



The Prince's  
Responsible  
Business Network

## Engaging & Mobilising Change Agents

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### Why are Change Agents important?

Developing inclusive leadership as a core part of your organisation's leadership approach will inevitably require both influence and change in order to become embedded.

Elsewhere in our resource kit, we include the core competencies that define an inclusive leader and the actions and behaviours that support them, as identified in our research. But **how** inclusive leadership becomes part of the day-to-day leadership approach is likely to vary from organisation to organisation and even between parts of an organisation depending on its culture and how change tends to take place.

It is the **how** and the role of change agents in this process that we focus on here.

At one level, developing and embedding inclusive leadership requires organisational systems that value it in how leaders are recruited, developed, rewarded and promoted. We will deal practically with how inclusive leadership can be built into each of these processes in other parts of the resource kit. But here we focus on how we can identify, engage, empower and work collaboratively with key change agents who have the power to help ensure the required changes are implemented and sustained. In today's complex organisations it is highly unlikely that, however expert and hard they work, inclusive leadership can be developed and embedded by one individual.

This resource kit runs through **three steps** to help you engage and mobilise your inclusive leadership change agents. These steps can be adapted and used whether you are looking to develop and embed inclusive leadership in a part of your organisation e.g. a team, department, function or region or across your whole organisation.

## Step 1: Identifying your Change Agents

### How does successful change happen here?

In identifying your change agents, begin by reflecting – or asking others: *'How does change successfully happen in this organisation?'*

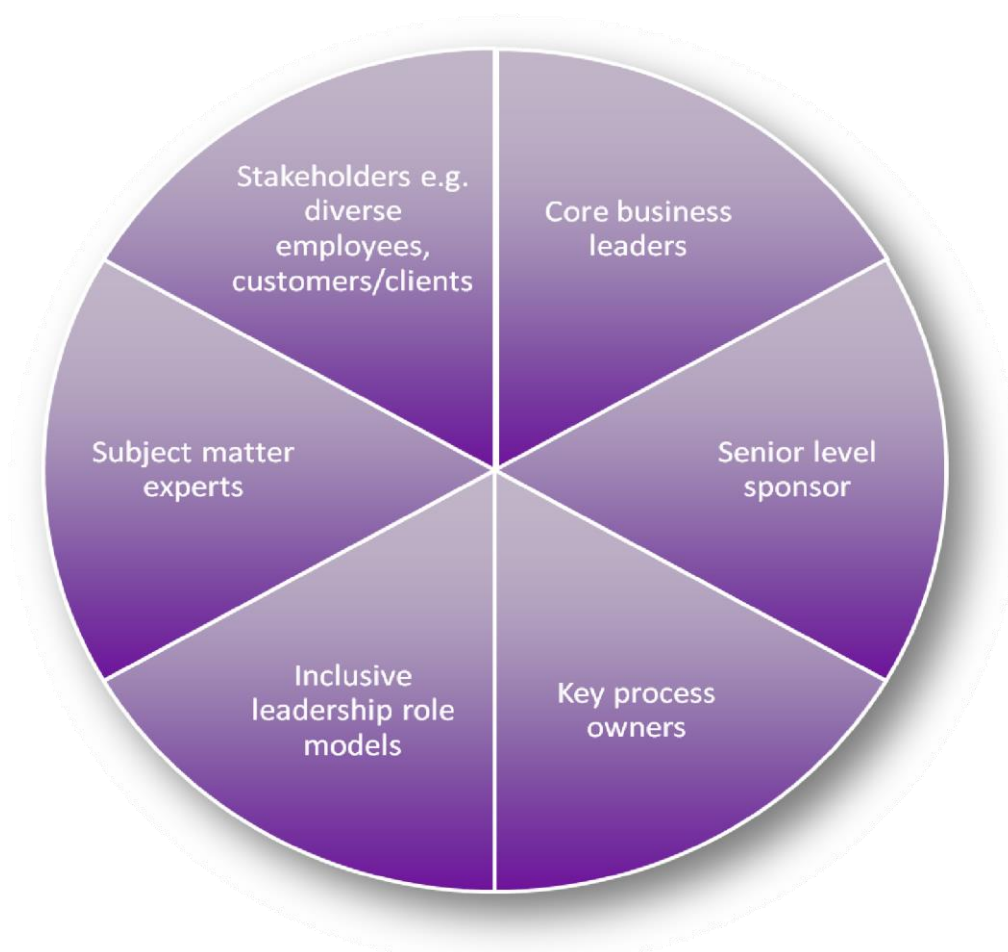
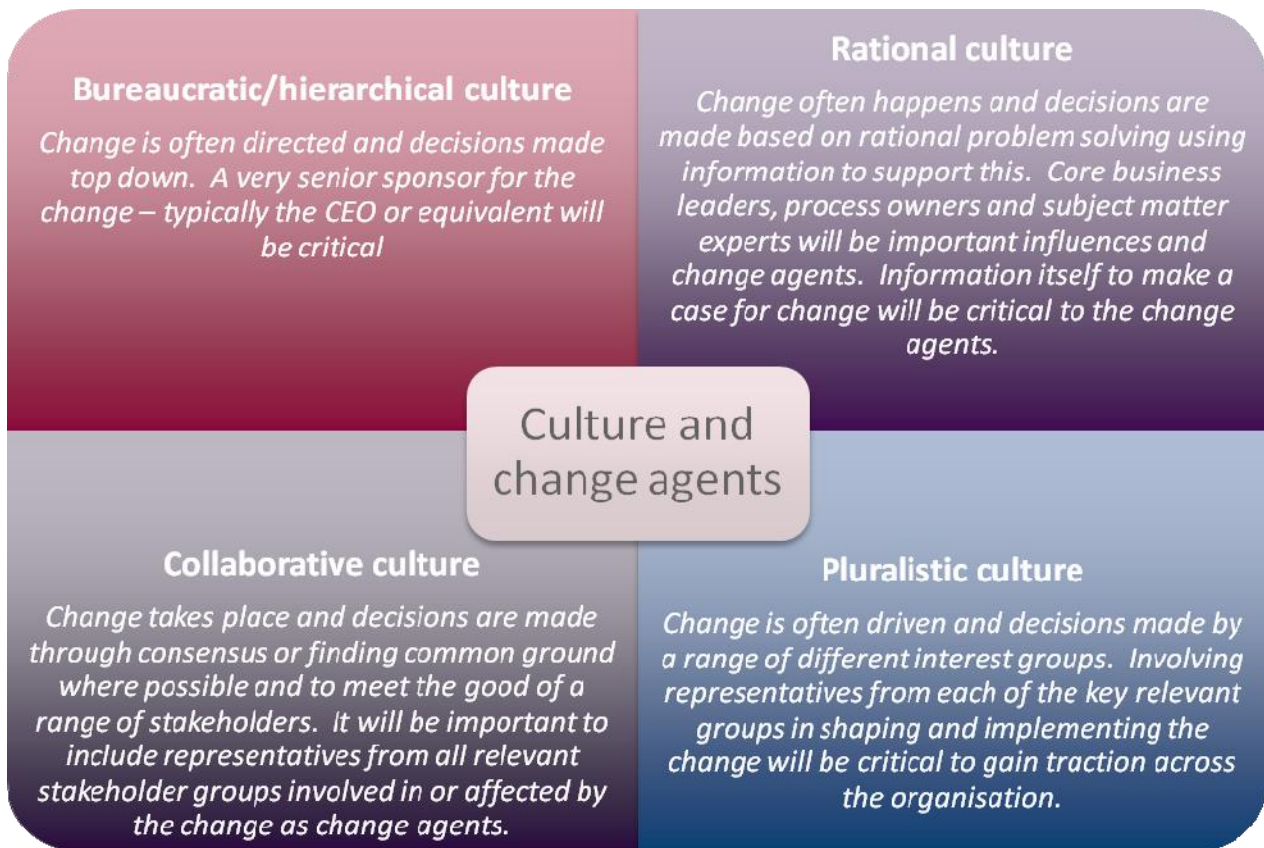
This will provide you with invaluable information in either following or navigating the culture for change in your organisation and who you need to involve to do this.

On the next page, we provide a matrix of organisational cultures and typically who the critical change agents are in each. We then show a cluster of change agents to consider drawing on in creating and embedding inclusive leadership.

The culture you are working in may not neatly fit into one or another of the matrix quadrants and you may not identify all the change agents from our cluster as critical. However, we do recommend that a change programme to develop and embed inclusive leadership includes the following change agents:

- **A senior leader as sponsor:** The CEO or equivalent ultimately sets the tone and direction for leadership in the organisation. Gaining support from the very top for building inclusion into leadership is critical.
- **Core business leaders:** These leaders can help identify the role and importance of inclusion in helping to meet business objectives. Involving them in shaping and implementing inclusive leadership will help to ensure it meets the real needs of the business and the changes gain their buy-in and support.
- **Key process owners:** To embed inclusive leadership, it will need to be built into core HR processes including recruitment, development, promotion, appraisal and reward.
- **Role models:** Who is already demonstrating inclusive leadership competencies? Building on their leadership approach and learning how they developed their skills can help communicate what inclusive leadership means within your organisation in practice.
- **Emerging diverse leaders:** A key role of inclusive leadership is helping to develop diverse talent. Involving people from diverse backgrounds can help ensure your approach to inclusive leadership meets their different needs.
- **Subject matter experts:** These change agents have experience and expertise about inclusion and diversity. They may be internal or external to your organisation or part of your organisation.

## Matching Change Agents to your organisation's culture



## Step 2: Engaging your Change Agents

Your critical change agents may or may not yet be ready to influence and make the necessary changes to develop and embed inclusive leadership.

When approaching your change agents, consider the following questions as part of your preparation:

- Who and what will be most effective in gaining this change agent's support and interest?
- Can you make a direct approach or do you need to involve another influencer / change agent?
- What information will be most compelling to them – e.g. the inclusive leadership research results, your organisation's business case for inclusive leadership, feedback from customers, employee engagement scores or feedback from diverse employees etc.?

We recommend reviewing the Inclusive Leadership research results and sharing these with the potential change agents you approach.

In speaking with your change agent, include the following:

- Tap into their knowledge, experience and expertise e.g. how do they see inclusive leadership as adding value to the organisation, what are the practical benefits and challenges, what does inclusive leadership mean here?
- Engage them at a personal and professional level e.g. ask them who has been their inclusive leader and the impact they had on their career and performance; ask them how being a change agent for inclusive leadership can benefit them
- Ask them who they think are the other critical change agents for developing and embedding inclusive leadership and if they or who else can help engage them
- Be clear about what you are looking for from them in the role of change agent, the actions and responsibilities you are seeking from them
- Discuss what they need from you to do this role well.

### Step 3: Mobilising your Change Agents

The role and responsibilities of each change agent may vary, but they must be clear. Our recommended role and responsibilities for the **sponsor** include:

- Helping to ensure that the rationale and approach for developing and embedding inclusive leadership is approved by senior decision-makers
- Overseeing the progress of the change and helping to facilitate the necessary actions being taken
- Providing a link back to the senior decision-making team on progress being achieved and build in ultimate accountability at a senior level
- Taking overall responsibility for the successful development and embedding of inclusive leadership.

You may choose to work with your change agents individually or bring them together in a steering / change agent group. If choosing the latter, the role and objectives of that group and how they will work together should also be agreed and clear to everyone.

Another option is to take a two-tier approach in developing and embedding inclusive leadership involving:

1. **Change Agent Steering Group.** A group of key stakeholders who can drive, influence, endorse and implement changes to the current model of leadership.
2. **Change Agent Working Group.** A group selected from middle management levels. They will develop ideas and resources that should be widely implemented across the organisation.

**Key actions** for the change agent group should be agreed from the outset and could include:

1. Defining what inclusive leadership means in this organisation part of the organisation, including the key competencies
2. Identifying and communicating the business case for inclusive leadership
3. Clarifying the organisation's current inclusive leadership strengths and gaps & agreeing objectives for the change programme
4. Role modelling inclusive leadership
5. Setting the approach for developing and embedding inclusive leadership
6. Identifying how impact / progress will be tracked and taking responsibility for ensuring objectives are met