



Approaches to change management in the Premier League 🏈

Managing change can be **hard**.

Let's take a look at three approaches happening in the **Premier League** right now.



POTTER
CHELSEA



DYCHE
EVERTON



DE ZERBI
BRIGHTON



Graham Potter

Chelsea

- **Difficult environment:** change in club ownership, diffused responsibility and high pressure.
- **In his first 15 games:** makes 64 changes to the starting XI, using 31 different players (that is a lot).
- **First transfer window:** six players are purchased by the club *for* him, but do they align with *his* needs?
- **Stuttering start:** has the worst total points record for a new Chelsea manager in the last 30 years.

The volume of **environmental changes** at Chelsea makes it difficult for Potter to succeed.

However, many of his own actions are **not providing the simple stability** that his team needs right now.

Graham Potter says...

“

I think it is probably the hardest job in football, because of that [recent] leadership change and the [new] expectations.



Sean Dyche

Everton

- **Downward trend:** Dyche enters a situation that has been negative for a number of years.
- **In his first week:** takes the old-school approach, making his players take a beep test.
- **In his first game:** beats league leaders Arsenal. This is Everton's first league win since October.
- **Sustainability:** aggressive change can be effective, but will this improvement be constant?

Everton essentially hitting 'rock bottom' means that **Dyche has little to lose.**

This means that he can take an aggressive *burn the ships* approach to change, trying to completely **cut ties** with previous regimes.

Sean Dyche says...

“

I told the players “these myths; I’m going to bust them for you right now.”



Roberto De Zerbi

Brighton & Hove Albion

- **Upward trend:** joins an overperforming team, so his responsibility is to maintain and grow.
- **In his first weeks:** makes very minimal changes to the selection and system.
- **In his first months:** makes gradual changes. Lets the top scorer leave after a public disagreement.
- **His impact:** since moving to his 4-2-3-1 system, Brighton have won 2 points p/game (a lot!).

De Zerbi has taken a textbook approach, such as **Lewin's 3-stage model**.

Transformation occurs through: unfreezing, changing and refreezing. Note that De Zerbi also **removed dissenters**.

Roberto De Zerbi says...

“

It is not right to change so much in the first moment.

Key Takeaways

- **Potter** is paralysed as an agent of change. He can still win back the situation by fighting to reduce the rate/volume of change, positioning himself as stability.
- **Dyche** shows that aggressive change can make an instant positive impact. He now needs to use this initial momentum to achieve long term buy-in.
- **De Zerbi** demonstrates the real-world application and efficacy of textbook techniques. He has successfully executed change, with Brighton trending upwards.

Crucially: one size does not fit all.



Thank you for reading

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