

FIELD GUIDE TOOL #6

The Change Cadence Planner

Chapter 6: Continuity During Change

DATE _____ COMPLETED BY _____

SITUATION _____

Use this tool when leading your team through a significant change. Complete each section before the change is announced and revisit it monthly throughout the transition.

When to use it. Best used before any major change is announced.

Part A: Narrative Stability Assessment

Answer each question before communicating the change to your team. Gaps here are the most common source of trust erosion.

Question	Your answer
What is the underlying logic that connects this change to the organization's longer-term direction?	
What has changed since the last strategic communication, and why?	
What has not changed? What commitments and values remain constant?	
What were the honest reasons the previous direction was insufficient?	
How does this change incorporate what was learned from what came before?	

Question	Your answer
Can you articulate this in two pages or fewer, in plain language, without a slide deck?	

Part B: The Three Causes Diagnostic

Assess the risk of each trust-eroding pattern for this specific change.

Risk	Likelihood (High / Med / Low)	Your mitigation plan
Shifting rationale: The stated reason for the change may evolve without acknowledgment.		
Priority volatility: The priorities that determine how people spend time may shift before this change is embedded.		
Cadence breakdown: Communication may become sparse in the weeks following the announcement.		

Part C: The Communication Cadence

Define your communication structure for the transition period. Be specific about format, frequency, and owner.

Communication type	Format, frequency, and owner
Regular written update to the full team	
All-hands or team meeting with Q&A	
Individual check-ins with key stakeholders	
Informal presence in team spaces	
Feedback mechanism: How will you hear what the team is actually thinking?	

Part D: The Constants

List explicitly what will not change. This section is as important as the change announcement itself.

Category	What will remain constant
Values and operating principles	
Commitments to team members	
Standards for how work gets done	
Relationships with key clients or partners	
Team structure and roles (or explicit exceptions)	

Part E: Monthly Review

Revisit these questions monthly throughout the transition. Honest answers will surface emerging trust problems before they become disengagement.

Question	Current State
Is the team's understanding of the rationale consistent with your own?	
Are there concerns circulating informally that have not been raised formally?	
Has the stated rationale shifted since the announcement? Has that shift been acknowledged?	
Is the communication cadence being honored consistently?	
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = no commitment evident, 3 = mixed or compliant, 5 = strong and consistent commitment), how would you rate the team's current commitment to the direction?	
What is the most important thing you need to communicate or clarify in the next two weeks?	

Before communicating the change to your team, confirm:

- ☐ You have articulated the underlying logic that connects this change to what came before.
- ☐ You have identified and named what will not change.
- ☐ You have acknowledged honestly what the previous direction did not achieve.
- ☐ You have a specific, scheduled communication cadence for the transition period.
- ☐ You have a mechanism to hear what the team is thinking, not just what they are willing to say formally.