

Good Breaks Evidence-based approach to achieving cultural change

Embedding new break taking or wellbeing practices with an organisation is about changing behaviour – encouraging people to take on new behaviours for managing themselves and for managing others.

But we're not just interested in individual behaviour, we also need to think about what is shared between people, and how individual behaviours collectively create a culture. It can be helpful to think about culture as "the way we do things around here", culture is often about unspoken rules, the things we know implicitly by observing how other people behave and how they respond to our behaviour.

As an HR professional, you have an opportunity to help this translation from espoused values to everyday practice and encourage your colleagues and particularly managers and leaders to act in accordance with the desired shift in break taking practice.

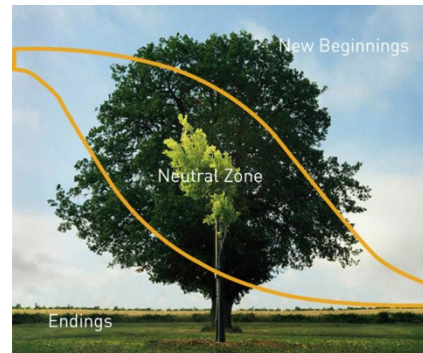
Supporting people on their journey towards change

Change is often understood as a process or cycle. We are asking people to change their ways of working and take on new behaviours that are better for their wellbeing or the wellbeing of those they work with. Therefore, they are likely to need to stop doing some things and start doing new things – for some this change may be minor, for others it may be considerable. You may need to think about and assess where people are on their journey towards change.

There are many approaches to change. **The Bridges three stage model** makes a distinction between change (external, can be fast) and transition (psychological, much slower to take effect). In transition, we make our adjustments in the neutral zone.

Change happens explicitly or implicitly at different stages of the cycle.

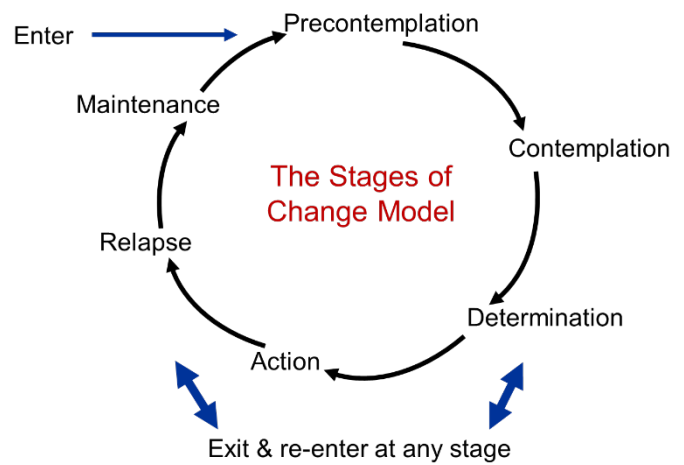
Applying the Bridges model to wellbeing, it may be quick to get people to stop saying something, but it may take some time to ingrain a new habit and see a consistent change in their behaviour, as this is likely to require more psychological change. It may also be that you will observe change quite quickly when things are going well, but the next time pressure is on, they will resort to older and more comfortable patterns of behaviour.



[GOOD BREAKS]

The Stages of Change Model is about behaviour change and highlights that in taking on any new behaviour we are likely to take some time to think about taking on a new behaviour before we decide to take action, and are likely to relapse and need to continue to invest effort to maintain a new behaviour.

We may well also exit the cycle and re-enter at any stage, therefore it is important to be patient with ourselves and with others – a setback does not mean that all progress has been lost! A good thing to think about is what is your motivation at the stage of determining to take action.



Influencing behaviour

Behaviour change is highly multi-disciplinary area of study, with helpful insights available in health psychology, behavioural economics and social psychology. Some forms of behaviour change theory emphasize decision making based on attitudes and intentions, while other behaviour change may be more influenced by factors such as ease. Therefore, we have to think about the right way to influence someone's behaviour in specific circumstances.

EAST model

The Behavioural Insights Team, who are based within the UK government, developed the EAST model which draws upon the principles of behavioural economics. It provides a lens through which to consider any activities intended to change behaviour.

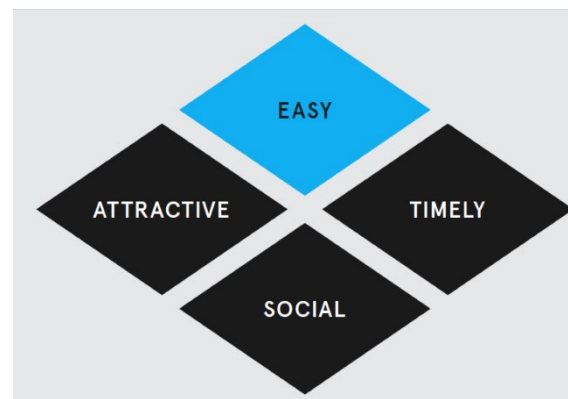
The model has four components through which contribute to the likely success of a behavioural intervention:

Easy – is it simple / the default option / a frictionless choice? E.g. are the salads closer in the canteen counter than the fries?

Attractive to the individual – is it personalised / incentivised / associated with positive emotion or a boost to my ego?

Social – is it related to social norms / reciprocating behaviour / social commitments? E.g. is something a popular or common choice?

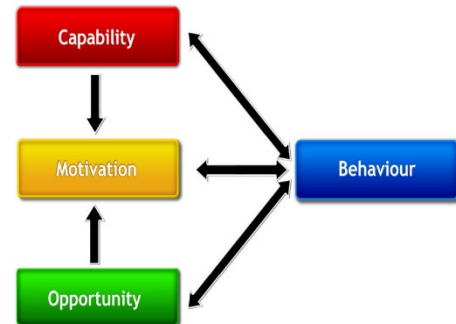
Timely – is it related to a prompt / giving feedback / a key decision moment? This can be either in the short term (e.g. prompts to stretch) or long term (right for your stage of life)



COM-B model

The EAST model focuses on the role of the individual, but when you consider any behaviour change in practice, it's clear that adopting a healthy diet, for example, is far easier if you have the funds to do so, and your local shop stocks vegetables.

For this reason, many other models of behaviour change consider that change within context. Susan Michie and colleagues (2011) COM-B model is an especially prominent example as it talks about behaviour as context specific. There are three elements in the model that influence behaviour:



Capability – The psychological or physical ability to enact the behaviour – This may require developing relevant skills or specific plans to change.

Motivation – Reflective and automatic mechanisms that activate or inhibit behaviour – This may require rewarding change, developing appropriate beliefs (e.g. benefits of changing, personal relevance, confidence) or developing positive feelings about changing

Opportunity – A physical and social environment that enables the behaviour – This may require social support, avoiding social and other cues for current behaviour or changing routines and environment