



SWITCH: How To Change Things When Change Is Hard

By Chip & Dan Heath

Change requires that we act differently. But people act as they do because one or more of the following is true: 1. they think it is right, 2. they don't want to change or 3. change is too difficult. In order to help people change we must determine which area to address.

Helping others change is more than simply telling them what to do. There are ways to help others overcome the obstacles to change. Understanding the key areas involved in all change will help us make change in our personal lives, help others make change, and help teams, organizations and churches to change.

The authors of "Switch" illustrate change as a Rider directing an Elephant to go down a Path. If the Rider doesn't know where to go, he will lead the Elephant the wrong direction. If the Elephant isn't motivated to move, nothing you will do is going to move him. If the Path is too difficult, the Elephant must struggle over the roadblocks to get to the destination.

To help change ask:

Do we need to: 1 DIRECT the Rider to a clear destination, 2 MOTIVATE the Elephant by finding the feeling that makes them desire change, or 3 SHAPE the Path by making changes that encourages change?

Some practical ways to apply these 3 areas:

DIRECT the Rider:

1. *"Follow the bright spots - Investigate what's working and clone it."*
2. *"Script the critical moves - Don't think big picture, think in terms of specific behaviors."*

3. “*Point to a destination* - Change is easier when you know where you’re going and why it’s worth it.”

MOTIVATE the Elephant:

1. “*Find the feeling* - Knowing something isn’t enough to cause change. Make people feel something.”
2. “*Shrink the change* - Break down the change until it no longer spooks the Elephant.”
3. “*Grow your people* - Cultivate a sense of identity and instill the growth mindset.”

SHAPE the Path:

1. “*Tweak the environment* - When the situation changes, the behavior changes. So change the situation.”
2. “*Build habits* - When behavior is habitual, it’s “free”—it doesn’t tax the Rider. Look for ways to encourage habits.”
3. “*Rally the herd* - Behavior is contagious. Help it spread.”

“For things to change, somebody somewhere has to start acting differently. Maybe it’s you, maybe it’s your team. Picture that person (or people). Each has an emotional Elephant side and a rational Rider side. You’ve got to reach both. And you’ve also got to clear the way for them to succeed.” Direct the Rider, Motivate the Elephant, Shape the Path.