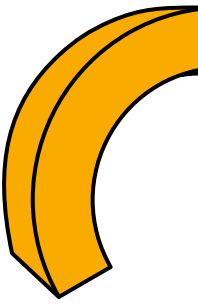


# How to Survive and Thrive When Everything Is Changing



While most of us tend to see change as an obstacle on our path, we are better off seeing change as the path itself. In government, change is unavoidable, whether it's a change in administration, new legislation and regulations, or new assignments. The task, then, is to find ways to adapt to evolving circumstances without losing your balance — or see transition as an opportunity to grow.

That was the focus on a recent [NextGen virtual event](#) featuring three speakers from The Cadmus Group, a strategic consulting firm. Here are their tips and best practices.

## 6 Tips for Staying Steady During Times of Change

When facing the uncertainty and change of a new administration, you might be tempted to lay low until everything settles. But both you and your team will be better off if you keep engaged in spite of the uncertainty. Here are some ways to do that.

### Embrace Ambiguity

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Rather than trying to escape uncertainty, be curious. What's changing? What's not changing, and why? Talk with your manager and others in leadership, asking open-ended questions about what's unfolding.

### Focus on What You Can Control

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During a transition, you can't control much of what happens. So, focus instead on what Stephen Covey calls your circle of control. That includes your thoughts, choices, actions and communication. It also includes your relationships with others, which enable you to expand your influence over time (see chart on next page).

### Communicate Clearly and Factually

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New policies and processes can create a lot of tension in a team. When talking about divisive issues, set your personal feelings aside and stick to the facts and what needs to be done. Again, this is your circle of control.

### See a Problem? Look for a Solution

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New policies and processes also can result in unanticipated problems for you or your team. As annoying as that can be, it's also an opportunity to step up and help work toward a solution. A problem-solving mindset can position you well for growth on the job and in your career.

### Manage Information Overload

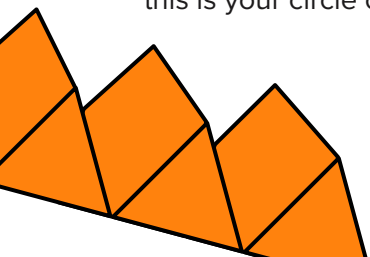
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Be more intentional about how and when you consume news. A good start is turning off news alerts and maybe even sticking your phone in a drawer. And when reading the news, look for sources that deepen your understanding rather than just feed your outrage.

### Prioritize Self-Care

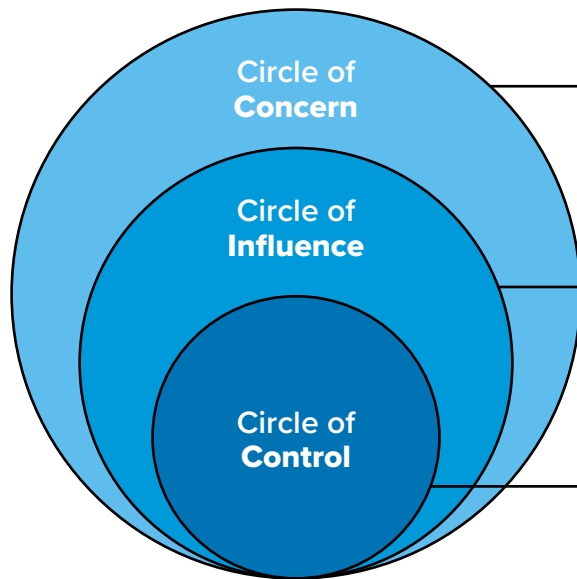
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It's obvious but often forgotten: The more stressed you are, the more you need to make a point of making time for replenishing your energy, whether that's exercising, journaling, meditating or connecting with friends. Whatever it is, make it a priority.



## Circle of Influence

By focusing on what you can control, you are more likely to expand your influence and create more choices and opportunities.



### Circle of Concern

Wide range of concerns over which you have little control over the outcome.

### Circle of Influence

Concerns you can do something about — not necessarily controlling the outcome but influencing it with what you can control.

### Circle of Control

What you can directly control or impact through thoughts, words and actions.

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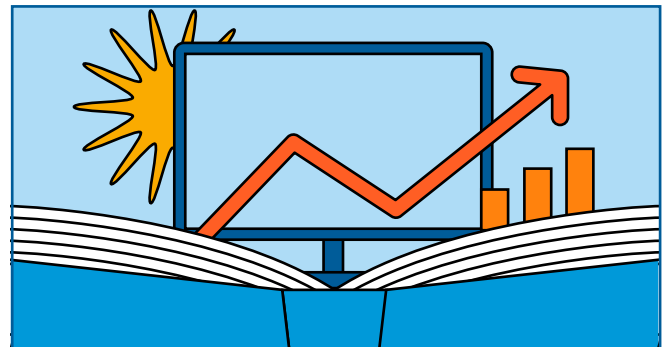
## Lead Into Your Strengths

A transition can make us feel vulnerable because it exposes our growing edges, that is, those areas in which we need to develop professionally and personally. Our biggest assets in that situation are our strengths. Gallup defines a strength as *the ability to consistently perform at a high level in a given area*. Here's how to think about it:



### Begin with your talents.

What inherent gifts do you have that could help you adapt to your new situation? Think in terms of how you think, feel or behave that set you apart from others.



### Invest in those talents.

How can you develop and hone those talents and turn them into strengths? Look for online- or classroom-based training, but also work with your supervisor to learn more on the job.

## The Three Stages of a Transition

William Bridges, an organizational consultant, made a distinction between change and transition:

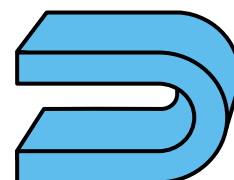
**Change** is an external event that takes place, such as a change in leadership, organizational structure or strategy.

**Transition** is the internal process we go through in response to change.

Bridges developed a three-step model for working through a transition. Try applying this to a change you are facing now, whether a change in leadership, a new organizational structure or new job, or just a shift in job responsibilities.

Endings	Neutral Zone	New Beginnings
What are you losing with this change? It might be practical, such as a familiar process, or personal, such as relationships with leaders or team members.	How will you manage that time in between the old status quo and the new normal?  Are there particular areas of concern for yourself or your team?	How is your job changing?  What new opportunities do you see to contribute to your team or organization?  How can this transition help you grow personally or professionally?

To learn more about navigating change in your agency,  
[watch the full session on demand.](#)



*This resource was brought to you by NextGen. The NextGen Government Training Summits are virtual professional development events for public servants to learn, innovate and get to the next level in their career. The upcoming Summit will be hosted on **May 21, 2025**.*

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