

The change state indicator

An assessment of the relative concentration of energy within a flow of change.

Understanding the nature of change is crucial to the successful design and alignment of an organisation and its stakeholders.

The Change State indicator provides an assessment of the subtle dynamics of the change flow and provides additional information that supports high precision strategic and personal decision making.

The change state indicator is one of a suite of instruments that originated from the work of Professor Clare W Graves. The broader assessment capability, using his work as a basis, is now known as BeingSCAN.

The Graves model is a flow-state concept that proposes that we pass in and out of stability and chaos in a cyclic, wave-like fashion. These passages energize our thinking and the development of Value Systems that today are being recognized as a core intelligence and influencer of all of our behaviours and actions.

The change state assessment includes ten scales that assess this wave like passage: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and New Alpha; 1st- and 2nd-Order Change; Flex; and Order and Chaos.

A useful metaphor might be to think about flying through a complex weather system. There are safe passages with clear, stable conditions (Alpha). However, there can also be turbulence (Beta) and even wind-shears (Gamma). At the transitional areas are tipping points (Delta) that can either cause us to turn back or move on to clear skies once again (New Alpha).

Glossary of terms

ALPHA

Alpha is a condition where individual, organisations, or cultural value systems successfully address the problems of existence. An individual 'has it together' in the real world. The company is doing well in its 'niche'. Society is meeting the needs of its citizens in an effective way. The environment is relatively stable. Organisations are satisfied as they are. The culture has created the forms and structures that match the problems. In a symbolic sense, 'God's in His heaven and all's right with the world'.

BETA

Beta arises with doubts. Something's wrong, but what is it? The old ways of living no longer work and the boat starts to rock. Successful living may have introduced new and unforeseen elements into the environment. Maybe nature has played its tricks on us. Maybe we're just bored because we are no longer challenged – we've got it too easy.

We may have personal problems; companies may show evidence of decline; communities might experience stress, conflict and discord. We still don't understand what's happening. So, what do we do?

- 1 First, we try to do 'more of the same' because we believe nothing is wrong with the system, only its implementation or enforcement. We 'hunker down', 'rededicate our lives', or 'get with the program'.
- 2 Second, we look for ways to reform, fine-tune, or adjust The System while keeping its main features. (See below: Change 1st Order). We experience nostalgia for 'the good ole' days' when everything seemed to work. (We forget why they didn't).
- 3 We recognise that the system is only a system; there are others. A window opens for a possible transition, through the evolutionary option into a New Alpha. (See Change 2nd Order).

GAMMA

Gamma is a time of growing frustration, feelings of being trapped, and an entire array of antisocial, self-destructive and acting out behaviours. The anger comes from (a) knowing what's wrong and why; (b) understanding what will relieve the tension and create a New Alpha; but (3) fearing that powerful and often punitive barriers stand in the way. These barriers can be internal to the person or group, and/or imposed by external forces seemingly out of their control.

Gamma may lead to violence, destructiveness, armed rebellion, and revolt against the status quo. This becomes the revolutionary option as individuals or movements literally or symbolically throw themselves against the barriers. In milder cases, it's a time of wanting to escape, run away, break out, and be free of the bonds that entrap us. Gamma is often seen in people experiencing the panic of a mid-life crisis or when going through a major personal trauma where the future looks hopeless.

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Since forward movement seems blocked at Gamma, we may experiment with a regressive search. We explore old ways of thinking, dust-off solutions, revive the 'tried-and-true', and believe the 'old-time religion was good enough for my father and it's good enough for me'.

DELTA

Delta is a period of excitement and rapid change where the barriers are overcome and previous restraints drop away. People take charge of their own destinies. The past no longer controls the present.

The Delta energy surge is often raw, enthusiastic, and unrestrained. Old ways of living give way to fresh solutions as unexpectedly different structures begin to emerge in a swirl of activity. This exuberance ignites creativity, resourcefulness, and dedication to the task of designing a new age or person.

"Eureka!" and "Ah, ha!" are heard everywhere as the thrill of liberation mobilizes people in search of the new utopia. Delta often brings stress into relationships and may even trigger negative reactions from those left behind. Too much Delta, too soon, too emotionally displayed, can produce a serious backlash that actually reinforces the old barriers.

NEW ALPHA

The New Alpha is the consolidation of the ideas and coping systems that emerged during the Delta state into new systems, paradigms, and arrangements. The individual returns to a steady state as the world is once again in sync. The organization is congruent to its marketplace or within its professional niche. Society itself appears to be in stride with its environment. Many come to believe the ultimate has been reached; the world will stay this way forever. Over the horizon, around the corner, or up the road lies a new Beta.

Revolutionary option	Flex	Evolutionary option
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demands fundamental change in structures/systems • Unrelenting 'All or nothing' assault on barriers/obstacles • Defends actions by finding noble purpose in 'The cause' 	<p>HIGH SCORE indicates readiness to accept change, to move away from what was and embrace whatever is next.</p> <p>LOW SCORE reflects a preference for holding on to what you feel is reliable, stable, important and necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous problems solved • Potential in the brain • Access to new system • New models and patterns • Available resources • Consolidation and support

Change 1st order	Change 2nd order
<p>Change occurs within a system which, itself, remains unchanged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore balance; improve within givens • Rooted in past decisions • Renew – refurbish – reform • Work harder and smarter <p>Basic Theme: MORE OF THE SAME</p>	<p>Mega-system shift to new paradigms, new assumptions, and new structures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generated by outside events/influences • Driven by perceived future • Puzzling – unexpected – paradoxical • New wine, new wineskins <p>Basic Theme: REFRAMING</p>

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Chaos	Order
Stimulated by turmoil, variety, uncertainty, challenges, novelty, unpredictability, surprises, and the need to adapt to sudden changes. Thrives on shifting patterns, air-cleansing storms and constant motion.	Relies on structure, dependability, logical sequences, clear boundaries, continuity and patterned detail in providing order and stability. Preference is for predictability. Looks for the prevailing order in everything.

Interpretation of the results

The scores reflect composite summaries, since an individual may be in different change states in different areas of their life. One might be in Alpha in a marriage, trapped in Gamma at work and entering Beta at church. One might belong to a company that is experiencing a Delta of growth after serious crisis. One's community might be in a Beta regressive search for reassurances from the past.

There have been average scores collated over the past 20 years. They provide some comparison with other groups' though equally require some care in interpretation.

These are recorded as: **ALPHA...17.5**, **BETA...9.8**, **GAMMA...7.2**, **DELTA...12.5**, **New ALPHA...15.1**, **FLEX...11.9**, **Change (1st Order)...21.6**, **Change (2nd Order)...17.5**, **ORDER...15.7**, **CHAOS...10.8**

