

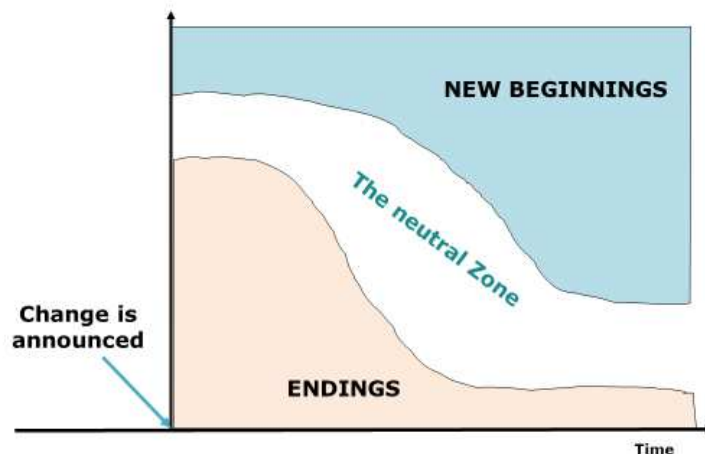
Managing Transitions

According to William Bridges (*Managing Transitions*, 1991): “Change is not the same as transition. Change is situational: the new site, the new boss, the new team roles, the new policy. Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal.” This transition takes time.

Bridges identified three stages, starting with an ending:

1. Endings: loss, letting go, closure
2. Neutral zone: in-between time, chaos, neither past nor future apply, wilderness
3. New beginnings: renewal, new chapter

Transitions Model



Source: William Bridges, *Managing transitions*, 1995 and 2002

These phases overlap and the movement through transition is marked by a shift in the dominance of one phase as it gives way to the next. Managing transition is the process of helping people through the three phases.

The 4Ps

Transition can be facilitated by applying the 4Ps:

- Purpose** explain the real purpose behind the change
- Picture** share a positive vision or image of the future, how it will look/feel
- Plan** lay out a step-by-step plan for moving forward
- Part to play** ensure individuals can have a clear role in the transition and new beginning

Managing Transition - Practical Tips¹

Managing Transitions

Ending	Neutral Zone	Beginnings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anticipate and acknowledge what might be lost• Define what is ending and what is not• Respect the past• Keep open the communication channels with others• Build commitment to change from others• Expect strong emotional reactions• Find a way to mark the ending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to recognise what continues and what is left behind• Try out new things• Set short term goals or milestones• Communicate what people need to hear• Seek or provide support or resources• Expect anxiety, confusion and some successes• Acknowledge it can also be an exciting time• Involve others• Encourage innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage the pace• Communicate often• Re-define performance measures• Ensure some quick successes• Engage in defining and practising new behaviours• Create symbols of the new beginning• Build commitment and enthusiasm• Expect a mixture of emotions• Be a role model

¹ Adapted from *Managing Transitions*, William Bridges