BIRKMAN NEXT: CHANGE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

How to Communicate Birkman Next Changes to Your Respondents

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Birkman Next denotes important updates, innovations, and new features rolled out by Birkman. The Birkman Next initiative is a part of our continual efforts to improve the experience of using our assessments and to amplify the positive impact of our reports for respondents.

Why is Change Management Important?

From implementing new processes to launching new products, change is an exciting and necessary component towards organizational and personal growth. However, it takes time for people to adapt to change.

Change management is a structured approach for ensuring that changes are thoroughly and smoothly implemented so the lasting benefits of change are achieved.

Now that Birkman has released many exciting updates, you will need to manage these changes with your clients (either internal or external to your organization) so that respondents have a chance to enjoy the benefits of the new Birkman reports.

This guide will provide you with tips on how to communicate clearly with your stakeholders and make the change process a positive experience for everyone.

Stakeholder Analysis

Before you begin presenting the changes, you will first want to determine which individuals or groups will be impacted by the Birkman Next changes – this is referred to as a *stakeholder analysis.*

How to analyze your stakeholders:

- Who will be affected by the changes? Create a segmented list of different types of clients/respondents or others who may be affected by the changes.
- How *important* will the Birkman Next changes be to each group? (Some groups may be more affected than others by the changes.) Give each group an *importance score.*
- What is the *influence* of each group? (Some groups may have a bigger impact and influence on your business or department than others.) Give each group an *influence score.*

Groups with high importance and influence scores should be your first concern—because they care about the changes and have a high impact on your success.

Groups with low importance and low impact are still necessary to communicate with, but perhaps through other methods or with less urgency than those who either care more about the changes or wield greater influence.

Presenting the Changes

One way to present change is by using the *Golden Circle* *of Why, How, What* created by Simon Sinek. This means that you will first explain the purpose of the changes, and then later explain the details of such.

1. Explain Why

First, explain why the change is occurring.

> *"Birkman continually strives to make our experience with their reports more intuitive and meaningful. Their goal is to help us work better together and focus more on what matters—discovery, self-development, effective leadership, and teamwork. By updating their reports and terminology, Birkman is helping us reach our goals by facilitating better communication."*

2. Explain How

Second, explain how the change is occurring.

> *"This change is being implemented through new appearance, structure, and terminology in their reports—as well as with simplified reporting packages."*

3. Explain What

Third, explain what is changing.

> *"There are several updates that Birkman has made to their administrative platform, but that will not impact you as the respondent. However, you will want to know about the updates they have made to their reports and naming conventions. These updates create a more memorable and fun experience using Birkman reports. The new terminology is much more intuitive, which we hope ignites more conversations about Birkman outside of the formal feedback session. The following are several of the changes you'll want to know about, including the Birkman Map, Birkman Interests, and Birkman Components."*

At this point, you can utilize the Birkman Next booklet for respondents, the Birkman Next videos, the new Signature Report, and the Signature Companion Guide to dive into more details of the recent updates. Check out the Birkman Resource Center for ways to access these tools and documents.

Position Change to Create Positive Impact

1. View change as an opportunity to be harnessed.

Explain that Birkman Next is a true opportunity to be harnessed.

> *"Because of the new intuitive names and data visualization, your experience using your Birkman report should now be more memorable and stimulate deeper conversation. You can now focus more on implementing and less on learning the terminology."*

Reassure respondents that this is a great opportunity for them to revisit their Birkman report and reconnect to discuss personality in the workplace.

2. Strive to achieve acceptance and excitement.

Change management is a process designed to empower people to accept and embrace change.

One great way to get respondents excited about the changes at Birkman is to provide their new Birkman Basics Report or Birkman Signature Report. Receiving the new reports will keep their excitement levels high and allow them to experience the new report benefits for themselves, not just hear about how it will affect future respondents at the organization. If you cannot provide everyone with their own report, you can show a sample report and highlight the new reporting features.

3. Reassure that the time and place are right.

Another important action is to reassure your clients that you have considered how these changes affect their unique situation:

- Confirm that you have thought critically about how the new Birkman reports may impact and benefit their current situation.
- Explain that you have considered how they have used reports in the past or how they may expand their use of Birkman concepts to meet their business goals.
- If you are in the middle of a project with a client, express to them that you'll customize the implementation of their new reports when it makes the most sense for them.

4. Provide a place for feedback
Encourage your stakeholders to express their opinions about Birkman Next:

- What questions do they have about the why, how, and what of Birkman Next?
- What excites them about the new reports?
- Are there any concerned reactions?
- How can you restructure any concerns or challenges into positive opportunities?
- How could you communicate change better next time?

Helping your clients or staff have their voice heard will make them feel empowered and more accepting as they embrace the new reports into the company.

How will I know the change management process was successful?

Here are some questions to consider when looking at the success of your change management process:

- What is the level of awareness and understanding that your clients have about the new reports?
- Are they using the new naming conventions?
- What is the current level of engagement and interest in Birkman activities and feedbacks? How does this compare to before the Birkman Next changes?
- What is the utilization rate of the new Birkman reports? Is the organization using Birkman more or less since the changes were implemented?
- Are people promoting or ignoring the changes associated with Birkman Next?
- How much reinforcement and training did you provide around Birkman Next?
- Was information readily accessible to all individuals impacted by the changes?

Additional Resources

We hope that you are excited and feel prepared for sharing the Birkman Next changes with your organization or clients. For additional resources on the change management process, please visit changeactivation.com for infographics, PDFs, and other helpful resources. To download tools and resources specifically designed around Birkman Next, visit the Birkman Resource Center.

Thank you for your dedicated efforts towards implementing the new Birkman reports and for supporting our innovation in the behavioral assessment field.