



## The three stages of transition

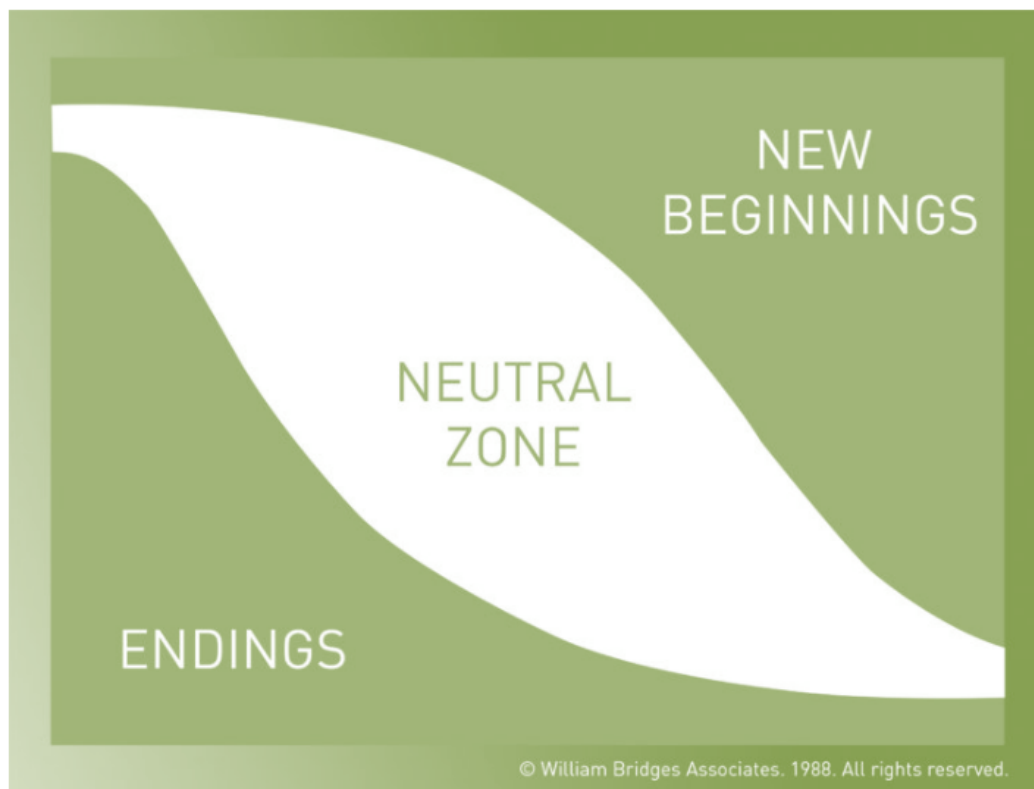
**Change:** *Is an external process. It is something that happens to people, even if they don't agree with it.*

**Transition:** *Is an internal shift, a psychological process. It is what happens inside people's minds when they are presented with change.*

The Bridges Transition Model (*Transitions: Making Sense of life's changes 1980*) helps organizations and individuals understand and more effectively manage and work through the personal and human side of change.

It describes three stages that people experience when transitioning through change – an ending, a neutral zone and a new beginning.

The starting point for dealing with transition is **not the outcome**, but the **endings** that people have in leaving the old situation behind.



Bridges Transition Model



<https://wmbridges.com/about/what-is-transition/>



Coaching Strategies to Support Transition	
<b>Endings – letting go of an existing situation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often marked with resistance and emotional upheaval</li> <li>Forced to let go of something they are comfortable with, which may include relationships, processes, team members or locations</li> <li>Must accept that something is ending before they can begin to accept the new idea</li> </ul>	<p><i>Listen with empathy and communicate openly</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accept their resistance</li> <li>Acknowledge the emotions they are experiencing</li> </ul> <p><i>Articulate a positive future</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasise their abilities to succeed – knowledge, skills and experience</li> <li>Educate them. People often fear what they don't understand</li> </ul> <p><i>Remind them of your support</i></p>
<b>Neutral zone – the confusing or distressing area of in-between-ness</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>often uncomfortable, uncertain and impatient</li> <li>can feel unproductive and frustrated</li> <li>may have increased workload adjusting to the new way of operating</li> </ul>	<p><i>Provide reassurance and frequent feedback</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"It's OK to feel lost or unsettled"</li> <li>Highlight small shifts in the direction of change</li> </ul> <p><i>Set short-term goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quick wins will improve motivation</li> <li>Builds positivity and hope</li> </ul> <p><i>Reduce other workload to offset change effort</i></p> <p><i>Encourage creativity, innovation and renewal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider new ways of thinking or working</li> </ul>
<b>New beginnings – launching in to a new situation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are beginning to embrace the change</li> <li>are rebuilding their ways of working</li> <li>a time of acceptance and energy</li> </ul>	<p><i>Build skills to work successfully in the new way</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasise evidence of ongoing success brought about by the change</li> </ul> <p><i>Acknowledge the large effort needed to enact change</i></p> <p><i>Accept that they can slip back to previous stages, especially if they fear the change is not working</i></p>

Adapted from

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/bridges-transition-model.htm>