

UNLEASHING CHANGE  
A Study of Organizational Renewal in Government  
Steven Kelman

This is a hopeful account of the potential for organizational change and improvement within government. Despite the mantra that “people resist change,” it *is* possible to effect meaningful reform in a large bureaucracy. In *Unleashing Change*, public management expert Steven Kelman presents a blueprint for accomplishing such improvements, based on his experience orchestrating procurement reform in the 1990s.

Kelman focuses on making change happen on the front lines, not just getting it announced by senior policymakers. He argues that frequently there will be a constituency for change within government organizations. The role for leaders is not to force change on the unwilling but to unleash the willing, and to persist long enough for the change to become institutionalized.

Drawing on the author’s own personal experience and extensive research among frontline civil servants, as well as literature in organization theory and psychology, *Unleashing Change* presents an approach for improving agency performance from soup to nuts—mixing theory with practice. Its analysis is innovative and empirically rich. Kelman’s conclusions challenge conventional notions about achieving reform in large organizations and mark a major advance in theories of organizational change. His lessons will be of interest not only to scholars interested in improving the performance of the public sector, but for anyone struggling to manage a large organization.

“Steve Kelman’s creative research, augmented by his own considerable experience as a reform-minded federal official, gives this book unusual depth and authenticity.”—Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School

“Kelman brings to the study of organizational change an insightful, informative mix of an experienced executive’s observations and a social scientist’s analysis of a rich fund of survey evidence. Everyone concerned with good government needs to get this book and read it.”—Hal G. Rainey, University of Georgia

Steven Kelman is the Weatherhead Professor of Public Management at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. From 1993 to 1997 he administered the Office of Federal Procurement Policy at the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, where he was a leading figure in “reinventing government” efforts. His previous books include *Procurement and Public Management: The Fear of Discretion and the Quality of Government Performance* and *Making Public Policy: A Hopeful View of American Government*.

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