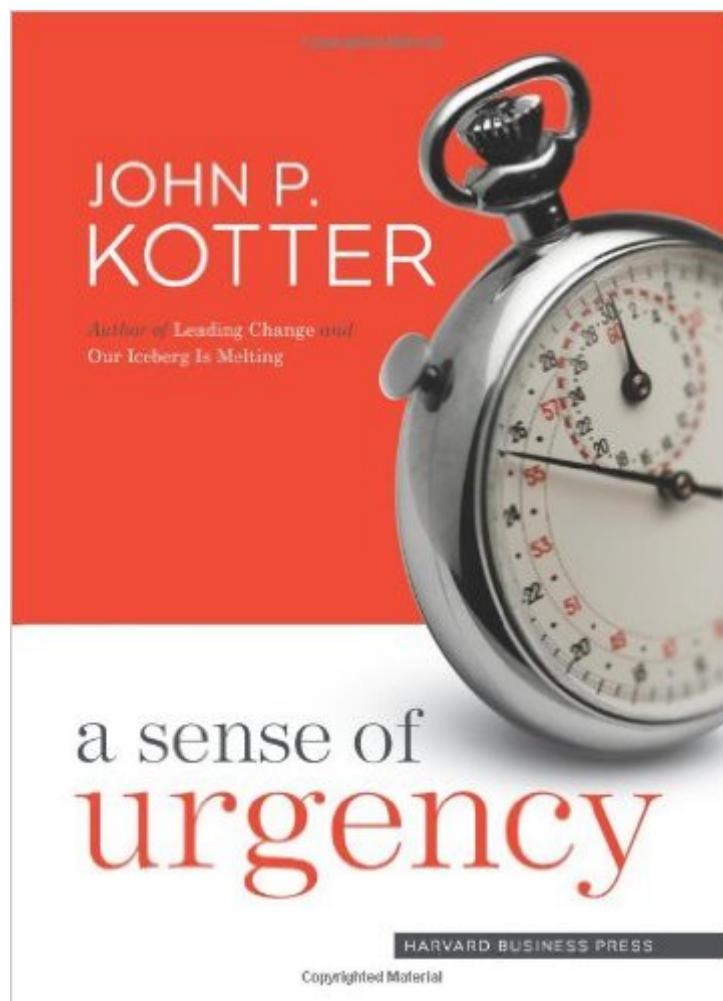


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# A Sense Of Urgency



## **Synopsis**

Most organizational change initiatives fail spectacularly (at worst) or deliver lukewarm results (at best). In his international bestseller *Leading Change*, John Kotter revealed why change is so hard, and provided an actionable, eight-step process for implementing successful transformations. The book became the change bible for managers worldwide. Now, in *A Sense of Urgency*, Kotter shines the spotlight on the crucial first step in his framework: creating a sense of urgency by getting people to actually see and feel the need for change. Why focus on urgency? Without it, any change effort is doomed. Kotter reveals the insidious nature of complacency in all its forms and guises. In this exciting new book, Kotter explains:

- How to go beyond "the business case" for change to overcome the fear and anger that can suppress urgency
- Ways to ensure that your actions and behaviors -- not just your words -- communicate the need for change
- How to keep fanning the flames of urgency even after your transformation effort has scored some early successes

Written in Kotter's signature no-nonsense style, this concise and authoritative guide helps you set the stage for leading a successful transformation in your company.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

*A Sense of Urgency* is a book that is sorely needed in today's times as the difference between urgency and change will make the difference between survival and liquidation in today's economy. Executives need to recognize the difference between the two. Urgency creates a motivating force on results and teaming. Change is imposed from above, the subject of skepticism and Dilbert

cartoons. Every organization needs to change, that is commonly understood and the subject of endless books, including those by John Kotter. We have become complacent in our approaches to change management as every one of those books deals with change as a process, an event something that happens and then happens again at a latter date. This gives executives the belief that there is a change management recipe, based on principles like the burning platform, communication, and executive sponsorship. That recipe has lost its meaning and its time for use to change the approach to change management. I recommend this book to any executive, manager, team leader, and concerned professional as a way for them to lead and create results in a powerful way. The book is easily read over a weekend, a couple of airplane rides, etc. The charts and tools are clearly presented and actionable. Overall a must read part of any management library. Why? Because change has lost its potency. It's become routine and we have lost sight of its fundamental roots. Change and enterprises have become internally focused, concerned with themselves, their processes, their investments etc. Kotter reminds us that the root of success involves sense of Urgency. Urgency is the highly positive and focused forces that give people the determination to move and win now.

Years ago, Stephen Covey suggested that many (most?) executives spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough on what is important. In Chapter 1 of this book, John Kotter suggests that, in fact, the problem is that many (most?) workers -- including executives -- do not have "a true sense of urgency [that is a] highly positive and highly focused force [and] the result of people, up and down the hierarchy, who provide the leadership needed to create and re-create this increasingly important asset. These sorts of people use a strategy that aims at the heart as well as the mind. They use four sets of tactics." Kotter devotes the balance of his book to explaining what the strategy and tactics are, why they are essential to the success of individuals as well as to the success of their organization, and how those who read his book can execute the strategy and tactics to achieve the given objectives, whatever they may be. As I read this book, I was reminded of recent research conducted by the Gallup Organization indicating that 29% of the U.S. workforce is engaged (i.e. loyal, enthusiastic, and productive) whereas 55% is passively disengaged. That is, they are going through the motions, doing only what they must, "mailing it in," coasting, etc. What about the other 16%? They are "actively disengaged" in that they are doing whatever they can to undermine their employer's efforts to succeed. They have a toxic impact on their associates and, in many instances, on customer relations. These are stunning statistics. How to explain them? Reasons vary from one organization to the next. However, most experts agree that no more than

5% of any given workforce consists of "bad apples," troublemakers, chronic complainers, subversives, etc.

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