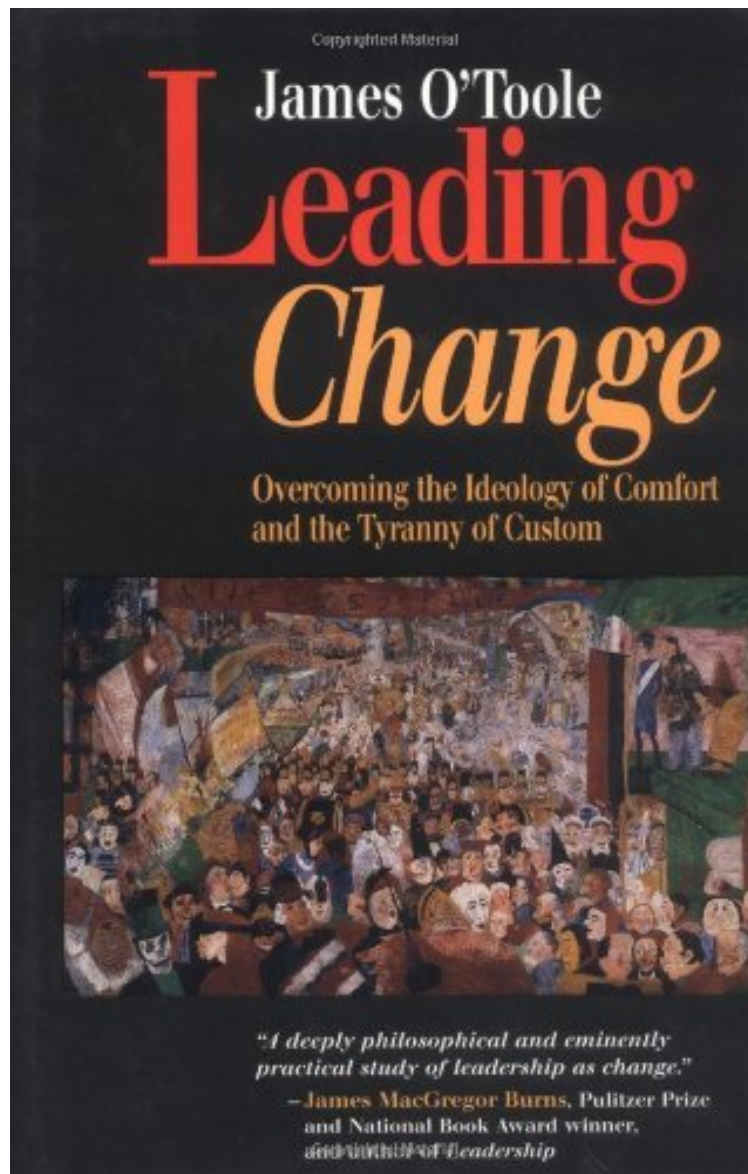


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Leading Change: Overcoming the Ideology of Comfort and the Tyranny of Custom (J-B US non-Franchise Leadership)

James O'Toole

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James O'Toole : **Leading Change: Overcoming the Ideology of Comfort and the Tyranny of Custom (J-B US non-Franchise Leadership)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Leading Change: Overcoming the Ideology of Comfort and the Tyranny of Custom (J-B US non-Franchise Leadership):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Moral and Effective Leadership! By O. Halabieh

The aim of this book, as summarized best by the author, is to address three related questions: "1) What are the causes of resistance to change? 2) How can leaders effectively and morally overcome that resistance? 3) Why is the dominant philosophy of leadership, based on contingency theory neither an effective nor a moral guide for people who wish to lead change?". The book addresses these questions through two parts. The first one focuses on the leaders, particularly on values-based leadership (so-called Rushmorean leadership). The second, on the followers with a focus on why people tend to resist change, and strategies to overcome that resistance.

What I particularly enjoyed about this book are the numerous reviews of other classics within these subject areas, which helps the reader further anchor the thoughts being introduced and how they are supported and/or are different from those introduced by the author. A recommended read in the areas of leadership and change!

Below are key excerpts from the book that I found particularly insightful:

- 1- "In complex, democratic settings, effective leadership will entail the factors and dimensions of vision, trust, listening, authenticity, integrity, hope, and, especially, addressing the true needs of followers."
- 2- "As Nelson Mandela understood, people will follow only leaders who take them where they want to go. Leaders thus beget followers, and they do so by allowing the followers to take the leader's dream as their own. This can occur only when leaders acknowledge the legitimacy of followers' competing beliefs and diverse values. Hence the overall conclusion from our inquiry: for leadership to be effective, it must be moral, and the sine qua non of morality is respect for people. (This is the concept of leadership we are calling Rushmorean)."
- 3- "In sum, Rushmorean leadership is not about voting; it is about the democratic value of inclusion. There is nothing oxymoronic, chaotic, or ineffective about leadership based on that moral principle."
- 4- "What we will find is that people in organizations resist change advocated by their leaders for exactly the same reasons that the leaders of organizations resist change advocated by outsiders."
- 5- "In general, the successful processes of change initiated...had the following things in common: 1) Change had top-management support. 2) Change built on the unique strengths and values of the corporation. 3) The specifics of change were not imposed from the top. 4) Change was holistic. 5) Change was planned. 6) Changes were made in the guts of the organization. 7) Change was approached from a stakeholder viewpoint. 8) Change became ongoing."
- 6- "Here's a sample of some of the most popular hypotheses: 1) Homeostasis, 2) Stare decisis. 3) Inertia. 4) Satisfaction. 5) Lack of ripeness. 6) Fear. 7) Self-interest. 8) Lack of self-confidence. 9) Future shock. 10) Futility. 11) Lack of knowledge. 12) Human nature. 13) Cynicism. 14) Perversity. 15) Individual genius versus group mediocrity. 16) Ego. 17) Short-term thinking. 18) Myopia. 19) Sleepwalking. 20) Snow blindness. 21) Collective fantasy. 22) Chauvnicistic conditioning. 23) Fallacy of exception. 24) Ideology. 25) Institutionalism. 26) Natura non facit saltum. 27) The rectitude of the powerful. 28) "Change has no constituency." 29) Determinism. 30) Scientism. 31) Habit. 32) The despotism of custom. 33) Human mindlessness."
- 7- "...The possession of the skill of overcoming resistance to change is what separates the mass of individuals with good ideas from the few leaders who are able to implement them."
- 8- "Thus even though progressives may argue that change will not affect the power, prestige, and positions of the haves, the haves understand intuitively that in fact change must undermine their ideology, upset their belief system, and discomfit them greatly."
- 9- "The current focus of leadership studies in business has a misplaced emphasis on helping haves (corporate leaders) overcome resistance among the have-lesses and have-nots in their organizations. As we see from the foregoing analysis...the far greater problem in overcoming resistance among the haves. In fact, it is progressives inside and outside corporations who face resistance from the people who have the most power to resist: the established leaders."
- 10- "Conflict, tension, and turmoil are the order of the day - today and tomorrow. Thus, great leaders recognize that there is a never-ending struggle to balance the constant and never-abating demands of those with different objectives...Because it is not possible to ignore, nor to completely satisfy, the conflicting demands of all constituencies, leaders live in a state of perpetual tension. Poor leaders cannot tolerate this discomfiting posture, and they attempt to resolve the tension by either giving in to the demands of those who are most powerful, or by issuing a command that represents their own will. There is another way: the values-based leadership described in this book. At its core, the process of values-based leadership is the creation of moral symmetry among those competing values...Hence, the task is to lead through the process of design, composition, tension, balance, and harmony."
- 11- "If one wishes to learn this particular art, the first piece that must be put into place is personal acknowledgment that no other form of leadership can be both moral and effective. Once a leader makes that difficult commitment, all the other pieces will eventually fall into place, bit by bit."

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good if you have the troops to inspire and lead

By Mell

If you're in an organization that needs change and you're not sure how to inspire the troops, so to speak, this might be a good book for you. I got this when leading up a community watch and revitalization program. I tried several ideas in here and they've stuck with me. Unfortunately, there weren't enough troops to inspire and in the end, the organization merged with another community with the same problem. If you've got a captive audience to lead, I'm sure this book can help.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Stand-out Among Leadership Texts

By Richard O'Toole

is obviously a principled person and an excellent writer. His underlying premise - that good leadership flows from people of good character and integrity who dedicate themselves to the positive transformation and improvement of others and society at large - is worthy of repeated advocacy. I found this book to be among the most powerful I have read on leadership and change during a career that includes a stint as a

Navy Chief Petty Officer and a graduate degree in leadership. I think it should be mandatory reading for anyone in or aspiring to an executive-level position.

In *Leading Change*, James O'Toole argues that outdated Machiavellian dictates of situational leadership are ultimately ineffective--and demonstrates instead that successful leadership is rooted in high moral purpose and consistent respect for followers.

From *Library Journal* O'Toole's book is stronger in its parts than in its sum. The author, vice president of the Aspen Institute, offers some practical wisdom about leadership, derived in large part from the lessons to be learned from the lives of the figures carved on Mt. Rushmore; other, more recent "corporate Rushmoreans"; and the writings of such thinkers as management guru Peter Drucker, British industrialist Robert Owen, and English philosopher John Stuart Mill. But these are simply insights scattered throughout the pages for the reader to glean rather than elements of a strong, clear, readily identifiable thesis. Some valuable things are said, but the premises tend to be generalizations about generalizations, often specific in illustration but vague in pattern. Interesting in places but not essential. A.J. Anderson, *GSLIS*, Simmons Coll., Boston Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Held up as exemplary in a decade that's desperately seeking a new order for business, in case history after case history of corporations and their executives, are usually names like Ben Cohen of Ben Jerry's, Anita Roddick of the Body Shop, and even Jack Welch of GE. But those models just won't work anymore, says professor, consultant, and award-winning author O'Toole. Instead, he uses examples from art, history, philosophy, and, yes, occasionally business to probe the answers to three questions: Why do organizations resist change? How can leaders effect change? What should the leadership philosophy be to most effectively (and morally) induce organizational change? He concludes that a values-based leadership is the only way to pull (not push) change; that change challenges the psychological comfort of the powerful--hence, the basis for resistance; and that imposing new values and new visions will work only if leaders create followers. A thoughtful essay, not a how-to manual, that will most likely spark discomfort among legions of American managers. Barbara Jacobs "A compelling book! Jim O'Toole argues convincingly that the complexity and turmoil of our time demands leadership that is right--not leadership that simply works." (Kermit Campbell, CEO, Herman Miller, Inc.)