



# Getting Unstuck or Avoiding Getting Stuck

## Get People Interested and Engaged from Day One

Have you ever experienced what one person called “dump and run?” Leaders inflict a change on others and then offer little or no support. (Thanks to the person who gave me that phrase.)

Or have you ever said to yourself, “How can I get them to do X, Y, or Z?”

Or have you been forced to take on a big project and continue to make a full commitment to all of the other work you’ve got going on?

This list could go on and on.

You know as well as I do that there is no magic potion that will make these challenges go away, but bringing people into the loop right at the beginning can make a huge positive difference. Here are some things to consider and some things to avoid.

## What to Consider

There are many good models out there for getting people engaged in changes. Since I haven’t experienced most of those approaches, it would be hard for me to recommend one approach over another. (BTW, I do not offer a large-system-change approach myself, so I am not about to hawk my own wares.)

Take a look around and ask yourself if the approach you are considering includes (at a minimum):

- A meaningful way to communicate with and engage all of those people who will have a stake in the development or implementation of this change.

- Ways to measure progress or lack of forward momentum at every step along the way. Think of this as an Energy GPS (I write about this in my free e-book *Seizing Moments of Possibility*. You will find a link on my website [RickMaurer.com](http://RickMaurer.com)). It is important to consistently measure progress on specified tasks, as well as on the movement of energy (support – inertia – resistance).
- A serious invitation for their input will make it easier for people to identify and discuss what could go wrong or is already going wrong.
- Select an ombudsman. Someone who can say, “the emperor has no clothes on.”

## What to Avoid

- Typical all hands or town hall meetings. These types of events have their place, but are often the wrong approach to use to get people involved. There is nothing wrong with big meetings, but they often focus on presentations from a few people, followed by questions and answers. The problem can be that the people in the audience have all the questions and the “experts” on stage have all of the answers. While these big events might add clarity, they are less likely to get people interested or committed to your proposed change.
- Planning that is limited to a small group. Even if this small group represents lots of stakeholder groups, any excitement or growing enthusiasm for the change usually only occurs within this small group.
- Holding a big event that gets lots of people engaged and then failing to follow up. You can just feel the energy ooze out of those projects as days and weeks go by.

This is just a start. I welcome your input. Feel free to email me at [Rick@RickMaurer.com](mailto:Rick@RickMaurer.com).