

# STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

**From** “Understanding Change: The Dynamics of Social Transformation,” by Scott London ([www.scottlondon.com/reports/change.html](http://www.scottlondon.com/reports/change.html)). This summary outlines the practical wisdom that comes from the ever-expanding body of research on change.

- **Build New Relationships** (“Banding Together”): Form relationships, organize, and claim collective responsibility for a given issue or situation. This ranges from town meetings to meeting neighbors in your home to discuss concerns. Developing a sense of group-identity as well as a sense of agency generates a sense of the possibility for change. Being with other committed people gives rise to a “can do” spirit.
- **Discuss and Deliberate**: All effective change strategies depend on discussion and deliberation so that issues can be framed and shared perspective developed. People work best together when they share a model of reality. Dialogue uncovers common ground.
- **Develop Shared Visions and Goals**: Setting new directions for the future is one of the most powerful ways to affect change. We communicate our individual visions and start to create a field of shared meaning, trust, and understanding.
- **Foster Social Capital**: Relationships have an inherent value. Building networks and relationships within and between individuals and groups takes time but it is an effective change strategy.
- **Ensure Broad participation and Diversity**: Fundamental change requires everyone affected by the change to participate in the process. Without diversity, perspectives are missed and issues will be overlooked.
- **Determine Leadership Roles**: Leaders lend a cohesion to a group and act as spark-plugs for change. Their vision, drive, and personal commitment galvanize a group into action. Leaders also protect those within the group most willing to risk change.
- **Identify Outside Resources**: Most communities and groups need to develop linkages to outside sources of information and capital for learning and growth.
- **Set Clear Boundaries**: Boundaries provide frameworks for measuring change and give focus and direction to efforts. They also provide of sense of what is a feasible plan.
- **Draw on the Examples of Others**: Those seeking to affect change may take comfort and inspiration from the examples of others. Not only does this provide mentors, it offers proof that a goal is attainable.
- **Adopt a Change Mindset**: What is required is a shift of perception from seeing change as a dis-equilibrium to seeing it as a constant. Social change agents are deeply motivated to transform themselves, to learn, and to grow.