

The Review

January 2026

Author Biography

Chip Heath and Dan Heath are bestselling authors and former professors (Chip at Stanford, Dan at Duke) known for practical books on ideas, decision-making, and organizational change, including *Made to Stick*, *Decisive*, and *Switch*.

Reviewer's Biography

Randy Stone is Lead Consultant and Coach with Strategic Church Solutions, equipping churches with tools and coaching for mission clarity, disciple-making systems, leader development, and healthy execution.



Produced for

**STRATEGIC
CHURCH
SOLUTIONS**

An Executive Summary of **Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done**, written by *Larry Bossidy & Ram Charan*

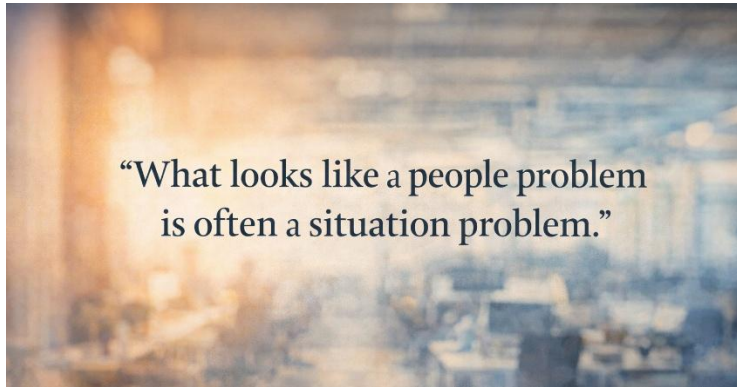


Basic Summary

Switch explains why change is hard—and how to make it easier—through a simple picture: the mind is a Rider (logic) on an Elephant (emotion) traveling a Path (the environment). Change fails when we appeal only to the Rider with facts and plans, while the Elephant is unmotivated or fearful and the Path is full of friction. The Heaths' core insight is to align all three.

To **Direct the Rider**, leaders should “find the bright spots” (study what already works and copy it), “script the critical moves” (replace vague goals with clear, observable behaviors), and “point to the destination” (paint a compelling, concrete picture of the future). To **Motivate the Elephant**, they urge leaders to “find the feeling” (connect emotionally, not just rationally), “shrink the change” into manageable first steps that build momentum, and “grow your people” by shaping identity—helping people see themselves as the kind who do the new behaviors. Finally, to **Shape the Path**, they recommend tweaking the environment: “tweak the environment” to make the right behavior easier, “build habits” so progress doesn’t depend on constant self-control, and “rally the herd” by leveraging social norms and peer reinforcement.

Across stories and case studies, *Switch* turns change from a heroic, exhausting push into a designed process where clarity, motivation, and supportive systems work together.



Ministry Application

Evangelical churches often cast vision biblically yet struggle to translate conviction into consistent practice. Switch helps leaders move from sermons and slogans to discipleship behaviors. Start by locating “bright spots” already bearing fruit—a small group that prays faithfully, a ministry team that serves joyfully, a class that multiplies leaders—and replicate the practices, not just the personalities. Script critical moves: define the next 2–3 actions for members (join a group, serve once a month, share your testimony), for leaders (weekly touchpoints, clear role descriptions, follow-up rhythms), and for systems (simple on-ramps and handoffs).

Motivate the Elephant with gospel-shaped hope: celebrate small wins, tell stories of changed lives, and shrink intimidating goals into first steps. Shape the Path by removing friction—clear signage, easy sign-ups, predictable schedules, and training that builds habits. Rally the herd by making discipleship normal: public testimonies, team-based serving, and peer encouragement that says, “This is who we are.”



Final Thoughts

Switch reminds us that change is not primarily a willpower contest; it's a leadership and design challenge. When we clarify the destination, define the next moves, and remove obstacles, people can move from intention to action with less burnout and blame. It also offers a kinder diagnosis of resistance: what looks like stubbornness may be confusion, fear, or a path that's needlessly hard.

For churches, the book pairs well with spiritual convictions: truth should be preached, but the path should also be shaped—habits formed, teams supported, and environments simplified—so obedience becomes normal, not heroic. Read it alongside prayer, wise counsel, and congregational listening, and you'll find fresh ways to shepherd people toward durable, gospel-centered change—one bright spot and one faithful step at a time.

Favorable Critique

Switch is one of the most practical change books available because it respects how people actually work. The Rider-Elephant-Path framework is instantly memorable, and the Heaths translate it into tools leaders can use tomorrow: bright-spot discovery, behavior scripting, shrinking the change, and redesigning the environment. The writing is clear, story-driven, and refreshingly free of gimmicks, making it easy to share with teams.

What stands out most is the emphasis on emotion and identity. Many teams agree with the “why” and still fail at the “how”; Switch shows how to build motivation without manipulation and how to create habits and systems that carry change when enthusiasm fades. For ministry leaders, it's a rare blend of empathy, clarity, and execution that consistently produces better meetings and better follow-through.

A great quote to consider:

"Any successful change requires a translation of ambiguous goals into concrete behaviors".