukewarm defenders in those who gain by the new ones. ”

Niccolo Machiavelli, 1469-1527 



© Copyright Kenth Åkerman and RB Publishing/Relationsbyggarna AB,
www.relationsbyggarna.se - All rights reserved. Printed: PRINFO Alfredssons, Bollebygd, 2014.
Layout: NALF AB, www.nalf.se Photo: iStockphoto, www.iStockphoto.com

First edition. ISBN 978-91-86439-33-0

Change should not be an aim to itself. New leaders sometimes have a tendency to be somewhat over-enthusiastic about making organizational changes, to show that there is a new person at the steering wheel. Often times, the result is frustration and questions why. At one point when I was employed, we went through three re-organizations in less than a year! And things did not get better; instead we had increased confusion, lower pace and lost stamina. We got more self-styled managers, more rules and more structure. Change should never be an aim to itself. Things that are not broken should not be fixed. However, if people know and understand the reasons for why changes are to take place, they will generally approve. The clearer the goal is, the higher the motivation.

An organisational change could entail reformation of procedures, different roles, new conditions, transformations of... well; change could become the normal state of affairs.

Transformation, development, conversions, differentiation and variegation... They are all just synonyms to the common word “change”. Those are words that suggest changes that will occur whether we asked for them or not.

The British biologist, zoologist and scientist Charles Darwin (1809-1882), once stated that: “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the fastest or most intelligent. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.”

Openness to change and renewal is a crucial characteristic of a leader, and as such, that also makes the leader a role model. The capacity to lead in times of change, resulting in actual change, is a skill that all leaders today need to possess. A leader with a vision of the future instils a sense of confidence in the team, and at same time points out the direction, and inspires the organization to reach for that vision. Three key competences of the leader are put to the test: the ability to engage, envision and finally execute the change.

Without change, you will come to a halt, and never reach your goal!

Kenth Åkerman

Leadership expert, motivational speaker and author.
kenth@kenthakerman.com

01. Constant change.

For most of us, change is something that forces us to enter into uncharted waters, and that could be difficult in the beginning. Therefore, we need to be supportive of one another. For you to put your head in the sand and hope the change will not affect you and that everything will soon go back to normal, is not a beneficial strategy. The goal must be to make the change happen. Not for the sake of change itself, but in order to reach a certain goal or result.

Change is to bring an end to old practices and routines. It is to move beyond your comfort zone and to embrace challenges and variation. It is to keep up all that is good, and to be curious of trying new things. It means breaking patterns, change environment and perspective in order to generate new thoughts and insights. Perhaps you will need to acquire new knowledge, a change of attitude or what you believe in.

Regardless of what you do or don't do, your surroundings will always be changing. Your whole life is a never ending renovation project, during which adjustments could and should be made. It is never too late to start over and design a new ending.

- » **Change:** because we see potential in our failings, not because we are failures.
- » **Change:** is a LIFE-LONG state, not a project..
- » **Change:** is to sometimes get criticised, not to stay un-contradicted.
- » **Change:** happens by way of questions and dialogue, not out of silence
- » **Change:** is to connect to history, not to forget history.

TO CONSIDER

How does your organisation look at change? In what way have changes been received previously? What is there to learn from previous processes of change?

What are the obstacles: Are will and motivation lacking (why)? Is there a fear of the unknown (comfort)? Is there a shortage of knowledge (facts/what)?

"Everybody wants development, but nobody wants change."

Søren Kierkegaard 

02. Trust - Confidence - Speed.

Have faith in your co-workers, and relate to them based on what they may be capable of, not based on what they have done in the past. No one wants to do a poor job. Everybody wants to feel that they are contributing something significant. To be trusted, and to trust, are critical factors when it comes to establishing a sense of inclusion. We need to trust in each other in order to go where we want to be.

Several studies, in for example the realm of sports, have shown that many of the obstacles that are stopping us from reaching our goals are psychological. It is our own minds that are restricting us. However, given that we are developed creatures, we can change the way we think and what we believe in. Sometimes we may even have to allow ourselves to be naïve and believe that **change is possible**.

Putting things off doesn't help anyone, if there are no valid reasons. When I say reasons, I don't mean "excuses", but **real** reasons. Every day, it is always possible to take one more step towards a specified goal. Don't fool yourself that doing things slowly automatically results in better quality, decisions and results – so speed up.


- » Believe in the change
- » Keep your pace up
- » Have confidence in your co-workers
- » Beware of excuses and "reasons"
- » Grab hold of "evaders"

Goal: Give the important importance. Focus on the right things.

TO CONSIDER

Do you have enough confidence in that your co-workers can handle the change? Do you have confidence in yourself as a leader? Do you believe in the task at hand, are you hesitating or feel uncertain of the goal? In order to keep the steam up, what will be most important for you and your team?

"You have to either stay ahead of the competition, or ahead of yourself, all of the time. If you try real hard, you will find better ways. But you always have to continue questioning how things are done."

Sir Richard Branson 

03. The power of 1%.

Thoughts alone do not lead to success. Promises do not take you further towards your goal. Goals are not achieved automatically. For success to happen, you need action. Little steps, every day. Even the tiniest baby step will be an advancement, and make things a little bit different from yesterday.

That is what I call the power of 1%. In one hundred days, you will have given 100%.

- » It is easy to get caught up in the operative and everyday routines of the business
- » Break patterns and fixed behaviours
- » Everybody is important, and together we can make a difference
- » True change is about the little everyday adjustments, not the major and pompous investments.

Goal: Momentum – Creates a forward-moving energy.

TO CONSIDER

What could you do to increase the chances for your organization to reach given goals? How do you bring about engagement and encourage your co-workers to contribute? How could you establish habits that make it possible for the resolutions to become reality – time and time again? What does 1% mean for you – **right now?**

“Don’t worry about hopping on the wrong train
– just hop on!”
The train conductor in the movie The Polar Express



04. Comfort or Challenge?

Comfort is like a rubber band, stretched between the constant of your comfort zone, and the challenging outposts of advancement. It is an elastic connection between the forces security and insecurity. The secure comfort zone will always be pulling you back. The stronger of the two forces will win.

Most of the time, I am the type of person that strives towards something, with an ambition to discover something new rather than avoiding things. I like challenges and love innovative ways of thinking. I am not like that because I have to, but because I want to. Your outlook on things may be different. **What is your motivation** and drive?

Sometimes you don’t get the results you want, and everything feels amiss. What you need to do then, is to pick yourself up, and start over. I am aware that this is not an approach that necessarily comes naturally to everyone. Instead, you may try once, and that will be all.

- » Change is to have the courage to let the unknown enter into your life and work, not to give up what is known.
- » A person that has stopped achieving has also stopped existing.
- » Finding the balance between proficiency and challenge will give you flow.

The strategy to retain and preserve rarely leads to development, but rather to settlement. The two words ‘problem’ and ‘challenge’ may have equivalent meanings to some people. Everybody needs a sense of security, but it is the challenges that make us grow!

TO CONSIDER

What is keeping you in your comfort zone? As a leader, how can you make sure that challenges are “safe”? What are you going to try doing today, that you couldn’t, wouldn’t, or were too afraid to do yesterday?

“Behind every opposition is an opportunity.
The bigger the opposition, the bigger the opportunity.”

Unknown



05. Proactive or reactive?

Essentially, there are two ways of managing change: reactively or proactively. You could postpone acting until you have run your organization into the ground, and be left with no choices. Or, you could explore the possibilities at hand, and stake out a course of action. What is important is to become aware of that you do have a choice.

Many of us are unaware of our capabilities until the moment we are required to act. You are using only a small share of your energy and brain capacity, and you may not even be aware of it. Waiting for others to include you into their plans, will probably result in that you are waiting for nothing. **You have a choice:** actively seek out opportunities and make use of them when you stake out a course of action for the future.

- » Initiate change before it becomes critical.
- » Stay one step ahead – that will keep you on top.
- » Change is to act before the situation becomes critical, not to be delayed till after the fact.
- » Professionals are proactive! Practice makes perfect.

TO CONSIDER

Why do co-workers have higher expectations on their managers? Why is it not enough to always get better at what you are already doing? Why is the leadership crucial? Which are the greatest obstacles in order for a change to take place? How do you handle change, reactively or proactively? What will the possibilities be when you think proactively?

“Effective change is not something you subject people to.
It is something you do together.”

Ken Blanchard/Terry Waghorn 

06. Indicative vision!

Change is to be in constant movement, a movement towards a dream. Let bygones be bygones.

Starting out in the present, you move towards the future, and we can make history together. Where are we going? What is the ambition beyond the goal? In order to navigate along the way, the long-term course must be staked out like beacons on the sea. Take a moment to imagine that you are already at your desired destination:

What is success?

When have you succeeded?

What do you see, hear and feel then?


- » Change is to talk about the goal often, not just something to display once every quarter.
- » Consider people as resources and create dependable relationships.
- » Communicate the goal and where you are heading to your co-workers, and then entrust them with the operational controls.

Goal: Indicative vision and clear goals

TO CONSIDER

How do you look at change in your organization – as an opportunity or an obligation? What do you yourself want to do; improve what is already there, or create something new? What is the orientation of your

“Vision without action is a daydream;
action without vision is a nightmare.”

Japanese proverb 

07. Why? Why? Why?

Just because you yourself know the reasons for a particular change, it does not mean that everybody else knows too. Given that you are a leader, you have probably been aware of it longer, and had time to reflect. Your motivation, knowledge and understanding are on a higher level than your co-workers. Therefore, always allow time for the questions: Where are we going, and even more importantly, why is it so important to achieve this result?

The motivational gap will increase if you move forward too fast. In order to stimulate motivation, you will need convincing answers to the question "why". The given motive behind "this is why we are doing this," should result in feelings and engagement. The questions that your co-workers will unconsciously be asking themselves are: Why do we/I need to change? Why should I care? Why should we/I contribute? As a leader, you need to provide credible answers to these questions.

You may choose to either encourage your co-workers by emphasizing the positive effects of the change. **In what way will this benefit you?** Or, you may choose to "intimidate" them, by stressing **what you stand to lose if you don't change.**

- » Find the motives that generate motivation!
- » Watch out for the motivational gap.
- » Do you have to, or do you want to?
- » Remember: 80% of all success stems from a compelling "because!"

Goal: Awareness

TO CONSIDER

What will remain the same (gives stability and sense of security)? What will be different (provides variation and challenge)? Define the 3-5 most important challenges within the change.

"Touching the heart will activate the brain. A compelling "because" will make the brain cells dance, pens will glow, hands will create, and the energy will flow."

Kenth Åkerman 

08. Stop littering - act!

In order to start something new, you have to put an end to the old ways. You need to stop littering and end whatever it is that is impeding you, or leads you in wrong direction. To do what you have always done, will yield the same results as it always has.

In order to achieve another result, you have to do something different. Quite simply: **Start by stopping** what you used to do. How can we do that? Which are our supporting habits/routines? Which of our habits/routines work against us?

- » Remove the risk of failing
- » Make it easy to do right.
- » Where should you begin? Where should you end? With what should you continue?
- » When and how should we act?

Goal: Break patterns. Clear out failing practices.

TO CONSIDER

What is the biggest obstacle in your way? How can we "stop the littering" together? How long are we going to allow things to be done in "the old way"?

"Instil awareness of the opportunities and alternatives. Then, all you will need to do is to take the first step, stay focused and be persistent."

Kenth Åkerman 

09. YOU as a role model!

“You don’t need to follow me. You don’t need to follow anybody! You’ve got to think for yourselves! You’re all individuals!” This quote is from the person who is mistaken for Messiah in the movie *Life of Brian* by Monty Python.

As a manager and leader, you are a role model, whether you want it or not. People look up to you, and to some extent they are also dependent on you. To be a role model may sound rather pretentious, but we are all role models to one another. Perhaps you are a positive character worth learning from, or have a negative trait that serves as a deterring example.

Take responsibility for yourself.

Being a manager is something that you do. Being a leader is something that you are.

- » Be the type of leader that others want to follow.
- » Leaders attract leaders by being good role models
- » Keep your values clear.

Three core competences of a leader:

Envision: where are we going? Present time and desired goal.

Purpose: Create clear goals.

Engage: why should we? Implications and motivations.

Purpose: Create energy.

Execute: how to? Right things right. Feedback.

Purpose: Create winning practices.

Goal: Become a leader that others want to follow.

TO CONSIDER

Who sees you as a role model? What type of leadership do you represent? Do you agree on what should be expected from all leaders, in order to be good role models? Would it be easier for your co-workers to follow you if you were more clear on **what you believe in and want as a leader?**

“The clumsy smith blames the iron.”

Dante Alighieri 

10. Culture eats structure.

Leaders attract leaders. Successful leaders allow co-workers to step up, take on responsibilities, have influence and get due credit. Leaders let the team win. Leadership is about building winning teams. Change is made for people. Change is made by people. We work towards making us all better, together. That is how a winning culture is created.

What is more important: people or technology? A successful leader looks at people as resources, and technology as tools, and not the other way around. What is it like in your organization? The soft values of an organization are its culture, i.e., the people that do the work. Culture always trumps structure.

In essence, leadership requires four important characteristics:

- » Be distinct in your communication.
- » Be consistent in your behaviour.
- » Encourage efforts that are done well. Praise worthy contributions.
- » When things go wrong, dispense rational consequences

Change always means **adjustment of behaviour and culture**, not just the organization and structure.

TO CONSIDER

Do you work for, and together with other people, or “just” within an organization? Do you see your organization or business as a large amoeba that encompasses and absorbs its prey and gradually breaks it down? Is the response to change in the organization’s culture compelling or constricting? How can you encourage others to give positive feedback to new and desired behaviours?

“You have to be run by ideas, not by hierarchy. The best ideas have to win. Otherwise good people don’t stay.”

Steve Jobs 

