

# Create and Sustain a Culture of Curiosity: A Case Study of a Home Healthcare Organization in Toronto

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**TABLE 2.**  
Tactics to address Kotter’s eight-step change model in each key phase of growth

Kotter’s eight-step model		Phase 1: Building trust and visibility	Phase 2: Defining a vision and deliberate partnerships	Phase 3: Driving our own agenda
Create climate for change	Establish need and relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided direct program evaluation support of clinical programs to move the organization toward a more structured and data-driven approach to evaluation and problem solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlighted strategic benefits of research: legitimacy, opportunities for innovation, excellence in clinical care, attracting top talent and strengthening academic and sector partnerships</li> <li>• Tied research outcomes to organizational priorities (e.g., accreditation requirements)</li> <li>• Created a strategically selected network of senior research consultants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened commitment to academic approach and a learning organization</li> <li>• Viewed research as a differentiator for the organization sharing evidence-based research on behalf of the homecare sector</li> <li>• Accelerated key organizational priorities through research outputs</li> <li>• Carried out research required to form influential clinical partnerships with key organizations</li> </ul>
	Engage coalition	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established an internal network by providing evaluation support to colleagues</li> <li>• Created an evidence and outcomes committee as a practical resource</li> <li>• Created a research advisory committee to democratize and build buy-in for the research process</li> <li>• Always prepared to manage detractors</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reached out to established networks to identify potential collaborations</li> <li>• Hosted academic research placements for students</li> <li>• Engaged in active networking: workshops, seminars, conferences, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised the profile of academic inquiry within the organization while broadening and deepening the internal network:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Created fellowships</li> <li>◦ Identified people with research interest</li> <li>◦ Created ways to work directly with providers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Engaged clients (e.g., research advisory councils, application reviewers, hiring panels, project advisors)</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligned partnerships with vision, including outreach to partners in each priority area</li> <li>• Created scholarships to engage emerging researchers and their advisors</li> <li>• Connected external researchers with client and provider partners</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended structure for client and provider engagement</li> <li>• Worked with data stewards to create infrastructure for routine/continuous, efficient internal data access</li> <li>• Grew fellowship programs</li> <li>• Consulted on program evaluation for projects with broad organizational impact and potential for scalability within the sector</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained key academic partnerships and outreach to new strategic partners</li> <li>• Cultivated partnerships with organizations in addition to individual researchers</li> <li>• Established system-level partnerships to grow reach and impact on both policy and clinical practice</li> </ul>

Kotter's eight-step model		Phase 1: Building trust and visibility	Phase 2: Defining a vision and deliberate partnerships	Phase 3: Driving our own agenda
Create climate for change	Get vision right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established evaluation and research structures to demonstrate the value added to the organization with clear outputs</li> <li>Built networks and awareness of the research department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created a research vision defined with key strategies and focus areas that were aligned with organization-level priorities</li> <li>Sharpened focus on where and how resources were spent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed the research vision to guide decision making, budget choices and priorities</li> <li>With increasing departmental maturity, shifted toward increased focus on the impact of our own work</li> </ul>
	Communicate for buy-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosted workshop presentations for colleagues to support program evaluation</li> <li>Late Phase 1: Communicated successes with the board of directors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared research vision through stakeholder events</li> <li>Hosted fun events to share the vision and successes broadly within the organization</li> <li>Provided annual updates to senior management and board of directors, including clear metric-tracking</li> <li>Created a research website to showcase partnerships and ongoing work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulated and published research vision on the external website</li> <li>Restructured external website to reflect the new vision, partnerships, productivity and fellowships</li> <li>Researched annual reports created as companions to the organization's annual reports</li> <li>Hosted knowledge exchange events across sectors</li> </ul>
Engage and enable	Enable action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established freedom to share organizational information for academic and partner benefit, reflecting a typical academic rather than business culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created partnerships with researchers in priority areas</li> <li>Increased internal investment                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerated internal lines of inquiry and pilot work</li> <li>Cash contributions provided flexibility and leverage in partnerships</li> <li>Created a permanent research position</li> <li>Received funds for increased client and provider engagement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created sustainable data access infrastructure to enable efficient research and evaluation that required organizational commitment</li> <li>Greater internal investment increased the capacity for organizationally driven research and broadening of internally available skill sets</li> <li>Sought direct external funding for senior students</li> </ul>
	Generate short-term wins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnered for network-building and productivity</li> <li>Acted as a recruiting site</li> <li>Provided substantial support for internal program design and evaluation                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created tangible outputs: evaluation reports, conference materials and manuscripts</li> <li>Leveraged outputs in external applications for clinical funding, leading to increased funding success</li> </ul> </li> <li>Embedded scientific approaches in business and quality processes (e.g., chart audit sample sizes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focused on partnership-driven productivity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnered as named investigator on grants</li> <li>Publications were driven by partnership work</li> </ul> </li> <li>Prioritized a few targeted high-visibility, high-value, internally driven research activities closely aligned with the organization's strategic plan</li> <li>Metrics for board of directors highlighted new/promising partnerships and exciting technologies</li> <li>Continued evaluation support, moving toward a more consultative role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed an extended portfolio of high-visibility, high-value, internally driven research activities that were aligned with the organization's strategic plan</li> <li>Increased focus on independence and internal productivity metrics, as well as metrics reflecting partner-linked productivity</li> <li>Provided program evaluation support for selected projects with high organization-level impact</li> </ul>

Kotter's eight-step model		Phase 1: Building trust and visibility	Phase 2: Defining a vision and deliberate partnerships	Phase 3: Driving our own agenda
Sustain	Consolidate gains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on reliability and productivity</li> <li>• Maintained excellent record-keeping to share accomplishments</li> <li>• Put together the accomplishments and opportunities, building toward a defined vision in Phase 2</li> <li>• Identified key metrics: Number of partners engaged, number of funding applications supported and number of research studies active and in the funding pipeline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carefully tracked accomplishments and expanded the range of metrics reported</li> <li>• Leveraged external funding for trainees as a cost-effective way to increase capacity</li> <li>• Transitioned evaluation support role to the quality department</li> <li>• Identified key metrics: Number of funded studies as co-investigator or principal investigator, total funding applied for and secured and number of papers published</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased prominence of research in organizational structure and decision making</li> <li>• Maintained consistent core team membership, with a clear process for onboarding and enabling the productivity of trainees</li> <li>• Identified key metrics: Student funding secured, number of studies funded as co-investigator or principal investigator, total funding applied for and secured and number of papers published</li> </ul>
	Anchor the change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transitioned the part-time consultant role to a full-time role</li> <li>• Supported operational improvements through increased rigour (e.g., sample size calculations, chart audit, confidence intervals) and newly established committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired an academically focused senior manager with a broad portfolio</li> <li>• Built a core team of researchers with specialized roles</li> <li>• Created clear data management, security and privacy processes</li> <li>• Required third-party research ethics review (university or hospital)</li> <li>• Demanded the strictest standards for academic independence, autonomy and transparency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired an academic vice president with a dedicated curiosity-driven portfolio</li> <li>• Enhanced focus on the impact and strategic advantage of research</li> <li>• Defined programs for increasing capacity through the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ framework for client and provider engagement</li> <li>◦ clinical fellowships</li> <li>◦ more advanced academic positions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Built a profile within the healthcare sector as an academically committed organization</li> </ul>