



Five Minutes with... Olivia Linehan



My name is Olivia Linehan and I am a Senior Communications and Change Professional.

My career spans more than seven years in internal, transformation and online communications. My corporate and industry experience covers Utilities, Education, Defence, FMCG and most recently, Telecommunications.

The major areas of focus have been on planning and delivering change management strategies to support large scale systems implementation, intranet/internet design and content management, and delivering strategic internal communications for large corporate organisations.

2. How did you come to perform in a change management related role? What attracted you?

One of my first exposures to change management occurred in one of my earlier roles in communication, which saw a company go through the assessment of many different strategic options. In gearing up for a potential IPO and possible sale of a business stream, I was involved in anticipating the effect of these changes and impacts upon all areas of the company. Upon understanding more and more about the process of change, I realised that big announcements from the CEO or SLT is far from enough. Elements of change can happen every day in every organisation's lifecycle. Effectively seeing through an end-to-end change program sparked my interest in change management.



3. Why is good change management so critical to the way businesses perform today?

In today's economic climate, businesses need to execute change with the total trust and belief in the change from their employees. I have seen many large companies go through change programs over and over again, with some staff extremely sceptical of success – they've been there long enough to see them fail before! Evidence of good change management is demonstrated through employees not only buying in to the change, but wanting to play a part in owning and delivering the success of this change themselves. When little effort is required to reward or coerce staff to be involved and shift their mindset or practices in their day-to-day work, then you're more than half way to seeing good change management implemented.

4. What makes a great change management practitioner?

A great change practitioner should have the ability to understand that change involves everyone in an organisation, though it may not be direct, and that no single scenario of change can be pigeon holed into one delivery model. A great practitioner must have the ability to communicate well at all levels, and translate complexity into simplicity without losing meaning or intent. They also have to be able to be creative enough to engage a tough audience and be influential enough to challenge some of the fixed ways of thinking in senior leaders.

5. What would you say to anyone thinking of starting/developing a career in change management?

Not a single day is the same working in change management. As every job comes with its challenges and rewards, there is always at least one new thing learned. Change management can involve so many exciting combinations of other work that it can only expand your knowledge and experience for the long term.

Overall, the job can bring personal satisfaction when you see the influence you've had resulting in a shift in attitudes and practices that bring about long-term success in an organisation.

6. What is your idea of a great change management challenge?

Being able to show those who think they know everything about an organisation that they really don't!