

Basic instincts: the derailers of change.

Seven hardwired human instincts that can quietly derail any change you try to lead. Know them, and plan around them.

1

Loss aversion

We are all motivated more by avoiding a loss than by the chance of a gain.

2

Emotion before reason

We screen information first on emotion: how it makes us feel.

3

Gossip

People are hardwired to gossip, so communication risks being left to the grapevine.

4

Contest and display

We can all fall into the trap of doing things that make us look good, rather than staying grounded on the fundamentals, which often take slower, more complex thought and action.

5

Community

We are social animals, hardwired to connect most strongly with our immediate family ahead of the whole village. Bonds are stronger in the smaller team than in the larger group.

6

Hierarchy and status

Human groups function through hierarchy. If the hierarchy becomes unclear, groups become dysfunctional.

7

Confidence before realism

Humans are hardwired to deny reality. This leads people to plan optimistically and disregard implementation.