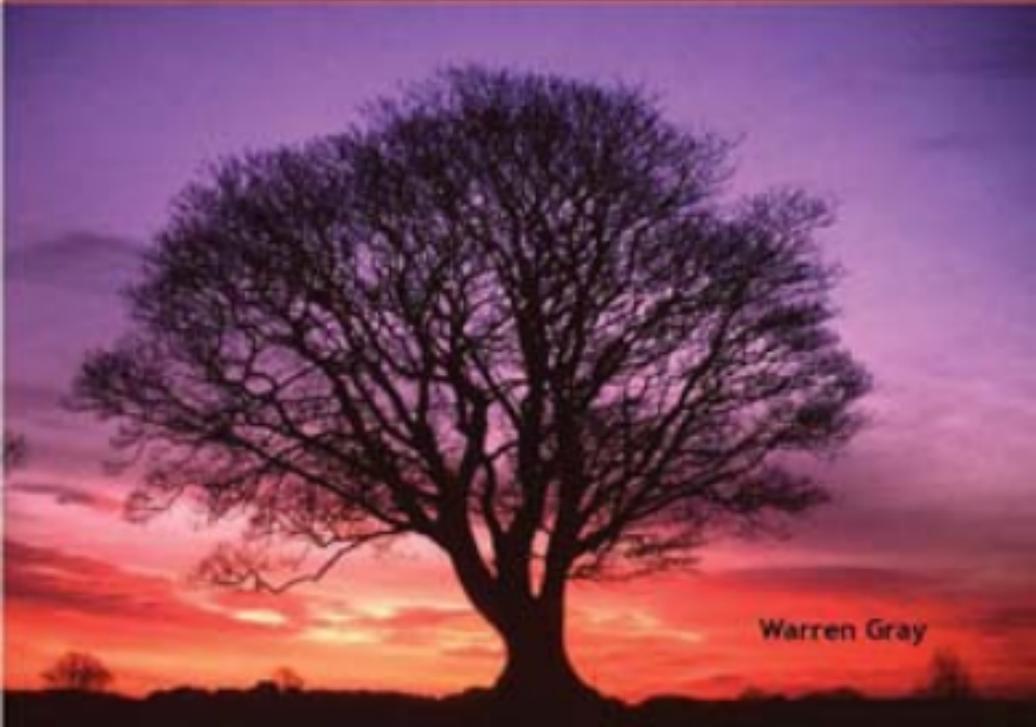


**Business Change**  
**The Roles of Change Agents**  
**and Subject Matter Experts in**  
**Organization Change**  
*And Much More...*

**101 World Class Expert**  
**Facts, Hints, Tips and Advice**  
**on Change Management**



Warren Gray

**Business Change - The Roles of Change Agents and Subject  
Matter Experts in Organization Change**

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# Business Change - The Roles of Change Agents and Subject Matter Experts in Organization Change

## And Much More... - 101 World Class Expert Facts, Hints, Tips and Advice on Change Management

Information is power – you know that. However, how do you research the best Change Management strategies, without spending too much of your time (and money) on it? The average person earns \$ 1100 per week, which equates to \$ 27 per hour. Trying to do the research yourself would take you at least 5 hours to come up with the best information, AND you'll have to do this on a regular basis to come up with the most up to date and current information.

There has to be a different way to find the info you want! Well, yes there is... we did all the research for you, combed through all the information and got down to the hard core of the 100 most up to date and best Facts, Hints, Tips and Advice here, in this book.

The 101 of the most current, most actual and beneficial Facts, Hints, Tips and Advice you can find from experts in the field on Change Management

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## Access Your Present Self & You Will Find it Rich

It was not to long a go that I was looking forward to a mode of business where in I could do bulk sales of commodities to community who could be descent buyers & dealing with whom I could gain in terms of life style, its systems & finance of course.

In other words I wanted to deal with a set of individuals who were a class & could seriously bring a change the plight of my dull life style spent every morning with a set of questions - will I elevate today? -Will I do better with a job or should I put in efforts towards orientation of my own business?

To answerer all these questions I had limitation on time & finances, honestly it seemed that life had come to a static end. My breath was heavy & heart so full that I could bust out any moment in a crazy out bust of emotions. The times were not good as we had people been retrenched from jobs. Every consultant in the town said there are too many resumes from your company- so I felt like a black sheep.

However at this time a hard core philosophy-"having patience always pays" came to my rescue. I started to call up various companies in the pharmaceutical line & seeking appointments with guys who had never known me or hard of my company. I called up one than the next & than so many others, with the mustard seed hope that some one may find the patience & time to listen to me. My endeavor made a little parting in the veil of low hopes when a friend referred me to a company where the brands promotion head was in need for some corporate gifts. With a mission in mind with a focus to make bright my figures dialed & the lips spoke fixing an appointment a week later.

In the mean while the exercise of calling the references or the not known was constantly on. so that I could give my self a preparation for a good presentation to the Brand Manager at the reference mentioned above. I followed the Robert Bruce saying try- try until you succeed. The day of our meeting was decided and there I was to do my best display of products & conduct that could build the confidence in the mind of the prospect that I was seriously embedded in the business of marketing the promotional products.

Today when I look back to see what inspired me at that movement, when had practically no money in my pocket & the depression of a job loss. There was a perfect recipe for low self esteem.

Never the less the courage was not low. The practice of reaching the unknown through the data searched in various directories was on. Mostly I spent long hours reading books on spirituality & metaphysics & than on day I said to me," Yes I got it"! It was the strength of the assets I had. The strength of the honesty of my degrees I worked for, the asset of knowing people. I had been working as a purchase manger & had the knowledge of procurements, I had some samples, I had a home my kitchen counter was the works table, I had a mobile & a land line & a complete office set up with an internet connection. I started counting on my assets- in other words my glass felt so full. Then in side of me was a voice that said put in your best do not worry about the results you, just move on towards the chosen target.

This voice was read by me from the quotes of Bhagwat Gita, many a times had my guru the physics teacher narrated the quotation but I could only implement it after years when life was in the dimension where time seemed to have stopped for a while. The voice in side set the motivation from with in. The voice said be a seeker learn, learn from the surrounding build up new interests & life will be a cool walk in the breeze.

I took up every challenge as a learning mode of life & befriended every difficulty like a wooden raft in the stormy river after a while it was an adventure & the journey of life begin...

Rose from one order to another till doing a series of big & small ventures I had sufficient funds to invest in the thought of a small apartment from a rented premise of my brother to a holding of my own. Every plan had a motive. I was motivated to earn for the sake of my ambition of having an apartment of my own in the financial capital of the country.

The essence of the article is that we have to move with the motivation from within with interest in every feature of life that comes our way. We have the opportunity to learn from the simplest element in nature to the most complex games of the human mind. In other words to live we learn, to learn we have to be alert, to be alert we need to focus & repeat or exercise our path to achieve.

My introduction to all the friends will be an "Entrepreneur", who seeks adventure in the journey of life by trying new ways to earn & live with interest in life. The present day project is the web site for gifts & gems & jewelery. This is the collective result of all my education as a gemologist & an MBA in marketing. I invite people to visit the site <http://kits9.com> Your visit will boost my energy to do better, there by generating occupation & livelihood for many who work in the capacity of designers, craftsmen, traders, importers...remember your contribution of buying in case if you like our products will motivate the economy & give you the benefit of buying well.

## Understanding the Various Aspects of Change Management

A phrase that is commonly associated in big organizations, change management refers to a series of processes used for im-

plementing improvements in the workloads and designations of employees or workers in private corporations. With the use of this phrase, executives and laborers understand that improvements in the organizations will happen in a systematic and orderly manner. Additionally, in organizational changes, staff should be willing to follow a group of individuals who are assigned with the proper implementation of proposed changes. Furthermore, before proposing changes, it is important that leaders ask for the opinions and reactions of their subordinates to the proposals, to make the changes beneficial to all of the members of a particular corporation or organization.

### The Use of the ADKAR Model

When implementing changes in large corporations, it is necessary and advantages that executives assess and follow several industrial management models. One of the models that executives commonly use in change management is the ADKAR model. The acronym ADKAR stands for Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. Awareness refers to the understanding of staff or employees about the reason behind the implementation of changes in a particular organization. On the other hand, desire refers to willingness of the people to follow the proposed changes. Knowledge is the understanding the industrial changes will not be attained without the support of all staff and employees. Ability refers to the need for enhancing the skills of employees and executives to successfully implement changes. Lastly, reinforcement is the act of adjusting to the behavior that will be important to support the changes.

### The Importance of Management to Organizational Changes

Executives or leaders are important to the implementation of organizational changes mainly because they are the ones in-charge with the behaviors and skills that the corporation needs to improve its performance. As soon as they determine these factors, it is important that they predict the effects of the changes on the organization. Afterwards, executives should identify the best method to use to properly implement the proposed changes.

## Why Buy-In Is Essential to Change Management

Buy in refers to the idea that the whole organization or corporation understands that proposed changes are beneficial to all of its employees or members. This is very important to change management because buy-in can greatly influence the reaction of employees to organizational changes. In addition, it can enhance the support of employees and workers to changes.

## Important Factors to Consider in Change Management

When it comes to change management, there are important factors that executives should consider before they propose changes or improvements to their subordinates. For instance, it is important that executives analyze the steps or procedures that they will use to effectively implement improvements in the various levels of organizations. In addition, leaders should also remember that their goal in proposing changes is to avoid resistance from the staff or workers since it can hinder improvements in the performance of their organizations or corporations.

Change management can surely help organizations and corporations enhance their performances and attain their goals easily. Thus, by learning the basics and important factors to consider when implementing changes in organizations, executives and leaders will surely get the support of their subordinates for their proposals.

Peter Garant is a business management consultant and has written many articles such as Change Management <<http://www.tech-faq.com/change-management.shtml>> Info and SAS70 <<http://www.tech-faq.com/sas-70.shtml>> Info for Tech FAQ web site.

## The Fallacy of the Status Quo

Like death and taxes, change in business is at once inevitable and difficult to comprehend. It also happens to be necessary if your aim is to create a sustainable, competitive enterprise. Ignore this imperative at your own peril, as history has taught us over and over again. Once great firms like AT&T, Polaroid, and A&P exist as a shadow of their former selves while others including Bethlehem Steel disappeared altogether, in large part because they couldn't change.

This is not just a large company phenomenon; when it comes to change, size doesn't matter. Smaller firms fall victim to this slow demise with great frequency, it's just that their stories are rarely the stuff of MBA case studies. Whether it's hubris, a virtual monopoly, or flat out denial of external circumstances and events, the common denominator of these sad endings is a literal death grip on the status quo by otherwise competent leadership.

The concept of status quo is misleading, because in fact nothing ever stays the same. Just like a wad of cash buried in your back yard inevitably loses value over time, so it is with the status quo in business. Your markets, your clients, and your competitors will eventually outgrow and outpace you if you are unable to change and evolve. Although it may feel comfortable, the status quo is not a good thing at all; it is a slow motion business killer.

Whether you are conscious of it or not, odds are that you and your team embrace the status quo in a variety of areas. One client of mine - the president of a mid-sized Insurance agency - retained a problem manager for far longer than he should have - because of a misplaced sense of loyalty to her. Another delayed a much-needed technology upgrade because "things are working fine as is" (including, by the way, a number of labor intensive manual tasks). For over 6 months, a third client postponed a difficult conversation with a high-end producer who had become complacent in outside sales and spent virtually all of his time working his existing book.

During good times, we tend to give ourselves and our people credit for a job well done (think high-fives, healthy bonus checks, and lavish holiday parties). The result? "Let the good times roll, and let's continue to do what we've been doing."

When performance falters, our impulse is to identify and then blame external circumstances as the cause immediately followed by pushing harder to improve results (think it's "the economy" and any underperforming employee you've recently counseled). The result? "We are underperforming because of the economy overall, so let's buckle down and get more appointments to win our share."

Ironically, both extremes reinforce the status quo; that is, you and your people generally continue to do what you've been doing. Your rationale is the only thing that actually changes!

What are your areas of status quo and why is it so difficult to move yourself and your organization beyond them? Where are your people stuck in the status quo?

The paradox of the status quo is that it makes us feel so comfortable. Only you can decide whether that's good enough or if you'd like to plan for change to make your business more competitive over time.

Since founding Performance Dynamics Group LLC in 2003, Mark Green has spoken to and consulted with hundreds successful, closely held businesses and partnerships to help them take more proactive control of their destiny by sharpening focus, increasing accountability, and implementing processes that lead to more predictable and sustainable results. Our clients say that their relationship with us produces significant, measurable improvements to areas including revenue growth, profitability, sales and marketing effectiveness, employee and customer loyalty, confidence, and peace of mind.

If you would like to understand how our work might be just the right fit for your business, give us a call at (888) 720-7337.

To learn more and to subscribe to our free monthly newsletter, visit us on the web at <http://www.performance-dynamics.net/> or read Mark's blog at <http://www.sustainablebusinesschange.com>

## The New Physics of the Workplace

The landscape is suddenly very different. The ground is shifting beneath you. It wasn't so long ago that you took a job and could expect to remain with the company until you retired. Those days are all but gone. The worker entering the workforce today can expect to have over ten employers over a 40-year career.

Executive placement experts regularly tell recruits that organizations are happy to get three productive years out of an executive. The average knowledge worker stays on the job for only three years! Downsizing is an everyday reality as organizations merge or try to squeeze full value from every dollar during these times of economic uncertainty.

Everything has accelerated. The massive downsizing and chopping at mid-level management means fewer protégés are groomed for the senior ranks.

Many of those who remain have a dim view of the thinning population of their colleagues. Meanwhile, borders are becoming ever more transparent as the brain-drain sees North American and European workers switching, not only between companies, but between countries, too.

It's a truism to say we've entered an age in which our main commodity is knowledge. But that is the fact. And now, when we need knowledgeable workers most, they appear to be either in short supply or difficult to protect against high-paying, attractive

recruitment offers. If you lose a skilled knowledge worker, it hurts. It can cost as much as 200% of a year's salary to replace each competent employee. It's even worse if you have a small business and each of your employees wears a number of hats. You can easily envision the problem of replacing these people. Add it all up and you can see why retention and development of the staff you now have are so critical to organizational survival and growth.

If you want to grow your organization, you'll more than likely have to abandon some of the old tried-and-truisms that just don't work any longer. For example: How are you going to hang on to good people - the bright knowledge workers - when everybody is trying to out-recruit and out-hustle you during these tough economic times when top talent can make the difference between winning and losing in the marketplace? How do you keep the best and brightest on the payroll when your neighbor down the street blatantly waves tons of cash?

Recognize that "loyalty" doesn't cut the proverbial mustard anymore. Ask the Baby Boomer 50-somethings who were "down-sized," "outplaced," "rationalized," and "de-hired" during the late 1980s and early '90s after devoting their lives to being "loyal organization men and women." And all the while, the younger workforce has been looking on with a sneer: "Loyalty!" they chortle. "Some loyalty."

The challenge you now face is to rekindle that concept of loyalty, to retain the talented people who cost you a lot to find and then to recruit - and would cost much, much more to replace.

Yes, it's a new world: and despite that, you have to hold on to the Generation Y employees - a group of some of the most savvy, loyalty-disinclined workers ever (at least according to the "old" definition of loyalty).

Change Resources Group Inc.

Change Resources Group has been successfully providing services to organizations in the area of strategic talent management for over 20 years to address the impacts of a wide diversity

of change challenges, such as new leadership, consolidations and mergers, site relocations, restructuring, market and customer changes, and high growth.

CRG's team building division, Creative Reality Games, has executed a wide range of initiatives designed to help our clients maintain levels of service excellence, while improving team cohesion, productivity and profitability in a constantly changing world of work. This division has become known for its innovative retreats and team building events using current reality TV formats, such as: The Amazing Race, Apprentice, Survivor, Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?

Our founder, Pat Thornton, M.B.A., has several years of experience in Canada and the U.S. with multi-national organizations, and as an executive coach in private practice. She began her human resources career at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. where she gained experience in public sector administration. Subsequently, she worked in Philadelphia and then New York City, where she developed a comprehensive background in customer service and sales training. After relocating to Toronto, she spent several years as a senior HR professional with multi-national organizations.

Pat holds dual citizenship in the U. S. and Canada and has extensive experience in Europe and Asia.

## Increase Sales - A Clear Signal to Sell More

There are three things in life you can count on death, taxes, and change. One of those things provides a huge potential for increased sales. Can you guess which one?

Change is the one with the huge potential for increased sales. Change is the signal you're looking for. When you notice change happening around you it's time for you to spring into action.

Those who try to ignore change or pretend it isn't happening are the ones who get left behind and miss the opportunity to capitalize on a huge selling potential. These late adopters won't act until others around them have already acted and captured the lion's share of the market. By the time they act they're just another also ran with no advantage in the market.

Once you sense change is happening your first action is to discover the source of the change. Who or what is behind the change? Next explore the impact this change will have on your existing and future clients.

When your existing clients and future clients discover the change is happening what are the three things they'll be most interested in?

What will happen to these people if they do nothing about the change?

How will they know what to do in response to the change?

Do your homework and get these questions answered by your clients and reliable sources. Don't guess at the answers to these questions. If you do you run the risk of getting it wrong and missing out on the opportunity.

Next comes the part that sets you up for tremendous sales success. Knowing what you know now how do you reposition what you have to offer to fulfill the immediate needs and wants the change creates? Condense it down into a succinct, powerful, clear message.

Infuse that message into every marketing communication every sales conversation and every relationship building communication throughout your business processes. Don't overlook

anything. Before you do or say anything review it to determine if it clearly communicates the most important message for the people impacted by the change.

Another important thing to notice about change is change produces the motivation to act. This motivation isn't linked to you it's linked to the pain or pleasure that change produces in your best future clients. It's your job to link yourself to the motivation that's already naturally there.

People are naturally motivated to solve a problem or achieve an outcome. They want to know how to do it. Link yourself to the how and give them a way to connect with you.

Would you like to discover how to increase your sales without rejection? <http://increasesalescoach.com/yes.html>

Selling Insurance made easy. Get your free report here: <http://increasesalescoach.com/selling-insurance.html>

Increase Sales Coach Cheryl A. Clausen Gets Results Sales Training Can't BECAUSE it's never just a sales issue

## What to Do When You're Put in Charge of Change

It's no secret that an organization's ability to continually improve how it operates has become an essential competitive aspect of doing business. Organizations that successfully design and manage transitions to improved ways of doing things - that is, effectively manage the change - grow and profit faster than those that do not.

Change management is a holistic and structured way of assessing needs, developing new ways of working, and implementing them. Initiatives that work well involve all the right people. They include training and communication that get everyone pulling in the same direction. And ultimately, they create an environment that supports continued development of value-adding processes and the behaviors that support them.

In today's lean organizations, there are often few internal resources to help managers plan and implement a change project. The good news is, when you're asked to handle a change-related project, such as a new information system, customer service techniques or quality control methods, there are "common denominator" activities that stack the odds of success in your favor. Here are a few examples of things you can do in the project start-up, change design and implementation stages.

1. **Build A Case:** Unless you've been provided with a rationale and expected results, you'll need to clarify these issues. And communicate them so your team understands why the project is needed, how soon, and what the benefits will be.

2. **Identify Barriers:** What are the most significant hurdles you'll need to overcome? Do people need upgraded tools, such as computers or software, to handle the new work process? Is there a high level of resistance - a "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" mindset? Identifying the biggest threats to success will help you dedicate resources to the right remedies.

3. **Define Roles:** Nothing breeds chaos like a lack of structure. Determine what skill-sets will be needed to bring the change about. Assign individuals to handle clearly defined aspects of the change project.

4. **Create A Timetable:** Inventory all the activities associated with the change project. Be sure to include all the individuals and groups affected by the change. Then set up a matrix showing who needs to do what, and when. Consider it your "road map" and share it with everyone involved.

5. Measure Success: Define the criteria that will indicate whether the change has successfully been implemented and if it is delivering the expected results. Build periodic checkpoints into your project timeline. And don't forget to communicate the results to everyone with a stake in the project.

See our Change Management Services  
<<http://www.aspenod.com/services/change/index.html>> !

Scott is a strategic communications consultant with extensive experience managing and implementing programs that help drive workplace change, organization restructuring and employee performance improvement. His work has helped a number of well-known companies communicate effectively during mergers and acquisitions, integrate systems and processes, and infuse their cultures with a quality focus. For more information please visit <http://www.aspenod.com>

## Structuring Your Work to Deliver Customer Value

Lean companies approach work differently than do traditional companies. People in Lean companies think of themselves as part of an integrated system, a linked chain of operations and decision-making points that continually deliver value to customers. Individuals in a Lean organization understand how their own activities connect to the rest of the company and to the customer. They know how work is supposed to flow to deliver the product or service in the least amount of time.

In traditional companies the system like nature of the value-adding process often gets hidden, and so does the customer. Distance from the customer increases as functions-such as engi-

neering, customer credit authorization, and shipping-focus on optimizing their functions at the risk of sub-optimizing the organization. Support activities swell, specialists are hired, and reports replace face-to-face conversations. Before long the clear visibility of the product and the basic activities of the value delivery process are lost. Instead of operating smoothly as a linked system, the company becomes a tangled mess of conflicting functions whose demands and disagreements victimizes the customer.

Lean companies recognize this danger and work hard to continually avoid it by increasing everyone's awareness of how, why, and where time is spent. They make the main flow of work from start to finish visible and clear to all employees. They invest in this understanding with thorough training. By mapping the interfaces between functions, they reveal how these affect the work flow. Employees become aware of the way policies and procedures in one part of the value stream influence work in other parts.

There are two fundamental concepts in structuring work to create customer value. One is organization around the critical sequence of value-added activities, and the other is establishing continuous work flow. Regardless of the size or nature of the organization, these concepts are what create greater customer value.

### The Critical Sequence

The critical sequence is made up of those activities that directly add customer value in real time. Everything else a company does is support, which either prepares employees to add direct value or is off-line activity that can be done anytime. Lean companies identify direct value-added activities, isolate them from the non-value-added support work, and organize them in a clear and consistent sequence. This accomplishes two valuable things. First, it moves preparation and off-line work out of the value stream so that all value-added work can be done without wasting real time. Secondly, it highlights the critical connections between different parts of the organization that add value, making possible the design and development of policies and procedures that will make the work flow faster and better.

Most traditional companies don't think in terms of a critical sequence of value-added activities. Instead they organize and control around departments, functions, and skill sets. Within these structures they don't differentiate between essential value-added and support work. This approach makes sense for better control of the inputs, but it drastically penalizes the quality and timeliness of outputs.

Unlike traditional organizations Lean organizations live by one key rule-don't delay delivering value to the customer. In product development, for example, don't delay the new product that marketing needs promptly in order to refine a fickle new technology. Technology refinement is an off-line activity. Solve the problems before introducing the refinement in the final product development process. In retailing don't wait for weeks of accumulated sales before ordering the items that are selling. Reordering should be triggered by what is moving off the shelf this week. In bank lending, don't hold up an individual's loan application to make decisions on overall lending targets and limits. These issues should be addressed off-line. Banks should take hours, not weeks to approve loans.

All this makes sense from a customer's perspective, but traditional companies are often ill equipped to do it. Separating value-added activities from non-value-added activities breaks up long held turf, scrambles established skill bases, confuses existing control systems, and forces the organization to rethink a system that they mistakenly believe is working.

### Continuous Flow

Once management identifies and isolate the critical sequence of activities they can concentrate on arranging the work flow. By creating a smoother, more regular flow through the critical sequence, they can reduce the cycle time of the entire value delivery process, thus raising throughput capacity. Most traditional companies manage the cycle time of the bottlenecks of their operations, but neglect the other parts that are less obvious or hidden, like batching information or engineering databases that

take too long to access. These companies also allow decisions to pile up between process steps and allow feedback loops that should be closed routinely to remain open. All of this interrupts the flow of value-added work and extends the cycle time. As a result, time is wasted and costs increase and the customer is left waiting.

Most operating problems in an organization appear as work moves downstream from its upstream sources. New product development, for example, usually goes off track in the later stages as waves of engineering change notices and manufacturing problems expose an earlier failure to resolve the fit between product, process, and materials. Shipping is another example. Many of us have worked in organizations that go through a mad scramble at the end of the month to assemble and ship product that should have been flowing out of the door continuously. The reason is usually that upstream suppliers were late in shipping or that managers changed the scheduling for parts fabrication too often earlier in the month, so that assembly did not have what it needed to finish the product.

Many manufacturers have problems getting continuous work flow through their plants. They start to assemble a product but can't finish it because the hastily custom engineered pieces don't fit or because purchasing took longer than usual to get a new supplier approved, as a result, parts or components are missing. Once the work flow is broken, time not only stops, it is postponed. The unit in question now becomes work-in-process and is placed in inventory while other units are moved forward ahead of schedule further disrupting continuous work flow. This lack of continuity shows up as overhead in the form of problem solvers, rework, expeditors, and "dead-in-the-water" inventory. The only way to avoid this problem in the plant is by investing effort upstream and, in designing the off-line activities more carefully.

The same upstream and downstream effects take place in all organizations. Management needs to carefully consider the impact of a new system on the downstream effort before they implement the system. Up-front effort in developing reliable and orderly working systems as a whole differentiates Lean companies

from companies that simply go after the bottlenecks. The key to achieving more efficient synergy between functions in the company lies first in the overall organizational and system design. Lean companies think about where to place responsibility for results and how to shift people to close the distances between customers that big companies can create. They think about balancing the flow of work upstream and downstream, making allowances for a changing product mix demanded by customers that will affect this balance. A Lean organization will justify investments that traditional companies cannot because they do not understand the linkages throughout their value delivery process. The reward for the continuing effort is reduction in overhead, inventory, and improved customer satisfaction; and the product or service is delivered faster.

## Conclusion

Both service and manufacturing organizations are facing a large number of challenges in the marketplace. Mounting competitive pressures, economic upheaval, and the diverse needs of customers are forcing organizations to look at ways of delivering customer value quickly, cheaper and more efficiently. Structuring the organization around the critical sequence of activities that add value and creating a smoother, more regular flow through the critical sequence will enable them meet these new challenges.

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## Management's Wrong Decisions During an Economic Downturn

In every economic downturn, the bad decisions made by companies continue to amaze me. Economic struggles and downturns often prompt drastic and reactive decisions by company management. Their instincts are to "cut back" so they close divisions/plants/stores, layoff staff, and implement salary and hiring freezes.

In addition, many strategic initiatives that are critical to successful day-to-day operations, and continued and improved profit generation are stopped or put on hold in an attempt to cut costs. Often, this encompasses training and consulting contracts and programs, including the deployment of process improvement -Six Sigma, Lean, and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).

Although it seems logical to cut contracts and programs during an economic downturn, strategic activities of this nature should be enhanced and provided more focus than when "times are good." Companies should instead focus on cash flow to survive the downturn, but keep their strategic programs in place to better position them for the future.

Specifically, here are some examples of how process improvement programs and initiatives can help in good and bad times:

Lean eliminates the waste from processes which can reduce cost and increase cash.

Six Sigma removes the variation in processes which reduces cost and can increase cash by improving quality.

The use of both Lean and Six Sigma identifies the steps and/or employees in a process that are not necessary, thereby allowing targeted reallocation of resources rather than a cross-the-board layoffs.

Management that focuses on directed project selection aligned with changing corporate goals will not only survive, but position themselves beautifully when the economy takes an upward swing.

Dick Booton is an executive recruiter that specializes in assisting organizations with their Operational Excellence (Lean Six Sigma) Deployments through the recruiting of professionals with Lean Six Sigma skills and experience. Dick has experience with various industries (healthcare, financial, distribution, manufacturing and resort management). His contacts in Lean Six Sigma are unparalleled. Contact him to discuss how he can assist your organization.

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## Business Change - The Roles of Change Agents and Subject Matter Experts in Organization Change

This can be a decision that may lead to increased productivity and a bigger chance for success. Change agents have a lot of expertise, but they're not subject matter experts. Because they are hired by many corporations, it's quite hard for a change agent to be an expert in every single detail of every business that they work for. Most business change who have achieved success, have employed subject matter experts to help out.

The job of the change agent is to deal with the parts of the process that are part of their expertise. This may involve coming

up with new procedures for evaluation, developing channels of communication so all parties have a smooth way of passing information with each other, or keeping the internal staffing on task with the change process. Change agents have one other primary role and that is to make certain that there are subject matter experts on hand if ever and whenever their input is necessary.

Subject matter experts are usually not qualified enough to deal with business change because they're not experts on change. They are not in the position or capacity to develop the business change proposal. Sometimes, technical experts can be cranky and they are often excluded from the entire change process. This is wrong, in more ways than one. They ought to be given the chance to offer input in the technical aspects of the project. They can focus on the technical side of the process, know what the competition is up to, the technology that the business uses and other relevant patents. This puts them in the position of being able, when a technical choice needs to be made, of identifying the choice that has the highest probability of success.

During a business change, one important thing to remember is that it's all about business. For a successful business change, someone with a high level of expertise is needed. And this person with a high level of expertise is not the change agent, it's the subject matter expert.

For more information on business change  [<http://cm.hditools.com/business\\_change.html>](http://cm.hditools.com/business_change.html) , please see the website: Business Change Management  [<http://cm.hditools.com/>](http://cm.hditools.com/)

<b>Successful Change Management Tips</b>
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Every organization and every individual must have change to survive and prosper. Change at work improves processes and increases a competitive advantage. Change in your personal world expands your opportunities to be authentically happy and to live a really great life. When you decide to resist change, you can become stuck and complacent, and you will most likely lag behind. When you decide to embrace change, you can become happier, and you will most likely advance.

Below are best practices to help you implement organizational change and to help you cope with personal change.

### 5 Tips to Implement Organizational Change

1. Determine what core values are needed to carry out your vision. Then, develop the behaviors that model them.
2. Be proactive by developing business and next-step initiatives during the times of operating well.
3. Create an empowered and collaborative culture to develop high-performance teams.
4. Practice slow-to-hire and quick-to-fire recruitment and retention practices.
5. Execute and monitor initiatives to maintain their implementation.

### 5 Tips to Cope with Personal Change

1. Acknowledge what is no longer going to happen and what you are giving up because of your circumstance.
2. Express and differentiate between your realistic and unrealistic fears.
3. Realize that it is okay to ask for help and that you do not have all the answers. There really isn't a superman or superwoman in the real world.
4. Think positively and have hope. Believe that you will get through this chapter in your life with time.
5. Take a break and do something fun.

Change and adversity will happen. How we react and adapt to our challenging times; and more importantly, how we bounce

back afterwards will determine our future. When we stay worried, confused and afraid of the unknowns for too long, we will remain paralyzed, complacent and accepting of the status quo. When we learn and apply effective coping techniques, we can bounce back stronger with greater hope.

Nancy Stampahar is a sought-after organizational development consultant, trainer, and speaker, with a degree in human resource management, and the author of peace, love and lemonade: a recipe to make your life sweeter, Stampahar owns and directs Silver Lining Solutions, a consulting firm that specializes in adversity/change management, assertiveness/conflict resolution, empowerment, leadership, and team building. Visit: <http://www.silverliningsolutions.com>

## Continuously Improve Your Business Using Kaizen Principles

You need creative ideas to improve your business. People perform many activities by sheer habit. A habit is second nature as a habit if not resisted soon become necessity.

Habits develop over a time. Some times we continue doing an activity as a routine but the reason for doing so is no longer exists. Creativity is breaking away from habitually doing things and finding a better and easier way of doing the same.

For generating creative ideas you have to be inquisitive. A questioning attitude towards each and every activity helps you to find better and creative ways of doing things. When you see something is done some one in your office or work please ask yourself to probe;

- a) What is he doing?
- b) Why is it necessary and what for it is done?

- c) When is it done and can it be done at a different time?
- d) Where is it done and should it be done there?
- e) How is it done and can it be done in any other way?
- f) Who does it and can it be done by some one else?
- g) How much does it cost can the cost be saved by finding a different way?

The above listed mind probing questions will lead to thoughts of finding better ways of doing things by simplifying and improving the ways of doing things, discarding activities that serve no useful purpose but done as a habit and be easily avoided, changing the place of doing it for effectiveness and finding cost saving alternative etc.

By developing such analytical thinking you mind will help you to create and innovate better methods. The application of creative thinking will help you to be more result oriented than task oriented in conducting your business. Thereby, you will begin to think of different ways of achieving same results.

You will always look for simplifying or combining work for better results. You may proceed to automate time consuming manual tasks by using software programs, electronic devices etc., for speedier and better results of course. This investigative approach will also lead to the elimination of irrelevant activities without affecting the results.

Your objective analysis may also lead you to observe whether operations can be improved by rhythmic motion that ensures a smooth, symmetrical, convenient, stress free way of doing things. Your creative thinking will also lead to find out whether the efficiency of an activity is improved by making the posture of the one performing comfortable, by better lighting, by better seating, by using better equipments and tools etc.

You can similarly review analytically whether your business filing system in use and storage systems can be improved, can color coding be used where necessary for easier identification of items. Also such thinking will guide you to evaluate whether the things frequently used are located near the point of use, can the

time for searching things be shortened, can unusable things be thrown away saving space and time, can items used like paper, pens, materials etc., be changed to less costly ones, can items used be recycled at low cost for repeated use, whether the stocks of items are adequate or excessive, can the skill levels of your staff and workers be improved etc.

The same creative thinking for improvement can be instilled in your subordinates too. Then they will also suggest improvements. You can encourage them by introducing a suggestion scheme so that they can propose innovative improvements. You can award prizes to the best implemented suggestions. A suggestion has to be implemented to be of value.

This system of continuous improvement through innovative focus is very effective in practice. It is used by the Japanese and their industrial success bears testimony to its success. This methodology of looking for results through continuous improvement is called Kaizen,

The practice of Kaizen by the participation of you and your staff, helps to improve your business on a continuous basis step by step will certainly lead to enhanced productivity and higher efficiency.

Author Chandrasoma Perera was trained in Kaizen methodology in Japan under scholarship studies. In Sri Lanka he guided a large organization to apply Kaizen Methodology for business excellence by being awarded the prestigious Annual Kaizen Gold Award- 2005 in year 2006. Chandrasoma recommends tested simple work from home business opportunities in his website <http://www.chanano.com>

<p><b>Do Old and Matured Organizations Need ERP</b></p>
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Enterprise Resource Planning is a very comprehensive exercise and generally heralds far reaching changes in organizations' working culture. Decision to go in for an ERP needs lots of thinking and rethinking. This decision is generally quite easy for an upcoming or relatively newer organization. But once organization grows and attains maturity, the implementation process becomes complex and a long drawn one. Over the years that an organization has been into existence, it has evolved and developed its own systems and simplified its working to suit the job requirements. So adopting an ERP is like relearning the whole process. That's the precise reason old and matured organizations have found it difficult to adopt ERP in their organizations.

If an organization has fully developed systems and an information management system which is serving the purpose, then need to have an ERP may be reassessed. Though ERP vendors will be hankering after IT heads of these old organizations but my experience in management consulting suggests that these old matured organizations should stay away from centralized ERP deployment. In such organizations ERP development needs to be a slow and gradual process and should be followed by a stabilization phase.

All reputed ERP vendors have very learned professionals in different functional domains working on ERP functional applications. These professional try to incorporate the best practices of each and every domain in to their systems. IT and planning heads of these organizations are required to work in tandem with the functional experts of ERP vendors to decide about the best rollout and implementation strategy. ERP implementation has more to do with offline work involving data harmonization, system standardizations and acceptance by all concerned. If that is done even their home grown legacy applications with customization help from IT service providers, can be extended to cover the working of entire organization without the real need for an expensive ERP solution.

Virtual Web Symphony <<http://www.edunetsys.com/blog>>  
: A blog by a management and software consultant, SEO and SEM expert, E-learning evangelist and all weather Guru.

## ESI - Executive State Identification

Life is a puzzle and often we find that there is a piece or two missing from our own personal puzzle, to complete the picture of a successful life! What is that missing piece? Do we have access to it? Is it possible to find the puzzle piece to complete our picture?

We read motivational articles, we Google the net, we buy the latest self help books. And, there in front of us lie the answers, all of them! Yet we almost always continue along our usual pathway with promises and pledges to make the change we need to make our lives more successful.

What is missing from the words we read is the HOW. How to make those changes and make them stick!

After many years of studying people's behaviour, in particular their ability to change, Jan Sky has developed a process that truly motivates behavioural change!

ESI is a process that uncovers the HOW, as well as discovering if the ability to change lies within us. ESI - Executive State Identification - reveals the many parts of our behaviour. The many parts of our behaviour that make us who we are. Some parts are quite obvious to us and to others, as they are displayed by our overt behaviours.

As a coach and trainer, Jan was interested in revealing to the client the 'hidden parts'. The parts that hold the potential for change to occur and to help create a pathway for future growth and development.

This is done by developing a uniquely personal 'State Map' of the individual. A part is called a state - an ego state - and each individual is made up of many different states. The unique combination of these states defines the person you are. That's why there is no generic questionnaire for a mandate profile - everyone is treated individually because you are unique.

Within your uniqueness is the answer to what level of success you are capable of. By using a simple questioning process your states are revealed and then the work begins!

There is no magic to this and yes, each person must be prepared to take measures to ensure change occurs. What is powerful is that once the revelation of your states are revealed you are empowered to move forward towards success.

ESI was originally trialled with in-mates in jail who "felt empowered by their realization that there are more parts to their personalities than their criminal parts. They appear to grasp the concept and use this in addressing their offending behaviour" ... says Brenda Ambler, Department of Correctional Services. Statistics on these prisoners reveals a change in behaviour. Considering that these men in jail were operating each day in 'survival' mode, this change represents remarkable success and only leads to thoughts of how powerful it could be for them, once released, to make the necessary changes to live within the society free of crime.

In our daily lives, at work and at play, we are not limited by the remotely structured life of an in-mate. We are limited only by the possibilities of our thinking and the understanding of our abilities to move change. ESI creates the motivation for you to move change in whatever direction you choose.

ESI has been used extensively in the corporate world with coaching and training with outstanding results. Here are some examples for you ...

A senior executive who needed all the information before making a decision therefore holding up the workflow of his teams, found a state in him that was a 'risk taker' which was capable of making faster, decisive ones. He used this state at work and was rewarded by the results.

A Customer Service Manager, overwhelmed by work, family and her constant attempts to create balance and harmony, discovered a passionate state that needed to play piano. This state al-

lowed her to relieve the restrictions of day. In turn the sense of being overwhelmed at work was replaced by a feeling of contentment in the workplace.

A CEO who was stuck in a mid life crisis found a state that hadn't sufficiently mourned the death of his mother and after allowing this process to occur, moved forward with his life. His company has now expanded to the overseas market.

Many more stories of success lie within this process, including yours!

For more information visit <http://www.execstateid.com.au> and read more, or purchase the book 'The Many Parts of You' ... information on the website.

Jan Sky is in the business of creating a difference to the workplace environment by making behavioural changes stick. She specialises in the area of leadership and people development to those organisations who want to create an environment of high performing people. Her background in management and sales combined with psychology and counselling provide a balanced style of delivery, coupled with enhanced empathy to meet the needs of others. Jan recently developed the process called ESI - Executive State Identification - a process to ensure behavioural changes stick! Her many case studies from business executives to inmates in jail will astound you and the amazing stories of success are all proof that the process is successful. ESI will equip you to achieve your goals enabling you to enjoy the rewards of success. ESI is excellent for resolving conflict in the workplace, reducing absenteeism, improving communication and creating workplace harmony. ESI will assist in meeting KPI's by changing behaviours to support the team and company goals therefore increasing the bottom line.

In other areas of training Jan has excelled in defining critical business needs and delivering to achieve outcomes using techniques and skills that ensure results.

# Whipping Healthcare Into Shape

## Lean Six Sigma: Whipping Healthcare Into Shape

### Healthcare Headache or Improvement Opportunity?

As we move forward, the healthcare industry will be serving a double edged sword, and in an effort to reduce or eliminate the pain, the MAGNUMUS need for process improvement and quality metrics is ESSENTIAL. Specifically in these times it is necessary to eliminate non-value added items. Times are tough for all, and to reduce waste is paramount.

As the baby boom generation ages, the US will see the majority of its population in their senior years. Adding to the already short supply of medical professionals, the increasing services that will be needed, if not already overwhelming, will be out of control. To add to that, President Obama's Healthcare plan, which is an overall positive effort to improve quality, will unfortunately increase regulation, policies, and constraints on the industry. Thus, causing another dramatic financial burden on all facilities.

Process improvement consultants can design and implement real solutions that draw on an organization's collective know-how to deliver proven results to healthcare organizations. Process performance improvement firms can and will provide value added consulting and implementation services that target bottom line results in quality of care, efficiency, patient satisfaction and organizational improvement. Returns on investments have succeeded 200%.

Many hospitals look inward to their own organizations, embedded in the medical profession to make these changes occur. That may have some immediate benefit, but to embrace continuous improvement and to keep pace with the industry, it is necessary to look outside the box. GO LEAN with those that are experts in Lean Six Sigma, who just may have had their roots in manufacturing.

A sampling of what six sigma and process improvement firms can due for your facility:

- Increased Patient Satisfaction and Care
- Higher satisfaction scores
- Fewer complaints
- Reduced wait times and variation
- Increased Physician Satisfaction

Satisfaction

- Fewer physician complaints
- Dramatically improved throughput
- Reduced scheduling delays
- Reduced Costs / Cost savings
- Better financials and higher annual savings
- Less rework and waste
- Better recruiting and retention power - both clinical and administrative

administrative

- More efficient emergency departments
- Fewer medical errors.

Applying Lean Six Sigma Tools will eliminate the waste now placing you in a better position as our country's demographics as well as government policies continue to change.

Marie Ketaner is the co-founder of QUALACO, Inc., a Total Quality Management Consulting firm, specializing in Process Performance Improvement. She manages the direct daily business operations for the firm, and is directly responsible for managing its client base and overseeing projects that directly relate to Process Performance Improvement, Supplier Quality and Root Cause Analysis Program Development.

<p><b>The Launch of AS9100 Rev C Will Make Firms More Competitive</b></p>
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The International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG) released a revision to AS9100, the quality management system (QMS) for the aviation, space and defense industries. But, unlike the recent release of ISO 9001:2008 (which was more of an amended version), Revision C will have considerably more impact. Its benefits, however, far outweigh the impact of implementation. The new requirements are intended to make significant improvements in quality and reductions in cost - throughout the value stream.

The Standard's payload includes several new requirements and clauses that focus on planning, project management, and risk management. Its trajectory will also traverse on-time delivery performance, the formal monitoring of customer satisfaction trends, and formal plans to ensure continual improvement - all are mission critical. IAQG's mission is to dramatically raise the on-time, on-quality delivery (OTOQD) performance across all three business sectors.

## Background

To do business in aerospace today, you need to comply with AS9100, the international standard for aerospace quality. AS9100 now includes the requirements of the ISO 9001:2008 Standard, plus additional requirements imposed by the aerospace, aviation and defense industries. AS9100 places additional emphasis on structured design and validation methodologies, configuration management, and identification and traceability.

IAQG is the lead organization responsible for revisions. The first draft of the AS9100 revision was developed in July 2007, after considerable inputs from stakeholders. A coordination draft was sent to all stakeholders in November 2007. The IAQG 9100 Team met in April 2008 to address all comments. The formal ballot draft was released in May, and the official release was on January 15, 2009.

The IAQG 9100 team consists of eighteen members representing Americas, Europe, and Asia-Pacific IAQG Sectors. Among the various stakeholders are: Civil aviation authorities, defense

and space industry and authorities, certification/registration bodies, trade associations and IAQG member companies.

### Transitioning to AS9100C

Transition details are still being finalized. We expect that both revisions will remain current for over 2½ years. IAQG has proposed a maximum thirty month implementation schedule from date of publication. Unfortunately, it is not quite that simple. The reason is because AS9101D, the Quality Management Systems Assessment Standard, has not yet been approved.

This Assessment Standard is currently being revised in order to simplify it, and to make it easier to facilitate a value-added, process-based audit. Changes are expected to be rather significant. And it isn't until this sister Standard is approved, that the approximate six-month development period (for sanctioned courseware to train third-party auditors on the revised standards) can even begin.

If the AS9101 Standard is released in the next several months (Q1 or Q2) - and if it takes about six-months to develop sanctioned training materials - it probably will be Q4-2009 or Q1-2010 before any certification body can audit to the AS9100C Standard. So, third-party auditors can't do anything until the AS9101 Standard is also launched, and the sanctioned training materials are released to the certification bodies.

Once the Assessment Standard has been released, the primary thrust of the first six months will be to develop auditor training materials. The challenge for the next twelve months will be to train the certification bodies and auditors. This suggests that the earliest opportunity for organizations to be registered to the new Standard (early adopters) will be about six months from publication of AS9101D.

During the next twelve months, all organizations that have not opted for early adoption will need to upgrade to the new Standard at their next surveillance audit or re-certification. So, it appears that the maximum allowed time to upgrade will be thirty

months from publication of AS9101D, and any certifications that are still to AS9100B will no longer be valid. Detailed transitioning requirements will be available at or around the time AS9101 is officially released.

### Overview of the Changes

Revision C changes include expansion of the scope to include "Aviation, Space and Defense," changes to the design specification, greater focus on planning and project management, and additional emphasis on risk management and mitigation. Keep in mind that ISO 9001:2008 changes have also been incorporated.

Additionally, two new terms were introduced - special requirements, and critical items. Special requirements are those identified by the customer, or determined by the organization, that have high risks to being achieved. Critical items (e.g. processes, characteristics, parts, software, etc.) are those that have a significant effect on product realization and use of the product.

These changes present new challenges to those working to the AS9100 Standard. For example, emphasis on risk management serves to reduce liability and costs associated with "escapes," as well as to obviate costs associated with remediation (that might also include litigation). Essentially it requires organizations to establish a process for managing risks to achieve customer, statutory and regulatory requirements.

Other implementation benefits include measuring, analyzing and improving product quality and on-time delivery performance, and the formal monitoring of customer satisfaction data and trends. Also, improvement plans will be needed to ensure continual improvement. Understanding and embracing these changes will better position your organization for growth and profitability.

### The Path Forward

This is a good time to evaluate the overall effectiveness of your current quality (business) management system. If you are not measuring on-time delivery performance and customer satis-

faction trends, do so, and don't wait. This is no time to procrastinate - it just makes good business sense.

If you want to brush-up on project management and be better prepared to address the new clause (7.1.1), ISO 10006:2003 QMS - Guidelines for Quality Management in Projects can be used as an information resource on how to apply project management, using ISO 9001's principles and structure.

In addition, we encourage you to visit the official IAQG website at [www.iaqg.org](http://www.iaqg.org) for additional information. And if you come across any articles by L.L. "Buddy" Cressionnie, read these. He is the Americas lead for the IAQG 9100 Team. Visit the SAE International website as well at [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org) for related useful information. Just visit on "aerospace."

Also, obtain a copy of the AS9100C Standard. Copies can be purchased from your national standards body, ANSI, in the United States, SAE International, or from the American Society for Quality. Remember, this standard includes ISO 9001:2008 QMS requirements and specifies additional aerospace, aviation, and defense QMS requirements - shown in bold, italic text.

One last thought. AS9100C provides the framework for a fundamental business model. It is the foundation from which to build a competitive, customer-centric enterprise. If you think it's just another standard that can be taken lightly, think again. It makes a strong business case. And that translates to improved business results, and a sustainable competitive advantage. It's a matter of survival!

### About the Author

Founded in 1993, Change Management Consulting is a global management consulting and training company, dedicated to helping organizations of all sizes improve performance, achieve goals and advance leadership capability. As a full-service organizational improvement firm, CMC focuses on organizational and leadership development, compliance management (ISO 9001 and it's derivatives), strategic planning and Lean Six Sigma initiatives.

Headquartered in Wayne, NJ with offices in San Diego, Dallas and Detroit, CMC has a proven track record in helping public and private sector clients implement pragmatic continual improvement initiatives that drive financially measurable results. CMC also has extensive experience in obtaining grants and funding assistance for its clients. Learn more at <http://www.cmc-changemanagement.com> or contact CMC at (877) 268-2440 or (973) 696-7878.

## 5 Elements of Business - How to Look at Business Growth With an Alternative Eye

How often have you had a "burning desire" to begin a journey, a business or a project. The Element of Fire begins our explanation of how 5 Element diagnosis can be an insight into ourselves, our business and our present place in the market.

If we accept that "in the beginning" our Universe began with the "Big Bang" we can see that Fire:heat, energy can be placed at the creation of all things. In business, I see Fire as the spark, the idea, the heartbeat of the company we have created or work for.

In an Index of 5 Element Theory, Fire is associated with the Heart; the Tongue; Speech and Communication. The lifeblood of most businesses. We have the idea; we are excited;we talk to people and enthuse them to join us.

From the earliest times, when people congregated around a "controlled"Fire. Communication took place and a group of people gathered to talk, discuss plans and share ideas.

One of the words most associated with Fire is Energy. It is the use of "controlled energy" which nearly always highlights successful business, creators and leaders. The prime factors in developing a growing business are relationships: which depend on being able to talk clearly to each other: trusting each other and gathering others around the idea. Fire gathers people to talk, to listen and to bring purpose.

How often have we been "Fired Up" by motivational speakers, skilled at radiating the enthusiasm and "calls to action".

As well as being the beginning of our journey, Fire can bring things to fruition. Heat is often the catalyst for change.

"Go back to your desk and clear your personal items. You are dismissed".

Those words were the catalyst for the Fire in my life. It wasn't the Fire of Anger. It was the Fire of Excitement. I had lost all of my enthusiasm for my work and had broken regulations. The job I had created for myself, by showing enthusiasm and creativity had begun as a menial fetching and carrying assignment for physiotherapists. My training and previous experience had given me the tools to be more useful to the department.

As an Exercise Therapist I worked with a Senior Physiotherapist who, like me had the same Fire for building a successful unit. The Fire, the enthusiasm allowed the Head of Physiotherapy to appoint us to our own Exercise ward. In the two years we worked together we brought the waiting list down from thirteen weeks to immediate appointments. As the committee's decision showed it wasn't to last.

The Fire was re-ignited, it propelled me into self employment and to build the business which is now seven years old.

The awareness of the opportunity that formed the base for my present work and the aspirations I have are being "communicated" to the public and to the members of the Networking groups

I visit. In 5 Element Theory, Fire is linked to speech, the tongue, to being "fired up", excited and marketing your message.

Are you showing that Fire: that Awareness; Aspiration and Excitement?

Are you Communicating these qualities?

Are you circulating your message to other people?

Through the good and bad times these qualities allowed me to grow and find "fertile"Earth for my work.

It allowed me to develop a natural process which has been used by native people for hundreds, thousands of years to produce Earth that produces the sustenance and nourishment.

In the current climate, have you lost your Fire, your Desire and Enthusiasm. ?

Have you lost Heart?

Or are you prepared to re-light the Fire, to seek fresh ideas, to go out there and communicate your idea to the public?

For the next installment of the 5 Element Theory keep watching for the Ezine on the Earth Element of Business.

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<b>Change Management and CRM</b>
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There are a variety of reasons that CRM fails. Generally speaking, a lack of planning is a sure fire way to fail. One of the critical parts of the planning process is identifying the risk of low user adoption. A solid change management program must be implemented to address this before it ever appears on the radar screen.

Just about every business out there has multiple departments. These are also referred to as functional silos and each is tasked with certain functions. Over time, these functions cement themselves into the ownership mentality taken on by each employee in that silo (department). This ownership complex can result in turf wars if it is threatened or invaded.

Silo workers are walled off from the other silos in the organization. That's why they are often referred to as silos. The work performed is always within the silo. But many CRM initiatives attempt to tear down the walls and force these workers to suddenly work together, with a new focus on the customer (not their internal process). Maybe there's an example out there where this has worked, but I haven't heard about it.

### A simple plan for change

When the CRM change is coming, the C-Level executives need to be out there letting the organization know that the customer will become the center of their business activities. And the CEO needs to be leading the cheer. But change management is more than that.

You need to build a cross-functional team of key players for a couple of reasons. First, no single person has a unique and comprehensive perspective on how to re-work an organization. And second, the inclusion of these key players handles the turf ownership issue because they become owners of the new process as they help identify it. Keeping them focused is a challenge, but make sure they are reminded that every consideration must benefit the customer first and then benefit the company. If it passes that test, existing turf battles are harder to mount.

Your team should consist of not only department managers, but also key customer facing line staff that can give you deeper perspective. Here are players I would recommend:

- \* Sales Manager and two key sales reps (one star one average)
- \* Marketing Manager and two subordinates
- \* Customer Service Manager and two CSRs
- \* IT Manager
- \* Human Resources Manager
- \* Possibly a representative from Manufacturing or production if that makes sense.

You may need to rotate others in and out as the program evolves, but these key players will be the core of the team. You will also need a team leader. If there is someone within your company that can survive this process, use them. Otherwise, it might make sense to hire a consultant with experience in change management to be objective and keep things moving.

Mike Boysen is an experienced CRM consultant and the creator of Effective CRM Consulting <<http://www.effective-crm-consulting.com>> You can read more about effective change management <<http://www.effective-crm-consulting.com/effective-change-management.html>> as well as other CRM related topics.

## Some Pretty Good Ps for Initiating Change

Need to start a major change effort? What to improve your margin? Put your company on the right track? Become a market leader? Survive the economic downturn? Keep in mind that a

successful change effort starts with two critical requirements. You must

1. Be very clear on the change itself: what, why, when, who, and how; and
2. Communicate that to all members of the your organization as soon as you can and as often as possible.

These two requirements are critical regardless of what kind of change you make, or whether it's targeted toward process or quality improvement, market leadership, survival, positioning for sale, or some combination. If you do these things well, you have a good chance of beating the 3:1 odds of failure in change efforts. If you don't, then join those who contribute to the 75% failure statistic for change efforts.

It's sad that so many change efforts start and end in a back room, with senior managers and "implementation" teams doing all the planning--and then bringing the rest of the organization into the picture only when it's time for them to go, or move, or change jobs, or comply, or whatever the operational expectation is. This approach is an effective way to build resistance into an organization and drive it underground where it can do the most damage in implementation.

There are other ways to implement, and they can be characterized by good planning and good communication throughout a change effort, from the very beginning. And there's a checklist of considerations that you should think about to guide the design and implementation of your change initiative. I call them the "Pretty Good Ps", and they start with four basic categories that define initial planning: Purpose/Problem, Picture, Plan, and Part to Play. Let's look at them one by one.

#### Purpose or Problem

It's essential to be clear about and communicate the purpose for any major change. Most of the time most of us think things are going along pretty well. Or conversely, we're used to the current rotten situation, but would rather continue as we are than do something different that could be worse.

If you're going to change that perception, you'd better have a compelling story that tells why. That's why the most effective change efforts start with a clear description of the problem you're trying to solve. Otherwise, people will view this as "just another management ploy" that makes a lot of noise, but doesn't really make anything better.

To characterize the problem and make your purpose clear, answer these questions:

- \* Why change?
- \* What's wrong with the current situation?
- \* What's the real problem? How do you know?
- \* What's driving change? Why?
- \* How bad is the situation?
- \* What would happen if you didn't make the change?
- \* How immediate is it?
- \* Why can't you put it off until the organization feels more ready?
- \* Who does it affect?

The answers to these questions, positioned appropriately, can be used to build a compelling case for change and start to "unhook" people from their current perceptions. Getting employees to start moving away from their current perception of how things are going in the organization is the first step toward building an ongoing momentum that characterizes effective change efforts.

When you start that shift, your employees will start to wonder what you have in mind for the future. Perhaps the most effective answer to that is a...

#### Picture

By "picture" here, I mean a concrete description of your vision for the organization at the end of the change effort. Not some pie-in-the-sky image, but a concrete, real, and accurate portrayal of the organization you're shooting for. Here are some questions people will be asking, at least in their minds:

\* What will be different? (Structure, culture, people, processes, systems, mission, etc.)

\* How will those things be different? Contrast now and when.

\* What will be--as an organization, as teams, and as individuals--different in our behavior, attitudes, business focus, collaboration, decision-making, etc. as appropriate? In other words, what does the change look like, feel like?

\* Will there be new ground rules for how we behave? What do they look like now, even though they're not fully fleshed out? Who will they apply to?

\* What's the outcome here that makes the change worthwhile? What's the cost-benefit equation (for the company, the organization, the team, and the individual)?

Remember that with these two Ps you're trying to change your employees' perception away from a focus on the past toward the future you're defining for them. Changing that perception--highlighting the downside of the past and current organization while emphasizing the upside of the future one--isn't an easy task, and you may have to tell those stories many times to get a noticeable shift in perception. However, it's important because even though perception isn't actually reality, it does drive behavior and attitude. And the beginnings of a perceptual shift are all you need at the beginning of a change effort.

Once your people--staff, team, employees--have an idea of why the organization is changing and where it's going, they'll want to know who's involved, particularly since you've mentioned who is affected a couple of times so far. Specifically they'll want to know if they have a

Part to Play

Most of us, most of the time, would be perfectly happy if change went on all around us and generally left us alone. Failing that, we most want to know the answers to the following:

\* Who is leading this effort?

\* Who is on the team?

\* Does this affect me? How much?

\* Do I have any say in what happens, when, and how?

- \* If I can influence, how do I do that? Will I be heard?
- \* If I'm asked to make a sacrifice, who else will be asked as well?
- \* Is there a vehicle for feedback? What is it?

These questions are all about "What parts is this drama are being played by others, do I have a part, and how can I best play it"? Knowing that the players on the implementation team are respected, accessible, and reasonable can go a long way toward building support for a major change effort. Knowing that there's a way employees can voice their concerns, ideas, hopes, and plans helps move things forward.

It's essential to provide parts to play for all those affected by any major change. That doesn't mean they get to decide, but it does mean that they get to speak, be acknowledged, and be heard. Otherwise, you increase resistance to your effort. That's like working uphill and building hills in front of your initiative as you go. Poor two-way communication is one of the reasons why so many change efforts fail, but that's a future topic.

Now that you've told folks why we're changing, what it will look like, and who's involved, it's time to address how and when. And that's where you talk about the

#### Plan

The idea of plan will take different forms, depending on the level at which you sit and where the change will take place. At the top level, and during the initial communication activities, the "plan" is likely to be more strategy than plan. And that's what you should share:

- \* The strategic activities that are to take place.
- \* The general order in which they will happen.
- \* How they will be monitored and adjusted as needed.
- \* How the strategic activities fit in with overall corporate strategy.
- \* How we will know when we're done?

At lower levels--and as real implementation planning gets under way--the activities get more specific and more targeted toward particular organizational units and groups. They take on the characteristics of more formal plans: tasks, resources, duration, due dates, dependencies, etc.

When planning, keep these things in mind:

- \* Stick with one plan. Drive strategy down to action. Nest lower-level plans under a master plan, so you can see dependencies.

- \* Include a management reinforcement and communications tracks in your plan. Define how progress will be communicated and reinforced along the way to ensure success.

- \* Don't stop with developing the things you have to implement. Include implementation tasks as well: meetings, reviews, pilots/trials, feedback sessions, etc. Too many plans have an empty box called "Implement". Not enough.

- \* Include an Early Warning System--Risk Management Plan--to identify and prevent risks, and manage issues when risk prevention fails.

- \* Review the plan at several levels. Identify things the implementation team had not thought about, get useful feedback, and communicate that you're serious about communicating and listening (part to play).

Problem/Purpose, Picture, Plan, and Part to Play. If you make a good-faith effort to follow these four Pretty Good Ps in initiating your change, you have a better-than-even shot at success. Engaging your people in developing and implementing these from the outset can take you the rest of the way in your change effort.

John Maher consults and trains on organizational change and effectiveness, process improvement, and model-based quality consulting. He mentors and coaches individuals, teams, and whole organizations. You can find John at <http://OrgImprovement.com> Read one of John's blog at <http://PracticalChange.John-Maher.com>.

## Change = Progression

We've "moved up", literally! We put our heads together and decided to function better as a team; we should all be on the same floor. Thus, a change was in order. However, as we all know, change is a scary thing for most people, and usually human beings have a challenging time embracing it.

So, from our recent insights, we thought we would share some of our keys to successful changes. As we settle in and unpack our boxes and get ready to ring in the New Year, here are a few tips to help you deal with changes too.

Start with the basics. If you feel some changes need to take place in your team, ask the team what they think. Beginning at the "front lines", make your team part of the change.

Make a "moving committee" We found this particular tool very useful. This committee worked together to gather all ideas and concerns, created a plan of action, and presented everything to management frequently for further discussions.

Communicate! Often! Don't rely on emails, memos, or other leaders to spread the word. Your team needs to be involved in this right from the beginning. Remember, this is the same team who has ideas you may never think of! Have meetings and brainstorm sessions with your group, and don't hide things from them. Provide them with as much information as possible all the way through the process.

If you are part of a large firm, a kick-off might be a great idea. Once you and your team have developed a plan for change, have a big kick-off to get people even more excited about it.

Keep your views clear and realistic, and connect frequently with your team so that everyone is on the same wave-length. Don't hide things from them, be open and honest and keep those lines of communication open.

Create a project plan. Keep it where everyone can see it, and make sure it stays accurate and up-to-date.

After the change has been implemented, keep it alive! Spend time meeting with your team and getting updates on how things are going. Address any challenges that are being faced.

Reward success! Compliment your team on how well they are adapting to change, and make sure they know how much you appreciate the part they have played in this from planning to implementation.

Of course, not all changes are going to be easy. Sometimes change can be perceived as unpleasant. Keep your team focused on why the change needs to happen, and make sure they are involved every step of the way. Your team needs ownership of the change to embrace it.

Leanne Crain is a Marketing and Administrative Assistant for the business consulting company BizXcel which publishes *Generating Greatness*, the bi-weekly ezine for business professionals. If you are ready to push your business to new heights, make more money, save time and improve productivity, then get your FREE tips now at <http://www.bizxcel.com>

## Self Leadership - Authenticity Has to Be Genuine

Life is now more transparent than ever. If you are authentic, you are consistent, then people are going to trust you. But if you say one thing, then do another, they'll wipe you off as quick as they change their undies. No way, you can bluff. So, it really

doesn't come down to rocket science. leaders take all shapes and sizes, however, in this era, the key is, they are true to their ways, and they stick to their patterns. People just sniff a rat when leaders turn up with a sudden radical, post seminar change of heart. They know it's not real. So, the question is: are you authentic or putting on a front?

So, what does authenticity look like?

The first thing is that you walk your talk. If you say one thing and do another people get really skeptical about your capacity to lead them.

The second thing is that your certainty comes from a genuine place of competence and not hard headed bluff. My first football coach was the father of one of the other guys in the team. He'd never played football and only got the job because no one else wanted it. He'd scream and shout and motivate us, but after 10 minutes on the field, when we really needed good sound direction, he was still trying to wake the dead with his "go, go you bloody idiot" catch cry from the boundary. You need to be good at what you say you are going to lead others to do...

The third is that you turn up. Consistency is the mark of strength that people need in a leader. If you're distant one day and present the next, you'll lose people. If you're emotional one day and peaceful the next people just withdraw. It's a circle, the bigger you make it, the more anxiety people have about you.

The fourth is that you are not lying. People smell lies from a thousand different signals. Body language, face expressions, eye contact. Most of the time people don't trust their intuition but I can tell you that every person, after a disastrous relationship, will say, "I knew it."

Fifth and my favourite is that you have to have a personal life. People whose home life is crap, come to work to try to compensate. They are hyper invested in the emotional aspects, fragile, and frail. They often stand for the job of fighting against injustice and worker rights. This deep misery spreads like a bush fire.

Chris Walker - <http://www.chriswalker.com.au> - is the guy you turn to when times are tough. He helps people and organisations change before discontent turns to disaster. He helps individuals find wisdom for good leadership through better self management practices. Chris Walker inspires change, he is a catalyst for growth where there's an urgent need for it. Walker runs leadership programs in the Nepal Himalayas and throughout the world in nature. He combines an MBA and studies in Zen, Yoga and self Mastery. Walker inspires people and organisations to change when times are tough. and <http://www.innerwealth.com> - This is what I share.

## Finding a Healthy Work Life Balance Requires Real Change

Sometimes we get so used to doing something just because that's the way we've always done it. As businesses grow and evolve, processes grow with them. Organizations (especially those who grow too fast) tend to modify and adapt the process in order to 'just get it done'. Often they are too busy to stop and reassess exact what the most effective method is in order to properly deliver value to the end customer. This impacts ever person who touches the process, which may include you. The result is wasted time, delays, inferior results, and frustration.

In life, we tend to develop similar patterns. We get busy, juggle schedules, miss appointments, rush in traffic, and at the end of the day we don't even have enough time left to reflect on the journey. When we do think about how we are living our lives we realize we need to live life differently, but we either don't know how or don't want to know how. People are fearful of change because they are fearful of failure. It also takes energy to change, and at the speed that life is going by, where are could they possibly

find that energy. Real growth doesn't happen when you are sitting on the fence, or hiding behind your desk. Real growth happens when you step out and put yourself in a position that requires a little more of you than you are able to deliver. That's the first step to success.

Here are three key strategies you can apply to help identify the need for change in your life.

1. Challenge everything. Don't let a wet monkey get in your way. If it is unclear, ask why it's done that way. Keep asking why until you get to the root cause. If the final answer is "I don't know", or "that's just the way it's done here", then you uncovered a wet monkey. It's time to change it. There is nothing wrong with asking why the process works the way it does, and there is nothing wrong with suggesting what may be a better way to do it. If a benefit can be realized from it (either cost savings or revenue generation), then elevate it with your supervisor. You will likely be asked to participate in implementing the solution/improvement.

2. Challenge yourself, and do something about it. Get off the fence and get into the game. Quit using excuses for not making improvements. Life is too short to miss an opportunity for success. Don't fear failure... it is bound to happen at times. Instead, have faith that God has a purpose for you. If it's an issue at work, deal with it promptly and professionally. If it's a problem at home, it's even more important to address it head on. Failing to act is called failure.

3. Don't react, instead reflect. Panic can cause overreaction and lead to the wrong decision. Let God be your Leader and ask Him for direction. If what you are thinking is not in line with His Word, it's the wrong decision to make.

Please visit our website at <http://successinworkandfamilylife.com> for more articles and advice on achieving healthy work life balance.

Andrew Hunter is a Certified Management Accountant and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt with over 20 years of experience in Project Management and Operations. He and his wife Sarah attend Beulah Alliance Church in Edmonton Alberta Canada.

<http://successinworkandfamilylife.com>

## Exposed - How You Can Start Risk Management on a Beer Budget Today

Names like Levitz, Sharper Image, Linens n Things and Circuit City are not supposed to just disappear so quickly. Every day it seems like another article in the news warns that no company, from a small private company to a conglomerate, is immune from dealing with business risks.

Yet the idea of creating or improving an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program to anticipate or plan for business risks sounds overwhelming in terms of the time and money it would take. Just think of those Sarbanes Oxley nightmares and overruns. In this volatile economic climate where cash and liquidity must be husbanded, how do you afford such a champagne sounding budget item in the current beer budget reality?

For those growing or middle market companies with no ERM program or just a shell of a program, somewhere sitting on a dusty shelf or boxed away in the warehouse may be step one of the risk management process.

The secret for you may be that you have gone through one of the following processes which can be the foundation for your Enterprise Risk Management expert process. Where do you have copies of an internal report or consultant survey that was done as part of (a) contingency planning, (b) a due diligence review, (c) an acquisition review, (d) a merger and acquisition review, (e) an operational assessment, or (f) a strategic facilitated top management session in this approach.

After you find one or more of these past reviews, designate someone to become your Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) expert. He or she will be pleased to find the nuggets for starting your ERM process. One unfortunate reality is that some, most or even almost all of those old suggestions may never have been acted on. Whichever of those activities you or your company have been involved in the past will help create this beer budget version to at least get started in the risk management arena.

Bottom line? - Stop Profit Leaks Now. Apply this information to improve your profitability, reengineer business models, and strengthen or gain competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Or comment on how this article could be made more useful for you.

And apply the free Fiscal Test available at <http://fiscaldoctor.com/fiscaltest.html>

From the author of the forthcoming book, 'Stick Out Your Balance Sheet & Cough: Best Practices for Long Term Business Health'.

From Gary W Patterson, <http://www.FiscalDoctor.com>  
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## Leading and Managing the Corporate Culture

Corporate culture simply means, "This is the way we do things around here", or

"A set of acceptable behaviours we expect people to do."

There are always two cultures in a company, family or group.

The first is the "espoused culture" - i.e. "people are our most important product."

In an "espoused culture," what we say doesn't fit with what we actually do or what people are rewarded for. So if we say "people are important" but we treat them badly what is said does not fit with what we do. The result is cynicism, resentment and disengagement - KaChing\$\$\$ - cash down the toilet.

The second is the "real culture" in which behaviours reflect the stated values. Outcome: Alignment, engagement and loyalty. KaChing\$\$\$ - money in the bank.

A "real culture" points the way to an ideal and 'better' culture that will lead to a sustainable business that has a great "Invisible Balance Sheet."

### The "invisible Balance Sheet"

A term coined by Carl Sveiby, is made up of three families of "invisible" or intangible assets:

(1) Internal Structure - Consists of patents, concepts, models, and computer and administrative systems. These are created by the employees and are thus generally "owned" by the organization, and adhere to it.

(2) External Structure - the relationships with customers and suppliers, brand names, trademarks and reputation, or "image". Some of these can be considered legal property, but the bond is not as strong as in the case of internal assets because investments in them cannot be made with the same degree of confidence. The value of such assets is primarily influenced by how well the company solves its customers' problems -or avoids creating problems for customers. There is always an element of uncertainty here. Reputations and relationships can be good or bad, and can

change over time. Peanut butter or "mad cow" being cases in point.

(3) Individual Human Competence - or intellectual capital is people's ability and/or willingness to act in various situations that add value to the company. It includes skills, education, experience, values and social skills. Competence cannot be owned by anyone or anything but the person who possesses them, because in the final analysis, employees are voluntary members of the organization,

### Why Build a Healthy Culture?

The results can be magnificent if top management enshrines and rewards the right behaviours i.e. Disney, Apple, Google. Disastrous if the company leaders are incongruent, inconsistent and duplicitous. i.e. Ford, GM & Chrysler

One successful example is Northwest Airlines, which has built its culture on the development and motivation of the individual in order to contribute to team success. Southwest has produced 97 consecutive quarters of profits while other airlines floundered in bankruptcy.

One purpose of articulating and fostering a healthy culture is to lead employees to adopt "the mind-set of owner-operators." The hired guns of global financial institutions failed miserably in this regard.

### Culture Differs from One Organization to Another.

Cambridge Design Partnership, in the UK, employs only 25 people, mostly top-class engineers. Its culture is built on the goal of attracting and keeping customers for contract research. Keeping is the key element here, because in the engineering design business the sales cycle is so long - often years. CDP has never had a failed project and has many repeat customers.

The "real" and the "espoused" definitions of culture share an obvious link. If you change the culture from whatever exists, i.e.

from unclear purpose and shoddy results, to clear purpose and consistently outstanding results, then you change the "way we do things round here."

Progressive, effective top managers understand and behave in ways that show that they are responsible for building and maintaining a healthy culture. If some aspect of the business is broken, they will introduce some new ways that will produce the desired results. They work with people to fine-tune the culture. Any wise, experienced business leader worth their salt will tell you that people cooperate best when executing policies and procedures devised with their collaboration.

The Present Exception to the Rule - Sort of.

Right now, in this economic malaise there is an apparent and major exception to the collaboration principle.

Businesses in trouble require a quick, marked cultural change to drive the turnaround - now. A faltering company can be made more effective if everyone puts their shoulders into the tasks.

Collaboration is essential, but prolonged consultation is not so useful in this instance. What top management must do is tune into, and turn up the volume on that radio station - WII-FM - (What's In It For Me?) so that every employee understands that now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of the company. When the house is on fire, you don't sit around debating about what to do next! You make sure people don't get burned because they're frozen in fear.

However, crisis management is not a strong foundation for constructing a lasting, healthy culture. When the crisis is successfully dealt with, the urgency and commitment that everyone brought to the turnaround quickly dissipates. The organization and culture can quickly revert to the status quo - which was the source of all the trouble in the first place.

CDP and Southwest Airlines have one thing in common. All their employees, from the CEO down, have a deep knowledge of the business, its objectives and its practices - to most of which they give their wholehearted support.

The leadership team can, because of a common cultural understanding and commitment, pursue ambitious, quick-paced plans that would not be possible in a dysfunctional, slow moving culture. Companies with healthy cultures are more likely to have the resiliency to weather the firestorm while preserving their culture.

Other companies, with less healthy cultures, and which successfully emerge from the economic crisis will have to, again, begin re-working their culture as the good times start to roll again - if for no other reason than the "war for good talent" will rear its ugly head once again. Top managements' efforts will have to move from financial survival to profitable sustainability while building the "invisible Balance Sheet."

### Leading & Managing A Healthy Corporate Culture

A healthy culture always follows from the principles and policies that are put in place and modeled - not vice-versa.

Here are the questions to ask - and answer - in order to identify a company's culture.

They are also questions that need to be answered when developing or changing a company's culture.

1. What is important around here? What gets rewarded? What gets punished? What gets ignored. What are our core beliefs, the principles that govern how we interact and treat one another, our customers and our suppliers? - Values.

2. Do we have the right people on the bus and in the right seats? Are they aligned with the demands of the business? Do we have the competitive intelligence? How do we develop them into

leaders and managers who will drive results while developing people? - The "Invisible Balance Sheet."

3. Where are we going? What future state do we want to achieve? - Vision.

4. How are we going to get there? What's the Big Dream? What is the roadmap? - Strategy.

5. Why are we here? Why have we pulled all these people and resources together? - Mission.

In working with people I've learned that we behave in our best interests when we:

- \* Increase our competencies;

- \* Get in alignment with our personal and business values;

and

- \* Choose to be engaged.

This combination leads to individual, team and company actions that produce increased personal and business results.

I've written three books. The most recent - Leadership for Einstein's  $P = MC^3$ : Bringing Out the Genius in People While Becoming Great Yourself.

<http://subject2change.ca/blog>

I've written about 1600 business articles for executives who want to increase their personal and business success. The model I use is based on John H. Eggers' research into 350 entrepreneurial companies at Western's Ivey School of Business - The Five Pillars of Business Success:

- \* Financial Intelligence;

- \* Values, Vision, Mission;

- \* Emotional Intelligence;

- \* Leadership & Followership; and

- \* Commit to Action

My assumption is that it's all about relationship. So here's

...

"The Deal"

? I will do my utmost to help you focus on solutions instead of problems.

? I will introduce ways for you to discover your own answers.

? I will keep you focused on your insights and actions that can bring about positive, lasting change in your Self, your family, your workplace, and society.

? I expect you to be Subject2Change so you can identify, create, and try out new, more effective behaviours.

? I assume that there's nothing wrong-with-you that what's right-with-you can't fix.

? I expect you to be open to feedback.

? I need to know what you expect of me.

Be extraordinary, or ... Be Eliminated

<http://subject2change.ca/blog>

## Business Change - The Future of External Staffing in Business Change

When it comes to business change, there is one thing that is unlikely to change: making use of external staffing. External staffers can be and are used for a multitude of roles in business, but particularly during change initiatives. Some change projects, although they're short term projects, may need skills that internal staffing can't offer. This is what external staffing does best. They work on a short term contract to help complete a project, usually for business change, and then they leave once they've done what they needed to do and the project is finished. Even though there is some stigma attached to external staffing, it is likely that external staffing is the wave of the future for business change.

Once upon a time in corporate America, people were hired and stayed with one company for the rest of their career lives.

They would retire from the company with a party and receive a gold watch. It was a time where loyalty is as important to management as it is to employees. It wasn't very impressive if your resume showed that you transferred from organization to organization. But during the 80's, everything changed. Loyalty wasn't that big of a deal anymore, the stigma began to change, and American business was reshaped.

Since corporate policy changed, all the changing and downsizing was tough for long term workers. However, that shift also helped American business become the most efficient and productive in the world. It allows for the redeployment of the workforce faster than anywhere else in the world. These redeployments are not always voluntary, but the upshot is that movement from one company to the next is no longer stigmatized.

External staffing is of great importance to this transformation. More and more high-level professionals are choosing to go to work for staffing firms rather than seek full time employment with a specific business. The people who make this choice find themselves in a position where they gain more money and they have a more challenging career. This also heralds the future of business change. Business change projects are much more complicated and risky than run the business. Managing change takes a whole lot of skill and most skillful workers are usually found in external staffing firms.

Daren Wade has been involved with business change for years. For more information on corporate change <[http://cm.hditools.com/corporate\\_change.html](http://cm.hditools.com/corporate_change.html)> , please see the website: Business Change Management <<http://cm.hditools.com>>

<p><b>Batten Down the Hatches - Do We Ever Learn?</b></p>
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If I'd been cryogenically frozen in the 1970's and brought back to life in the last few days, I may have been forgiven for disbelieving the passage of the intervening time. 'Wildcat strikes' and 'British jobs for British Workers' are arguments that many would have believed had run their course. In an interview between John Humphries and Peter Mandelson yesterday on the Today programme, the word 'xenophobic' got introduced and to my ears the argument started to get decidedly uncomfortable.

One of the eternal paradoxes of being human is the way we knee-jerk react, or at best, thoughtfully respond to threats to our survival. It's relatively easy to see the madness that can spring out of knee-jerk fears for our survival when seen in extreme examples.

On Sunday afternoon I turned on the TV and caught the last 15 minutes of the dramatisation of The Diary of Anne Frank. Most people know the story and the various heart rending aspects of it; the fact that the diary was written by a young woman, that they weren't "foreigners" in the sense of someone just arrived who obviously sounds and looks different. There was one particularly poignant scene near the very end when the plain-clothes officer making the arrests asks for the Frank family's valuables. Mr Frank pulled a metal box out from under a bed and written on the lid, in faded gold leaf was the abbreviation for 'Lieutenant' Frank. The officer was quick to challenge and demanded to know "Where did you get this from?" Mr Frank with fear in his eyes and a touch of confusion replied quietly, "It's mine, I fought for Germany in the Great War". There seemed at that point to be a slight pause, a chink in the mind of the German officer, the ability to respond with a different choice was fleetingly there and yet quickly overridden by the knee-jerk reaction that his embedded position demanded.

Wildcat strikes around British jobs for British workers may seem a long way from the extreme nationalism of the Nazis but that's the rub. From what I've seen, the vast proportion of the Nazis didn't initially set out to be cruel and vile, they simply allowed themselves to get swept up with what they felt 'was theirs' being under threat.

The fear of losing your job and not knowing how to pay your mortgage is one that I've experienced several times in my life along with many others and yet knee-jerk reactions to our survival fears are rarely an answer to dealing with fundamental challenges.

## Trinidadian Executives - Up Against Them in Jamaica

"Are those Jamaicans really so backward?" -- asked by some Trinidadian executives.

Following on the heels of our Caribbean Acquisition Project started in 2001, we have undertaken a short study of some of the challenges that Trinidadian executives and managers face when migrating to work in Jamaica. The study includes a survey of executives with at least six months of on the ground experience.

Most arrive on the island expecting that the work culture will be more or less the same as the one they left at home in Trinidad. However, they quickly undergo a rude awakening, and the survey is intended to understand the gap and help companies better plan for it.

While there will be a full report issued within the next couple of months, we think it might be helpful to managers across the region, regardless of background, to learn from some of what we are finding.

1. Underestimating the Challenge Trinidadian managers were uniform in saying that they underestimated the challenge of managing successfully in Jamaica. They admitted to being unprepared for a bigger difference in culture than they imagined. The differences in language, education and economic climate to the

high regard Jamaicans have for authority -- these were just a part of what they found they had to learn quickly, and without structured assistance. For example, many spoke of how they had to learn the hard way that the average Jamaican worker needed to be managed much more closely than his/her counterpart elsewhere.

2. Unable to Sell the Difference Once they recognized the gap, executives had a hard time trying to convince their more senior executives and board members back home that the gap was real, and that decisions had to be made differently as a result. In one case, the parent company decided not to replace a returning General Manager with a full-time executive. Within months, the company folded, in spite of grave warnings by the returnee that a costly error was being committed.

3. Inadvertent Slight The Jamaican worker, many found, appeared unpredictable and baffling. Seemingly small issues could become big problems. Insignificant events could turn into industrial action. The natural Trinidadian management style, which tends to be very outspoken and based on the premise of "all a we is one," caused trouble when it violated two pillars of the Jamaican workplace:

Pillar 1: Respect -- the average Jamaican worker's assumption is that respect is hard to come by, and that the little that exists is about to be taken away. Research by Carl Stone and others show that this feeling is perhaps the most important emotional experience desired by workers. Trinidadians, however, thrive on speaking in ways that Jamaicans find plainly disrespectful. They enjoy pecong, fatigue and ole talk -- all ways of making public fun of others through loud but pointed teasing. Calypsonians make their living by performing songs that expertly make Trinidadians laugh in approval, but would probably provoke Jamaicans to set up road blocks and go-slows.

Pillar 2: Hierararchy -- the chain of command in the Jamaican workplace is revered, and the boss is expected to look, speak, dress and act the part. It gives a sense of comfort and order to workers that is valued and expected. In Trinidad, the hierarchy is seen as a necessary evil to be abandoned at the first opportunity,

when we can joke about it, forget all about it and lime together later over drinks.

In each case, a Trinidadian executive's strength and preferred way to manage turns into a weakness when each of these pillars is unwittingly undermined.

The net effect of these pressures among others, is that some Trinidadian managers succeed, while others return home on the verge of nervous breakdowns.

We believe that the solution lies in focused preparation, but we have found no evidence of it existing. Those individuals that have done well, have done so in spite of their lack of readiness, which is really a tribute to their abilities. We think the experience of these managers is instructive, and can give us a good idea of what happens when an executive or manager must manage outside their home country. The differences are considerable, and in Jamaica in particular, they manifest themselves loudly.

In the CARICOM region, anecdotal evidence suggests that Trinidadians and Jamaicans might be the closest pair of countries in terms of cultural norms, leaving the imagination to wonder what must transpire when an executive must move to work in Francophone Haiti and has to deal with a significant language barrier, on top of the other challenges.

Much more work needs to be done to create workable solutions that move us all from flip debates about who is really backward, to the point where we can collaborate and work together on the very difficult issues that companies face in the region. Hopefully, our study will be able to shed some light on the matter.

Francis Wade is the President of Framework Consulting, and the author of *FirstCuts*, which has now been published since 2006. Visit the website <http://fwconsulting.com> for more details.

## Confronting Project Management Challenges by Adding a Project Management Consulting Firm

There are many reasons that corporate executives turn to external consultants to provide project management support for their projects. The challenges that organizations face include: sub-par project performance, the potential for lost credibility, lack of experience with a particular project type, and a lack of internal project management practitioners. An outside firm can supply experienced practitioners that offer high-quality solutions to the complex issues facing teams. Following are six ways that project management consulting firms are making a difference with leading organizations.

### ADDRESSING PROJECT-RELATED ISSUES

Often times it is the highly visible, at-risk project that drives management to recognize that a better project management approach is required. Frequently, consultants are brought in to address various project-related issues including: poor on-time performance (key dates being missed), unsatisfactory financial results (unnecessary expenditures to meet deadlines), dysfunctional team dynamics (poor communication, team in-fighting, and misdirection), and complicated team composition (multi-locational, language barriers, external partnerships, etc). By providing the right combination of methodology, training, resources and technology, project management consulting firms can help executives determine how to most effectively focus the resources they have available. They can also help preserve the integrity of project deliverables by ensuring that issues are identified in a timely manner and key dates are being consistently met. These tools and support solutions help improve overall project metrics, while enabling teams to work more effectively and efficiently in high-stress environments.

## PROVIDING ADVANCED PROJECT ANALYSIS TO UPPER MANAGEMENT

In many cases, upper management has difficulty evaluating project performance and making the best decisions because they lack visibility to key project information. A PM consulting firm can provide the necessary reports and analysis to equip managers with key information on upcoming obstacles, possible project pitfalls, and potential resource constraints. When this type of information is incorporated as part of a more encompassing project management approach, the consultant can convert standard project data from a reactive snapshot of historical information into a predictive project analysis tool.

## FILLING AN EXPERTISE GAP

Projects are sometimes launched without regard for the expertise and experience of the project teams working on them. Also, a project's complexity, magnitude, and uniqueness may be a significant concern even for the most experienced teams. Finally, the project management proficiency required to lead major project initiatives may be unavailable or in short supply. In these instances, a project management consulting firm can provide the required expertise necessary to drive the project to a successful outcome.

## ESTABLISHING A PROACTIVE APPROACH

Many projects, by default are managed using a reactive approach to problem solving. This style of project management creates an environment where fire fighting is the norm and the latest project emergency demands the attention. A proactive project management approach enables project teams to identify obstacles earlier in the project, which allows them to make better decisions and provide more cost effective solutions. By implementing the right mix of training, consulting and advanced tools, a Project Management Consulting <<http://www.pm-alliance.com>> firm can establish an early warning system that provides management a forward-looking tool to ensure their project will be executed as-agreed.

## OFFERING SHORT-TERM SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

The lack of qualified personnel to support a congested project pipeline is an ongoing concern to many organizations. Hiring and training full-time resources and mentoring them in the intricacies of an advanced project management approach can require more time than organizations have available. Project Management Consulting firms can fill the gap between the immediate need and the organizations current capabilities.

## PROJECT ASSURANCE

Some projects are so critically important to the success of an organization that failure is simply not an option. In some cases, a past project may have been so poorly executed that management wants assurance that future projects will be more successful. An outside firm can assist in this scenario by helping to deploy advanced risk mitigation tools and providing expert scrutiny of existing project schedules.

## CONCLUSION

Project management consulting firms can bring a combination of experience, knowledge and advanced tools that are not readily available in most organizations. By combining those capabilities with an understanding of best-in-class management practices it is easy to see how the benefits realized from using a consulting firm can far outweigh the out-of-pocket investment.

PMAlliance is an international project management consulting company that helps Fortune 1000 companies improve the execution of their mission-critical projects. Using their Duration-Driven® methodology, PMAlliance enables their clients to successfully complete their most important projects-on time, within budget and to the intended level of quality. In addition, they help them achieve a competitive advantage by making project management a core competency within their organizations. PMAlliance utilizes a flexible combination of services including a Project Management Institute (PMI)-certified training curriculum, best-

in-class project management consulting services, end-to-end project management office (PMO) solutions, and proprietary software add-in tools. For more information, visit Project Management Consulting Professionals <<http://www.pm-alliance.com>>

## The Phased Approach to Project Management Implementation

Implementing a PMO can present significant challenges. For that reason, a phased approach to PMO implementation is not only crucial but also a distinguishing characteristic of successful project management consulting firms. Experienced project management consultants know that a phased approach:

- (1) helps to overcome resistance to change,
- (2) allows for lessons learned in early phases to be incorporated in systems installed in later phases and
- (3) establishes a solid foundation of available project-level data prior to rolling-up enterprise-level information. Second, successful project management consultants also know that, when it comes to designing a PMO, there is no such thing as a "universal solution." To be effective, a PMO must be tailored to your organization's project types, management/staff capabilities, and organizational culture. A phased approach to implementation allows the necessary time (in the initial phases) to gather first-hand information about project characteristics, personnel, and cultural nuances so that the delivered solution can be tailored appropriately.

### The Four Phases of Project Management Implementation

I. Initiation Phase: Throughout the Initiation Phase, project management consultants use pilot projects to build process mo-

mentum, overcome natural resistance to change, and gain first-hand knowledge of your organization. This goal of this phase is to successfully mobilize your organization, remediate any current at-risk projects, and set the stage for the next two Installation phases. During this phase, the project management methodology is introduced and software training is conducted; but only for those individuals who will be specifically associated with pilot project teams. Also, a plan for the Project-Level Installation phase is developed and key tools are created that will be utilized during the remaining Installation phases.

II. Project-Level Installation Phase: The second phase utilizes information gathered from pilot projects in the Initiation phase to roll-out structured project planning and control processes for all remaining projects, as well as to formally establish the Project Management Office. This phase can include the creation of PMO job descriptions, formal guidelines for project planning/control, a project web site, and a web-based activity update system - basically the necessary infrastructure to support the consistent, successful application of project management techniques by the PMO. Project Management Training is also rolled-out to the entire organization during the Project-Level Installation Phase. By the conclusion of this phase, the nucleus of a Project management Office is in-place, all project team members have been trained, and the project management consultants are ready to begin transitioning from their role of supporting project team requirements to supporting the PMO staff.

III. Enterprise-Level Installation Phase: During the Enterprise-Level Installation phase, tools are implemented that are focused on managing an organization's entire portfolio of projects. Examples of these tools include; enterprise performance metrics, a management "dashboard" to gain summary-level visibility to project status, and project scheduling based on limited resources and project priority (enterprise resource leveling). The intent of these types of tools is to (1) provide management with timely and accurate information about the status of the all the projects being undertaken by the organization and (2) support business decision-making that impacts the successful completion of projects such as: changes to staffing, funding, project prioritization, and workload.

During the Enterprise-Level Installation Phase, the Project Management Office staff has already begun to assume some of the day-to-day responsibilities for developing and maintaining ongoing project plans. In doing so, the PMO staff is able to free-up the project management consulting firm to focus on the design and implementation of the enterprise-level tools. By the end of this phase, all responsibility for developing and updating individual project plans have been transitioned from the Project Management Consultants to the PMO staff.

IV. Maintenance Phase: The final phase marks the important transition of the Project Management Office from the project management consultants back to the organization. In addition to supporting the day-to-day responsibilities for planning and controlling individual projects, the PMO staff will now become the focal point for providing the enterprise-level information and analysis required by management. At this point in the project management implementation process, the organization has been well trained, numerous success stories have been created and communicated, virtually all projects have well-developed project plans, and there is widespread support for investing in a formal project planning and control process. Also, the Project Management Office infrastructure is in place, the PMO staff has been trained, and management has necessary visibility to the key project portfolio-level information. Successful completion of this phase creates long-term continuity by implementing the necessary policies and incentives to permanently inculcate project management into the culture of the organization. Ideally, formal project planning and control processes will become recognized as a required core competency and an essential function within the organization.

Deliverables to Expect From Your Project Management Consulting Company Phase 1 - Initiation Phase

- \* Initial communication(s) to management and assistance in the identification of pilot projects
- \* Project Management methodology and software training for identified pilot team members

- \* Project plans and formal control processes in place for all identified pilot projects
- \* A library of project "templates" for use during the Installation phases
- \* Standardized project coding structures and project-level report formats
- \* Finalized requirements and a plan for the Project-Level Installation phase

#### Phase II - Project-Level Installation Phase

- \* Network-based, structured project plans and formal control process for all targeted projects
- \* Rollout of PM/software training to all project leaders and team members
- \* Training and mentoring of PMO personnel
- \* Implementation of the initial PMO infrastructure
- \* Finalized requirements and a plan for the Enterprise-Level Implementation phase

#### Phase III - Enterprise-Level Installation Phase

- \* Implementation of the enterprise-level PMO infrastructure
- \* Turnover to PMO staff of the day-to-day responsibility for developing and maintaining individual project plans
- \* Finalized requirements and a plan for the Maintenance phase

#### Phase IV - Maintenance Phase

- \* Turnover to Project Management Office staff the responsibility for supporting all of the project management requirements of the organization
- \* Recommendations to management for policies and incentives required to permanently establish project management as a core competency and essential function

#### Conclusion

Without a doubt, the design of a Project Management Office must be tailored to the specific needs of its organization in order to be effective. A universal "cookie cutter" approach does not recognize differences in project types, management, or staff capabilities. As a result, standardized solutions tend to have a low probability of success. A phased approach not only maximizes the effectiveness of the project management consulting firm, but also of the organizations that they serve. It allows time in the initial phases to gather crucial, first-hand information, overcomes resistance to change, and leads to a well defined and successful Project Management Office at the end.

About Thomas P. Stevens, PMP and PMAlliance, Inc. - Thomas P. Stevens, PMP is the President and found of PMAlliance, Inc. and holds a master's degree in Business with a focus on Decision Science and is a registered PMP (Project Management Professional). PMAlliance is an international project management consulting firm that helps Fortune 1000 companies improve the execution of their mission-critical projects. For the second consecutive year, Inc. magazine has ranked PMAlliance Inc. among the fastest growing Project Management Consulting companies in the United States. Through its Duration-Driven® methodology, PMAlliance enables its clients to successfully complete their most important projects-on time, within budget and to the intended level of quality. Please visit their website at PMAlliance -Project Management Consulting Professionals <<http://www.pmalliance.com>>

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software add-in tools. For more information, visit Project Management Consulting Professionals <<http://www.pm-alliance.com>>

## Dealing With a Resistant Individual

The great insight from social constructionism is that we are not independent isolates, our reality is constructed with others as a social phenomenon.

It can be very helpful to keep this in mind when you are dealing with people who are (or seem to be) resistant to change. In order to dissolve the resistance, it is necessary not for the other person to change, but for the relationship between you and the resistant person (or people) to change. In our socially constructed world, if you change your relationship with that person, their resistant attitude will also change. As you'll appreciate, this is quite different from the standard change rhetoric which advocates persuasive communication to change the other person's point of view.

Here's what to do. Invite the person to talk with you on neutral ground. Over a coffee away from the workplace is a good start. The purpose is to enter into what I call a 'joint enquiry' with the other person.

'Joint enquiry' means that you have a perspective on the situation, and you recognise that so does the other person. By hearing the other person's perspective and by expressing your own, and being open to changing your own views, you will reach a new understanding of the situation, and with this shift in understanding comes a shift in the resistance.

Here is a four-point action plan for a 'joint enquiry' into the situation that will change the resistance of the other person.

1. Ask what their point of view is. Then summarise it back to them. If you have already heard their point of view previously, summarise your understanding of their point of view.

Lawyers and debaters often do this when they are rehearsing their arguments. The powerful key here for dissolving resistance to change is to express it in non-judgmental and non-personal terms. Don't say "You did not support the improvement to the quality system because you are not a team player," Instead say either "You did not support the improvement to the quality system because you were concerned about the impact on overtime," or "You did not support the improvement to the quality system and I do not understand why not. Can you please tell me?" Then summarise back to them what they have said to you.

2. Ask the other person if you have understood the situation accurately from their point of view. Allow them to make any corrections they think are needed.

3. Given what you have heard, explain your (amended) point of view, again using non-judgmental language. Keep your explanations free of value judgments as much as possible. Point out aspects of how your viewpoint has similarities as well as differences.

4. Agree next steps - some specific actions that you will each take, or something you are each committed to change in relation to each other. For example, "I will tell you if you do something that I don't agree with."

You may not need to go to step three, as steps one and two are so powerful.

Stephen Billing works with organisations to create dramatic change for competitive advantage. Areas of expertise include organisation design, restructuring, changing company culture, introducing new technology or new ways of working, developing

leaders and sales and sales management capability and human resources.

With over 20 years of experience, he holds a Doctor of Management from University of Hertfordshire - his research investigated the role of consultants in organisational change. He has spoken at conferences in New Zealand, Denmark and Holland, and has published articles and book chapters.

## Comfy 'Jammies and Warm Fuzzy Slippers

What can be better than getting home after a tough day at work, slipping into your most comfortable pair of pajamas and stepping into your warm fuzzy slippers? Brew a cup of tea, plopping into that well-worn Lazy-boy that knows just how to snuggle up to you, and turn on a good movie.

For most of us, what makes this scene so warm and cozy, so comforting and relaxing, is the familiarity of it all. We know our home, where everything is, how it feels, and how it will react. We've learned to turn the knob on the stove to just the right spot to get the amount of heat we need, and which doors need that little hip-nudge to close tightly.

It's that sameness that brings comfort, brings security. When we're ready to 'spice things up a bit' we buy a new pair of 'jammies, we redecorate the family room, or we buy a new 'favorite' chair. For many of us, getting to the place where we are ready to toss out the familiar for the new takes some getting used to. We may shop for a while, try on things to see how they feel, and then race back to the old stand-bys until we find that thing that is, as Momma Bear said, "Just right."

Is it any question why we rarely embrace changes that are thrust upon us by others? In your workplace, you work diligently to become proficient at what you do. You know where to find all your supplies, have a filing system that works for you, and know the best route from your work station to the bathroom. Now along comes some boss telling you that your 'system' isn't as good as it could be and you need to change. Even worse, once the change is made, you can't go back to the old way of doing things. Worse still, the decision to change is being made by others; your only input is to offer suggestions to fix something you don't believe is broken. Change is being done to you. You have no control.

Organization leaders need to keep this in mind when they introduce a change process. We're told all the time that change is good, change is where competitive advantage is found, and change is the only constant in business. While that may be true and your organization's survival likely depends upon the ability to reinvent itself as the market changes, employees by nature resist changes for themselves even while they are encouraging them for others.

What can the leader do? Develop a compelling vision of what your organization can become. More importantly, communicate that vision throughout the organization and ask for help in getting there. Have faith in your team and release their creative juices. Don't do 'change' to them. Invite them, encourage them to create the changes. Exchanging those familiar fuzzy slippers for the new stiff pair is much easier when it's your idea. Inspire your employees to want your vision and to be responsible for figuring out how to get there. Then stand back and watch as change is embraced, not detested.

Bill Gschwind is the Chief Success Officer with inPURSUIT Consulting LLC. The business owners who use his services accept nothing less than outstanding performance - for themselves, their employees, and their service providers.

When you're ready to take your business to the next level, visit my website at <http://www.inpursuitconsulting.com> for resources to help you get there.

## Monkey Business - Better Business Practices Learned Through Monkeys Num- ber 28

Kiko, a male Rhesus Macaque monkey who weighs 28 lbs., has both an indoor and outdoor enclosure. Inside he can watch Animal Planet on the TV; outside he can feel the breezes, visit with volunteers, or play on his swing. He can choose to be inside or outside whenever he pleases. There is a tunnel with a flap that swings both ways to keep the cold outside and the warmth inside (opposite in the summer time). There is one exception. When Colleen, his caregiver, needs to get in to clean and replace bedding, she shuts off access to one side while she is cleaning the other. She and Kiko are separated during the cleaning process because it makes Kiko mad to have his things rearranged. You will understand this if you have or have ever raised a teenager. You often can only get in to clean their room if they are not around.

Colleen was beginning to feel very frustrated. She had tried everything that had worked in the past to get Kiko outside so she could slide the door shut and get into his enclosure and clean it; but to no avail. And like a lot of teenagers, Monkey's tend to keep messy rooms and they don't mind it a bit. However, to keep odors and flies at bay, we caregivers must get in regularly to keep things fresh. But Kiko was on to us. He would watch us with that look and KNEW that we were not there to just visit this time. He stood his ground and is much faster than us (and yes, he outsmarted our every brilliant plan).

As human primates, we tend to be quite practiced at resistance, especially when it comes to change in the workplace. "Mainly when change has entered a persons life in the past, it usually came in the form of a loss, not a gain (at least in our version of reality). It is carried with Pain, not Pleasure. And most people equate change to something negative versus something positive." (Doug Firebaugh, "Why Do People Resist Change?" EzineArticles.com).

When a change is forced upon us, our routines and activities that we have become so comfortable with, now require conscious thought. Fear kicks in. Our "animal instinct" is to protect our comfort zone. This seems to me what was happening with Kiko when we came to take away his bedding and dirty toys and replace them with new ones.

So after a few days of resistance, Colleen declared that today would be easy. She went out to Kiko, and asked him for his help. "Honey, please, I really could use your help. I just don't know what to do. Please let me know how to make this easier for you. I need to clean your room so that you can stay healthy. I'm not doing this to be mean."

And Kiko cooperated.

In the words of Tom Balles, author of *Dancing with The Ten Thousand Things: Ways to Become a Powerful Healing Presence*, (pg.162), he says our words have power. "If you say it is not worth the effort, then it isn't. If you say nothing will ever change, most likely it never will. The antidote to helplessness is you declaration. By your declaration, new possibilities have a chance to come into being."

In the words of philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 - 1832):

"The moment one definitely commits (declares) oneself then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision (declaration), raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamt would have come his way."

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## Coping With Volatility in Your Business

Okay, the world is not performing up to par these days. While this particular economic challenge is certainly more frightening than usual...the truth is we've faced big stuff before.

And we've made big choices: Shall we give in to the volatility? Or shall we remain vital in spite of it?

Here's what I think; every day we get to wake up and figure stuff out. So today is no different than any other...although for sure the 'stuff' feels bigger.

On the best of days, you wake up strong and rested, ready to meet whatever challenges are out there. Your will is solid, your skills are honed, your confidence is up, and your spirit is filled with vitality.

On the worst of days, you wake up tired, sluggish, lacking in confidence and dreading what the day brings. Your spirit is low and it all feels too big to manage.

When the volatility of the world is taking its toll... you may feel you have no other choice but to give in to it. But the truth is...you do have a choice.

Here are some steps to consider:

1. Think of other unstable situations you've been in. How have you handled them? What inner strength did you rely on? Can you reach inside and find it again?

2. What support people did you turn to for advice on how to handle the insecurity or unpredictability?

3. Is it time to re-engage your support team?

4. Look to the SWOT as a reliable analysis tool. Identify each of the following:

S=Current Strengths    W=Current Weaknesses

O= Possible opportunities    T=Current Threats

5. Discuss the SWOT results with your support team.

6. Make careful, intelligent decisions about what to do next.

7. Take one action that will lead to a positive result.

8. Watch as your vitality goes up with each small success.

Become the one vital force that people turn to when the rest of the world seems to be falling apart.

Flo Schell, Ed.M, a former Vice President for Franchise Development at Sylvan Learning Systems, Inc, is the founder of Franchise Coaching Systems and author of Stop Selling: Start Visiting! You may reach Flo at <http://www.FloSchell.com>.

<p><b>Are You a Change Champion?</b></p>
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Think back to a time when you were really excited about something that was changing.

Maybe it was a new initiative at work or in your community, or a new idea for your family. It can be anything at all that you were excited about and anxious for the change or innovation to take place or for the new idea to be implemented.

It doesn't matter if what you are thinking about is current, recent or "ancient history" or whether it's work related or in your personal life.

Have you got a situation in your mind?

Great!

When you were living with that change and believed in the value of that change, what did you do?

My guess is that you:

? Talked about the change in positive ways

? Engaged others in conversation about the change and its benefits

? Helped other people really understand the change - so they could see it and believe in it the way that you did

? Encouraged others in regards to the change

? Kept others excited about the change, especially when they were negative or frustrated

? Supported others in any way that you could

If you have ever done any of these things, you've been a change champion, and you can do it again.

When thinking about change, especially organizational change, there are a number of things we expect or have seen those "in charge" do, including:

- ? Organizing the change efforts
- ? Supervising the activities
- ? Running things as effectively as possible
- ? Trying to keep the efforts on task and on time

These are important tasks and would be grouped into what I call change management. These are incredibly important activities that become more important the larger the change effort becomes (the more people involved, etc.). These are also the tasks that most people think about when in charge of a change.

Perhaps you also have seen people doing other things in regards to a change, things like:

- ? Helping to steer the change, perhaps through ongoing communication
- ? Conveying some sense of importance and urgency relating to the change
- ? Moving people, through their action perhaps, in the direction of the change

These are examples of what I call change leadership activities. In my experience they are seen less frequently than the change management tasks, but they are at least as important.

Read back now over all three bullet lists and ask yourself, which of these lists will have the most impact on creating real, lasting change?

Your answer might well be "all of them", and in many ways that is true - all of these tasks and activities will move a change

forward. Having said that let me emphasize a very important point. It is the first list - the activities of a change champion - that will make the biggest difference, in part because they are so often missing completely.

The good news is you have been a change champion in the past. You can do it - and you can do it again. Open yourself up to the idea that when you share a bit more of yourself, when you say more about what you believe, when you allow your passion to show through in your actions; you can make a real difference in a change situation.

Doing those things makes you a change champion.

Doing those things will allow you to make a bigger difference.

Are you a change champion? You are when you do those things, regardless of your job title or position.

So now think of all the changes around you - especially the ones you are interested in and care about - and ask yourself - will I champion this change? And if so, when will I begin?

Potential Pointer: Change, especially organizational change, requires more than management or even leadership. Change will be most effective and lasting when people who believe in and are passionate about whatever the change is champion it and nurture its development. If you want more effective change, stop managing it and start championing it!

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## How to Guide Staff Through Stressful Times - The Six Key Steps You Need to Take

How do you guide your staff through stressful times when everyone and everything seems to be falling apart? How do you keep staff focused and secure enough to stay healthy and productive? It has been said that attitude makes all the difference. Perspective is an integral part of a positive attitude.

Staff can quickly become depressed and disillusioned when they think about what they have lost because of a change. Wouldn't it be amazing if you could focus their thinking instead on what opportunities are now open to them that weren't there before?

Change is a swinging door: some things go out, while other things come in. Rather than letting them bemoan what they can't do, it would be wise to redirect staff to identify everything they can do. However, until their stress is under control, it is very difficult to help them move in a positive direction.

There are six key steps to guiding staff through stressful times. Help them to:

1. Recognize their stress responses.

It is important for staff to realize if their stress is negatively affecting them on a physical and emotional basis. Once they understand how their stress is affecting their health, happiness, and effectiveness, they will have an incentive for them to change their attitude or actions.

2. Assess their coping strategies.

They have already experienced a number of changes in their lives. It is helpful for staff to review and articulate the factors that contributed to their successful and unsuccessful handling of change in the past. This process can assist them in minimizing the recurrence of self-defeating patterns of behavior. It will also

reassure them that there are proven attitudes and actions that will be useful to them in the current situation.

### 3. Face their fears.

Stress results from what people tell themselves about a situation. Give staff an opportunity to list the fears and concerns that are the source of their stress and worry. Then have them assess whether each fear is valid or invalid. This activity will help them realize if they are making matters worse than they actually are. Once the valid fears have been isolated, it will be easier to discuss how to realistically address them.

### 4. Gain perspective.

When people are overwhelmed with stress, it is very difficult for them to "not sweat the small stuff" because everything seems big. However, there are activities that can help staff get in touch with what is most important to them. Once they can see their core values on paper, they will gain a much calmer perspective on day-to-day matters on the job. It will free them to start to imagine the opportunities offered by the change and how to take advantage of them.

### 5. Use available support resources.

People are social animals. Unfortunately, some staff may be tempted to ignore the support that family and friends are there to provide. Other staff may be hesitant to take advantage of counseling that may be necessary.

It is key to emphasize to staff that this is not the time to try to go it alone. Make sure they know what tools and resources are available and how to access them.

### 6. Take care of themselves.

Stress is a disease of choice, not chance. Ask staff to be more conscious of the choices they make that can impact their physical and mental health. This is an excellent time to review activities that can help staff prevent and reduce their stress. Help

them realize that there are many choices within their personal control. If they feel that they have choices, they are less likely to feel victimized and powerless. Encourage them to take responsibility for their own health and happiness.

By following these six steps, you can effectively guide your staff through stressful times, keeping them and you healthy, focused, and productive.

Deborah Spring Laurel has assisted managers and employees survive and thrive during difficult times of change for over twenty-five years. If you would like information about her workshops on Guiding Others Through Stressful Times, Coping With Change or Managing Survivor Guilt, please contact her at [contact@laurelandassociates.com](mailto:contact@laurelandassociates.com) <mailto:// contact@laurelandassociates.com> .

## Tracking Change - Identification & Categorization - Part II

There are numerous things we can do to help mitigate change and effectively respond to change that does occur. The bullets below outline how we can accomplish this, meet the customer's needs the first time, and in turn help better manage our projects, clients and team:

- 1) Communicate, Communicate, Communicate. Poor communication and failure to restate needs and specifications can result in misunderstandings. Without a completely clear view of the client's landscape, the project specs and all other pertinent details will likely falter in some fashion. Providing the client with a written account of all conversations, understanding of need and clear and thorough specifications can vastly improve all aspects of the project. Staying in close communication with the client about

their needs and the potential for change may allow you to better plan and react to it when it does occur. I find that regular communication, outside of a formal meeting to discuss a specific topic or project results in more useful intelligence that can be used to properly manage current and future projects.

2) Manage Change. A thorough understanding of the client's business and potential volatility should be reviewed up front during project planning. Forecasting and managing change is part of the risk management plan. Change management is not a static event. Even the best communicator can encounter change. It's how you handle and react to potential change that is important. Managing changes involves continuous awareness, being proactive in every day activities and general openness.

3) Create an Agile Development Process, Applying Short Release Cycles. Getting things in the customer's hand early and often will assist in ensuring the system will meet the intended goals. An agile approach, along with frequent client reviews may help ward off significant system changes and will better ensure the application will be in the client's hands faster, before business changes do need to occur. Along with short releases and regular client checkpoints, I like to employ prototyping for features and screens that I believe involve a significant amount of risk, typically for brand new features or those that have resulted in significant pre-build discussion. Get the client involved early and keep them involved throughout.

Additionally, systems integrators and implementers should be continually developing code in modular elements that, if required, can function independently of other requirements. Understanding up front what may change allows us to plan for change in our design.

4) Use the System as the End User. Best case scenarios and blue sky approaches to software development can lead to treachery and misunderstanding. Truly delving into the system and the client's business, as will be done in real-world use, is necessary to identify any unnecessary quirks or oddities in design. With a thorough understanding of the client's business and the offline

processes that occur in conjunction with the software screens, I recommend working with the client to develop real-world scenarios and personally using the system to fulfill the scenarios developed. This will help identify navigation difficulties, improperly labeled buttons, or issues in workflow.

5) Track the Origin and Source of Changes. In order to make improvements, we need to understand where we started and where we currently stand. Classifying changes, regardless of magnitude and type, is important. When changes surface, I don't recommend making an abrupt decision on origin, but consider the history of the project and all other relevant factors that contributed to the change. Once this has been satisfied, I recommend creating classifications for changes and properly coding all changes. If there is uncertainty on how something originated, you can poll the client and the project team. Asking the client to rate the capture and accuracy of requirements and performance in delivering a product to meet their needs can be very telling. Sometimes we are too close to the details to see the real issue or what went wrong. By involving the project team, you also broaden your perspective and create a collective interest in understanding areas needing improvement.

6) Collectively Analyze Change Request Data. With accurate reports on the frequency, timing (when in the lifecycle did the change surface), and type of requests, we are armed to make improvements. This data, just like the process involved in determining the origin of changes, should be carefully analyzed. Data patterns will help identify areas needing attention, but be sure and craft your approach to improvement in areas that you can control and measure.

7) Determine Steps Towards Improvement. You now understand how important it is to be intimately involved with your client's business; the ins and outs of the application that has just been built, you have controlled and categorized changes that have arisen, now you must look toward the future and ongoing, continuous improvement. In order to improve the client relationship, the product output that is being created and to reduce chaos that can result from change, it is critical to understand how to reduce

change in the future. Classifying several items as usability items will not tell you much, unless you identify where the usability area was introduced, what was missing/vague from the requirements that may have contributed to the issue, the client's involvement with this portion of the process, and any other supporting information that may identify what could be done differently next time. Working prototypes may take longer to create than static specifications, but the time spent up front can result in significant savings and client satisfaction levels later on. The complete cost, including the risk of not doing additional up front planning and communication, should be reviewed carefully.

The above tips will assist in reducing controllable change, identifying the source of changes and taking swift steps towards eliminating the same instances from reoccurring. Even after the system is released to the client, I recommend studying end user behavior, such as how they navigate, how they utilize the various screens and areas where they abandon the system. This data will help identify additional areas of improvement, outside those that have been specifically classified as changes. Project changes are typically positive improvements that surfaced after the project was defined. The key is to determine these improvements at an earlier stage, before they become ingrained in the project from inception.

We are often faced with nearsighted decisions that impact the schedule and cost of the project and are too quick to forget all the effects of an improperly designed system. While we all wish for projects to be completed on time and within budget, there is nothing more frustrating than rushing a system or not taking the time up front to truly understand what is needed. A lack of complete understanding will be quite evident to the client.

## Tracking Change - Identification & Categorization - Part I

The adage "what gets measured gets managed" can be applied to many endeavors. While it may not seem important initially to know why the client requested significant changes to the project, since the schedule and cost plans have been adjusted, these changes, regardless of origin, are symptomatic of a larger issue. Yes, the changes may stem from indecisive clients, or they could indicate that the original requirements were not completely accurate, thorough, flexible, or the system wasn't designed with usability in mind. In any case, it is our job as manager of the project to control change and to properly manage scope, schedule, cost and quality. I have been on the receiving end of incomplete requirements as well as seen the other angle from a systems implementer side. To me there are three main areas that change requests typically fall in:

- 1) Misunderstood Need/Business Process: Not properly designing a system to meet the client's needs stems from first not understanding the client's business to the level it should be understood. It is often then succeeded by not taking everything that is known of the business into account when architecting a technical solution.

- 2) Usability: While you may understand your client's business and have designed a system to meet their needs and goals of the project, the design may leave room for improvement. In my opinion, if an end user has to study the screen in order to understand what to do and how to interact with the page, improvements could and should be made. Not all end users will realize that the screen is not designed with optimal flow in mind and may look to adjust the way they interact with the screen to make their life easier. Software implementations are not meant to make processes more difficult or confusing, but to efficiently support business functions. While the page may get the user from point a to point b, there are often better ways to make that journey. Those who don't identify weaknesses within the system may remain silent and, while changes will not be requested by the client, your role as client advocate and PM should be to make things as easy and efficient as possible. Consequently in your review of the system and how it is being used, you may identify changes that are needed in order to optimize usage and performance.

3) Extremely Dynamic Business: All businesses change over time and the more time that transpires between system releases, the greater the chance that some component within the client's business will change. Depending on the magnitude and impact of the change, the software system being built may need to be altered as well.

If you simply classify everything as a change request or defect, you are missing the granularity necessary to eliminate changes from being introduced in the first place. The first step in reduction is awareness and a clear understanding of where the lack of clarity originated.

We are often faced with nearsighted decisions that impact the schedule and cost of the project and are too quick to forget all the other effects of an improperly designed system. While we all wish for projects to be completed on time and within budget, there is nothing more frustrating than rushing a system or not taking the time up front to truly understand what is needed. The end result to an incomplete understanding or rushed system is a list of change orders, time delays and budget overruns. A lack of complete understanding will be evident to the client or business user and will eventually result in change requests. Check back for the second part in this series, which will highlight ways to mitigate change, creating a product that is done right the first time.

## Change Mastery - Bulletproof Jacket - An Unflappable State - Keeping Your Heart Open in Hell

There are levels of leadership, just like everything else. The company can't grow larger than the vision of the leadership, so,

there's a real need to stay visionary, stay grounded, and stay mobile. At first this sounds contradictory. But it's not, It's inspirational. There are three things you need in life in order to live successfully as an entrepreneur without greed. Those three things are what I believe to be the three most important outcomes of my own self mastery journey. Those three things are:

1. Unflappable sense of personal presence here and now.
2. Inspiring and challenging vision of a great future to create what you want...
3. The ability to stay on track no matter what...

These three things affect your leadership, your relationship and your friendship with yourself. So, they're pretty powerful. What it means is that money is not the only thing that motivates you, or makes you happy. You become independent of circumstance so you stay more productive, more open-hearted and more contributory even during challenge.

By achieving these three great levels of personal mastery you'll become more resilient, adaptable to change, less emotionally fragile and easier to follow. Your leadership and intent will be clearer. Your mission and vision communicative.

The miracle of all this is that it's all totally natural. No flaky drinks or herbs or diets and you don't have to walk on hot coals to prove you are wise. It's all as nature intended. Simply the human will under your control.

There are numerous skills to achieve all this. It takes some time to learn but the end result is amazing.

Chris Walker writes and speaks about global and personal consciousness. <http://www.chriswalker.com.au> Chris helps people live the best life possible. He is a champion for human rights in community, corporate and family circumstances. His work is based in nature, but he incorporates his extensive knowledge in Zen, Tibetan Healing, Yoga and an MBA. Walker is unapologeti-

cally honest in helping organisations and individuals find harmony within themselves. His teachings around the human condition, success and happiness are astonishing in their simplicity and intuitive compassion. A remarkable insight and a resultant capacity to heal, guide and inspire people on their path. This is his legacy. <http://www.innerwealth.com>

## Change Mastery - The Time For Change is Before Discomfort Turns to Disaster

Are you distracted?

In good times, it's easy to add tasks, meetings and products or services that are not in harmony with your real mission. Check through everything that's happening right now and see where you are wasting energy. That's usually a great step. Personally, I review this every week.

Are you FIT?

FIT means that the strategy, structure and culture of your business are working hand in harmony. Sometimes the strategy is going somewhere but the structure and culture of the company are leading elsewhere. That can save you massive amounts of energy too.

People Skills

Stressed people are expensive. They don't work at their best but still consume resource. Has the pressure mounted to such an extent that personal skills in self management are not adequate. There's no use sending people off to meditation classes if they can't cope with the pressure of their work. Avoidance never fixed

anything. So, maybe it's time to raise the bar on Personal Management?

### Bad Eggs

One bad egg can stink out a room. One bad apple sends all the apples sour. So, one person gone toxic in a team, can infect the whole team. Do you have bad eggs in the team and how do you deal with it. The best strategy is a big cheque book and a wave at the front door. Bad eggs in one place can be bright red roses in another.

### Desperation

The fastest way to get rejected is to want acceptance. In business, the desperate salesperson is the one guaranteed to lose the sale. But there's a fine line. The enthusiastic salesperson and the desperate sales person are often just a few words apart.

### Environment

Nothing affects the energy of a person more than their environment. Is your office environment stuck? Maybe it's time for a repaint, a re arrangement or just a bunch of flowers on a desk here and there. Remember, mantras are the subconscious statements we make to ourselves day in and day out. So, environmental factors are the mantras. All the senses read mantras. The smell, the look, the taste, the touch, the sounds. So, look to make all the senses find a common theme, a single message told 5 different ways.

### Summary

There are no such thing as difficult times. There are however, times for clean out. When inefficiencies, greed, emotion and over consumption of energy cause complacency, nature sweeps a mighty hand. She tsunamis or erupts or storms a place. You don't have to wait for discomfort to turn to disaster, you can, simply act using the warning signs, before the s....t hits the fan.

Chris Walker writes and speaks about global and personal consciousness. <http://www.chriswalker.com.au> Chris helps people live the best life possible. He is a champion for human rights in community, corporate and family circumstances. His work is based in nature, but he incorporates his extensive knowledge in Zen, Tibetan Healing, Yoga and an MBA. Walker is unapologetically honest in helping organisations and individuals find harmony within themselves. His teachings around the human condition, success and happiness are astonishing in their simplicity and intuitive compassion. A remarkable insight and a resultant capacity to heal, guide and inspire people on their path. This is his legacy. <http://www.innerwealth.com>

## How Companies Benefit From Workplace Diversity Training

Without even needing to get into any statistics, we all know that our society here in North America is getting more and more diverse. Forward thinking companies should definitely learn to embrace diversity in the form of workplace diversity training and here are two major reasons why.

### 1) Recruit and Manage The Best Talent

If you are a corporate leader, manager or business owner, you want the very best people on your team or company. Do you really care if they are white, black, yellow, brown, red, or purple or green for that matter? The best skilled talent for the workplace can come in the form of many different cultures and racial backgrounds these days. We even see this happening in professional sports as well. Pro basketball teams now have players from China, Africa and Europe.

Pro hockey teams have been drafting players from Europe for years and even major league baseball has a few players from Asia. This would have been unheard of twenty years ago. And you can bet that the coaches for these professional sports teams made sure that all players, no matter where they came from, are able to function well together to win games.

Today, smart organizations want the best people for the jobs on all levels, no matter what cultural backgrounds they come from. Once in place, a diverse workplace must be managed effectively so that everyone in the company works cohesively without cultural misunderstandings that can result in friction. Therefore, some form of diversity training should be implemented so that companies can also function well much like the pro sports teams. Corporate managers especially, need ethnic diversity education.

## 2) Target Affluent Markets

Perhaps one of the strongest reasons to embrace diversity is that there are some very affluent consumers among certain ethnic groups. Let's take the Japanese for example. They love to travel. When I was in Egypt, I noticed that there were some Japanese tour groups with Japanese tour guides at the ancient Egyptian sites.

In eastern Canada, the leaves on trees turn red and orange during the autumn season. Japanese tourists come all the way to Canada to see this. I was staying at a hotel in downtown Toronto once and the hotel restaurant made sure that Japanese tour groups had Japanese breakfasts available. So instead of pancakes and cereal, they had noodles and dumplings. If you were a hotel and you had a chance to bring in several hundred Japanese tourists and send them out on bus tours each week during the fall season, do you think it would be worthwhile to set up a Japanese breakfast for them? Darn right it would be!

Banks in major cities like Toronto have literature in different languages now. But corporate initiatives are not just limited to ethnic diversity. Lifestyle diversity has been recognized as well. Many big corporations like banks and insurance companies,

sponsor gay pride events. They realize that the gay community has some really good spenders.

For example, Whistler, the biggest ski resort in North America, has held a special gay Whistler week. Ski vacations at top-notch destinations like Whistler are not inexpensive. Skiing as a sport is not a cheap either. The fact that Whistler can fill an entire week of gay skiers really illustrates the benefit of targeting specific affluent niche groups. If you are a company doing business in a diverse market and if you don't cater to these different markets, then guess what? Your competition most definitely will.

Old-fashioned businesses that ignore the need for both market and workplace diversity training will soon lose out in the modern business world of today. Forward thinking companies will recruit and retain the best overall talent since workplace diversity training has been implemented. These businesses will also be able to target diverse markets effectively.

Clint Cora is a diversity speaker <<http://www.clintcora.com>> , author and martial arts karate world champion. His book, "The Life Champion In You", is about how to overcome challenges and achieve life success. It is one man's journey from personal tragedy to becoming a karate world champion. More information about his speaking programs, books, videos, articles on motivation and success can be found at <http://www.clintcora.com>

## Four Keys to Change

Like many people, I have switched back and forth between self employment and a corporate job. When I worked for myself solving problems was easy. I usually fell over whatever wasn't

working and had to fix it right then to satisfy my customer. In the corporate world I rarely had the authority to make all the changes that solving the problem demanded. Mostly because the solution crossed from my group into different groups and I had to convince other managers to change their process to eliminate some contributing factor.

Why is it sometimes so hard to get the people you work with to recognize a problem with the existing process? Perhaps the following quote will help give perspective:

New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason but because they are not already common.

John Locke

In some cases the simple fact of change creates resistance to the new method, in others the proposed changes do add either time or complexity (read cost) to the current practice. This means that you must understand the process of creating change. The first step is one that everyone should be familiar with - identifying that some part of your process isn't delivering the desired results and is the reason you're not getting the results you expected. Once you know that something isn't working and why it's not working, you can begin the process of making whatever it is work again.

I propose that there are four keys to creating change:

1. Agree that your not getting the results you want:

You can't change what you don't acknowledge. Dr. Phil McGraw

I use the word "agree" because before you can start the change process, the decision makers must recognize that they aren't getting the results they want. Far too many otherwise intelligent people avoid recognizing a need for change because they immediately jump to how much cost and effort change will mean. Without agreement, no change can even be proposed because no one is listening!

## 2. Accept that your system is the problem:

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Benjamin Franklin

Again, I chose the word "accept" for a reason. No one wants to accept that "their" system, carefully crafted over time, at great cost and effort to solve problems is now, itself, the problem. Your audience may resist change because learning a new method takes time and shakes their comfort zone. The person who needs to agree may have been the author of the current system and feels a personal attachment to the system. Until the decision makers accept the the system needs to change they will not authorize the time and effort necessary to find and implement a new process.

## 3. Understand that your system will resist change:

Good ideas are not adopted automatically. They must be driven into practice with courageous patience. Admiral Hyman Rickover

People resist change for almost as many reasons as there are people. That said, resistance does fall into two main categories, first the "I like things the way they are", second, "it will cost too much". Even after you get the decision makers to sign up, the people who actually do the work will have to be sold on both the need for change and the new methods.

## 4. Remember that the person who bucks the system is the most likely to be a creative problem solver:

Reasonable people adapt themselves to the world. Unreasonable people attempt to adapt the world to themselves.

All progress, therefore, depends on unreasonable people. George Bernard Shaw

One of the hardest parts about change is that the change advocate generally has to make a lot of noise just to get the deci-

sion maker's attention. Making this noise can get the change advocate labeled as a trouble maker. Perhaps because they really are making trouble! They are questioning the status quo and in many cases they've been told by some managers that "this is the way it is, quit rocking the boat". Because they've kept on with that "courageous patience" and been ignored, they've ratcheted up the volume. One of the hardest thing for a decision maker is to remember that it's not about the messenger, its about the message.

If all this stuff is true, how do you apply it to your daily practices? With a process that works something like this:

Once you identify a necessary change to your processes or procedures, begin educating the managers who need to help you fix the problem. Before they will buy in to your ideas, they need to be shown that a problem exists and that it's serious enough to demand a fix.

Don't expect this to be a quick or easy process. While some issue may be so obvious that everyone can see the need, that's not usually the case. If it was that obvious it probably would have been fixed long ago. In many cases the problem only impacts your department and the people you need help from don't notice it as a problem or it has so small an impact on them they have just ignored it so far.

Once you get them to "agree" there is a problem you need to get them to "accept" that it's more than a one time issue. If it's just this one time, you fix it by exception. That is, you do something outside the routine process to fix it, just this once. Institutional resistance to change will make it difficult for you to prove that something needs to be done. You really have to have statistics to back up your position that it is more than just this once. How big a study you need depends on both your companies requirements and the expectations of your audience. Sometimes you just need enough back up to convince your boss that a study is warranted. Once you get the boss or the team to buy in that far a lot of the process gets easier because they've accepted the study as "theirs".

Once you've gotten your audience to agree there is a problem and to accept that the system needs to change, defining the change is a straight forward project exercise. The next big hurdle is implementing the proposed solution, and that's the last two keys.

Since we know that in physics a body in motion remains in motion until acted on by an outside force, think of the business process you want to change in the same way. It will continue on in the same direction using the same methods until acted on by an outside force. A process has "mass" that will resist change. In a process, mass is represented by familiarity. The more used to the current process people are, the more they will "like" it. Like an old coat, it's comfortable. Change means learning something new and you'll have to work hard to make that "body in motion" change directions.

As with most things, understanding the issue allows you to address it. I'm not giving you specifics about how to address your problems because your situations will vary with the kind of change, the people involved, and the degree of resistance in your organization. Each solution will need to be tailored to the particular situation but this is a sales job so use the same kinds of techniques to sell to your workers you'd use to sell to any customer. In this case you're selling a new process to the end users, your workers.

The last key is for managers at all levels. The boat rocker may just be rocking the boat to get attention, but those are rare. In most cases the boat rocker is simply an early warning system telling your that a problem is on the horizon. If you go back to the first key - agree that your not getting the results you want, the boat rocker is just the first person to see that the results are unsatisfactory.

So why include that in the solution process and why last. One element of established processes is repeatability. Recognizing that the boat rocker is part of your process to identify problems and institutionalizing the boat rocker's part in your problem identification process is one of the keys to change. If you do this, you are much less likely to dismiss the "boat rocker" when they

challenge the current processes and especially since the person most likely to identify one problem is also most likely to identify others. Their mind just works that way. In many cases the person who first recognizes the problem is either not trained to quantify the scope of the problem and to statistically explain the need for change or they don't have the time to do so because it's not part of their charter. Part of managements job is to either provide that training and time or to do the follow up once the issue is brought to their attention.

The last thing to think about is that everything in your current process was established to fill a then current need. As your business changes and grows those processes and procedures must to be constantly evaluated and tested against the new current situations to ensure that they still fill your needs. We watched many American business fall behind foreign competitors because we didn't continuously improve our methods and processes. Unless we standardize process reviews and act on the results of those reviews we run the grave risk of loosing our position as world class businesses.

Allen Laudenslager

## Change Mastery - Being Real at Work - The Fastest Path to Inner Peace at Work

When we lack inner peace, we lack trust. We neither trust ourselves, the universe around us, or earn the trust of others. This article shares the journey toward self trust and how it affects leadership and self confidence.

Trust can't be bought. Some analysts suggest that at least 50% of productive time is lost at work because people don't trust each other.

The stress, energy and anxiety involved in leadership is demanding enough, without adding to it by getting those who need you most, offside. It's amazing how people are really ethical and even the slightest misdeed on my part, breached the trust I needed from them.

On Friday's we'd have drinks at the office and tongues would come very loose with a few beers. Jokes would start, and people would forget the normal barriers of hierarchy and start really telling what they knew. I learned here that in leadership, everything we do, even the secrets, are totally transparent. My secrets were never really secrets.

I learned these lessons the hard way. The added stress of trying to lead a group of people who didn't trust me nearly killed me. And deep down, the less ethical I was, the less I liked myself too. It wasn't just about the opinions of others. I truly hated the person I was and totally loved the person I pretended to be. That in turn, made me hyper sensitive, defensive and critical of others.

So much of what goes on in a business comes from the unspoken truth. I'd worked on the factory floor for many years paying my way through uni and bridging jobs. I'd listened to lunch room chat, and smoko gossip about the boss, his flirtations and misdeeds. But, when it came to working from the other side of that imaginary divide I thought I had my secrets nicely isolated from the factory floor. Not so. They knew everything and acted accordingly.

It's the same at home, but we won't go there in this article. So, what next? Well it's all too obvious now. The more two faced I became, the less I trusted others. It's so obvious isn't it. One treats the world as one treats themselves. I became obsessed with getting behind the masks people put on, but ultimately it was mine that had to be dealt with.

Inner peace is a precious jewel and with all this drama I set off to find it and achieved quite easily. However, that too was a mask. A veneer I placed over myself at night or in the morning, or

even a fake smile during the day. To me at that time, the world was a shitty place, and my inner peace was my only escape.

Real Work comes from real people. The unique thing about getting real in life is that you start to laugh at yourself and your old habits. You start to see that who you are as you are is ok. Then the need to do things that are outside your own and others ethics drops too.

I got real by immersing myself in the real world, rather than try to win enough money to escape it. I started to see the beauty of life, and people and therefore, me.

Now, at this time it's all too easy to say, "I'm enlightened" or "I made it" but that's not true. That'd be unreal. Nobody "makes it." All that happens is that you learn what's real and what's not. You learn what is fake and what is real. And you get to find this inner stillness which is sort of unbreakable. Then, for me at least, you start living. Real.

I think real living begins with real work. Turning up at work already happy. Already fulfilled. There's no substitute for it. Now, I wouldn't give this joyful inner stillness up for anything. And the greatest part, is that life itself is the source of it.

Understanding creation, natural law, you understand the inner workings of the human mind, the human heart and the world around it. You become a spiritual realist. Then, work is just an extension of nature.

Live with Spirit

Chris

I really want to open your heart to a different rhythm of life. I have done many practices to achieve inner peace, they were good, but fragile. Now, I have found stillness because life has become my meditation. I would love to share how. You see, once I thought my expectations were the best barometer of goodness.

Anything that wasn't good, needed to change, or be fixed. Now, I know nature, natural law, creation. And I realise that with self-honesty, I can hold my inner peace, my stillness, wherever I go, not just on my cushion in the morning and night. <http://www.chriswalker.com.au> and <http://www.innerwealth.com> - This is what I share.

## Q&A - Richard Payne, BBC

(The last couple of years have seen a major transformation at the British Broadcasting Corporation - the world's largest broadcaster with an annual budget of over \$6 billion. We spoke with the man overseeing much of that transformation, Richard Payne, about the programme's objectives, the challenges he and his team have faced, the role played by outsourcing and offshoring, and what's next for finance at the BBC.)

**Q:** Richard, over the last couple of years the BBC's finance function has been through a very significant transformation programme. What was the objective of this programme and what were the drivers behind it?

**Richard Payne:** There were two basic drivers behind the transformation in the BBC since 2006. The first driver was really a reduction in the cost of finance, so an efficiency objective. We judged that finance was running at circa 2% of revenue, and we wanted to bring it down to less than 1% of revenue, which was a more appropriate benchmark. So that was one key driver. The second key driver was that it was judged in 2005 that the BBC was about to go through some big changes and transformation: there was licence-fee negotiation but, more importantly, its response to digital online broadcasting which was going to create some structural changes. So we needed a finance function that was capable of supporting that.

Q: And what was your own role?

RP: Let me give some context. There were two legs to the transformation: one was an outsourcing retender; the other was an internal restructuring around a shared service centre. IBM was appointed as the lead partnership consultancy for the internal transformation; I was an associate partner in IBM and from 2006 led the IBM input into this process. So from 2006 through 2007 I was programme-directing the internal transformation project. Then in 2008 I joined the BBC and have now taken over the operational running of the shared service centre and the outsource contract, and I also support the CFO Zarin Patel and the group financial controller Chris Day in the change agenda going forward.

Q: Can you give us an overview of the programme in terms of what was done, when?

RP: The programme really started in 2005, when the vision and the basic framework for what was going to be achieved were set out. There were five basic elements to the transformation. The first element was to create a management accounting shared facility in one place - not in London, but in a lower-cost location - which would support across 17 divisions. The starting-point here was that management accounting was done in each of these 17 divisions, so one leg was to create a shared service centre, and that was to be hosted in Cardiff on the BBC Wales site.

A second element was the creation of a finance partner capability in each of the divisions, so the retained finance organisation in the divisions would be based on the business partnering model. Thirdly, our base is SAP R3, so the third strand of this was to enhance our SAP capability; what we implemented was a SAP Portal which enabled all users to have a single sign-on across our SAP estate. We introduced SAP BPS - business planning system - across our production cost management, so we had a single tool that could do bottom-up cost management across all of our projects (we judge a programme - a content TV programme - to be a project); and SRM to manage a new procurement catalogue.

And what that was supporting was the fourth leg, which was self-service processes out with the users, so business users across the BBC had been used in the past to using their own administration units to do a lot of requisitions and procurement and so a lot of this change is predicated upon self-service through SAP Portal which we branded as MyBusiness. And then the fifth item - which was a key item to this - was to retender our outsource contract. We had an F&A outsourcer from the mid-'90s, which was an onshore outsource, based alongside the BBC head office, and we now tendered this to be an offshore contract, and the intention there was to create a significant saving in doing that, and also realign how we could better team with a partner.

Q: With the benefit of hindsight what would you say were the biggest challenges you encountered during the programme? And did you recognise that these would be challenges before you embarked on the project?

RP: Yes, the speed and scale of the change wasn't without its challenge... One key element I suppose was stakeholder management across 17 divisions: clearly taking away their internal finance capability and convincing them that it could all be serviced out of a central site was critical. We recognised that, and there was a lot of stakeholder management resource put into this - more perhaps than I've experienced on some other projects I've been involved in - to manage that.

Another one was: in the SAP design and reconfiguration work, it was closing down the design specs in time to be able to implement this - and again, given the nature of what we were doing, which was creating the SAP Portal, and the implications that had across the business, and developing a project-costing tool which impacted right across the business, there were a lot of changes right up until the eleventh hour (and indeed some of those still continue).

Another challenge - which we probably didn't recognise at the time - was the actual stage of stabilisation of both the shared service centre and the outsource contract. I think we may have been a little naïve in an expectation that you go through the transi-

tion and then come to a point where, hey, off you go to operate: I think the textbooks are a little light on the stabilisation phase, which is probably anything from 12 to 18 months, and that's certainly been a big issue we've addressed for the last 12 months, and I think we're bringing that to a close.

Q: Again in hindsight is there anything you'd have done differently if you could do it all again?

RP: Yes, hindsight is an interesting one... One of the areas is that I think we probably should have integrated operational management of the new environment far more into the transition phase. What we did was, we effectively had a large transition team which had consultants, contractors and some BBC folk, who were handing over to an operational team which was being recruited and staffed-up. In hindsight what we should have done is have the operational team earlier and actually had far more ownership of this. That was a key one.

Going back to my points around stabilisation: I think we should have planned to resource and put more investment into the stabilisation period; that would have made life a little easier. The other point is whether we should have staggered these changes. We tried to do - we did, sorry! - process, systems, people and outsource all in one big bang. Should we have staggered it? Again, hindsight's interesting: the problem would have been that we wouldn't have achieved some deadlines that we wanted to achieve, to get all this done prior to the BBC reorganisation which happened in 2007 under the brand of Creative Futures. So that's an interesting one, that one.

One of my colleagues in the BBC did make the point that when I was a consultant that "if you'd told us how difficult it was going to be, maybe we wouldn't have done it! But then you wouldn't have had a job... This is an interesting cycle..."

Q: You mentioned outsourcing again there, and it does sound like outsourcing has been a massive factor in the overall transformation equation: why did the BBC decide to go down this road rather than looking to keep those processes in-house?

RP: Well, the outsourcing decision was really made back in the mid-'90s, and one interpretation of why the BBC went for outsourcing back then was it wanted to implement a new ERP and chose R3, so in the mid-'90s it was going through the change of implementing a new system and also recognised that it needed to consolidate a lot of F&A processes. My interpretation is that the decision was made then that it was easier to do that inside an outsource relationship rather than trying to do it in-house. So the decision was then made and BBC folk were transferred into the outsource operation, and the outsourcer was heavily engaged in the implementation of R3.

Going forward - as part of this Future Finance transformation, we recognised that there was a good opportunity here for offshoring and that we could indicatively cut costs by around 50% by taking that step. So we felt that having got an outsource mentality, and the structure established, that we could then go into a transition into a new offshore relationship which would significantly reduce cost.

Q: Without betraying any commercial confidentiality, obviously, can you give us some idea of how you selected your provider in terms of the criteria you were looking for?

RP: We went through a full-blown procurement process and an evaluation; I think the main criteria were really capability, price - obviously, because that was a key driver for this - culture and a commitment to change. The interplay of those four factors, I would argue, was key in the final decision-making.

Q: So what's next for Finance at the BBC? How much more transformation can you undertake?

RP: What we've done is addressed the efficiency objective, so we've significantly reduced the cost of finance. Where we're going next is the finance effectiveness agenda, and there are a couple of points to this. One is, are we adding value as a finance function in controlling risk within the BBC, so that's one area that we're continually alert to. We have experienced a change in gov-

ernance structure; the BBC Trust was created in 2007 and, again, the way the BBC was run has changed, so we need to make sure that we are exercising sound financial management under that structure. We will continue on the efficiency journey under the continuous improvement banner, and we are continually looking for further efficiencies.

Another area is that of capability; particularly in our finance partnering model, we need to ensure that we do have the right capabilities working with business management in our divisions, to provide the appropriate level of financial insight and advice. The fourth area is we will be looking at our SAP and general finance systems estate, because we do need to upgrade SAP - we're not on Version 7 yet - and we do need to consider what is the future of our integrated back office? We've focused on the finance function; now we need to look on a wider scale: what is the opportunity for greater integration across our back office, and how do we apply our systems landscape to that?

Q: So a lot of work done already, but a lot of work still to do, by the sound of it...

RP: Yes, I think stability here will be a constant state of change - which is the very nature of the BBC, and why it's a challenging place to be!

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## Successfully Dealing With Change - Embracing Chaos As the Natural Order

Influenced by globalization, increasing outsourcing of American jobs through unfair international trade agreements, competition from rising economies of countries like China and India, seemingly never-ending wars (Iraq and Afghanistan), recently record oil prices, an economy weakened by a downturn in the US housing market (resulting in a shaking finance sector and a deep US recession), Americans and the organizations they work for are being forced to shake things up if they want to stay afloat.

Look at what's happening to America's once dominant auto and banking industries. GM, Ford, and Chrysler are asking for federal funds to try to stay in business, while Wall Street heavy-weight Lehman Brothers has folded. It seems that the world is in chaos. Well the truth is, that it is, but what many of us refuse to acknowledge is that it always has been, we have just turned a blind eye to that because humanity is afraid of accepting the fact that we cannot control all aspects of our existence. Even science, cannot control anything, but rather tries to understand life and events through trial and error. Control and stability in the natural world does occur, but not how we perceive it. Humanity's desire to have the world and its events conform to our worldview is a losing battle, that just brings about despair, heartache, and destruction. But, what if we embraced that change/chaos is constant and that we can at best try and predict change by analyzing trends?

A key concept that humanity has to acknowledge is that change/chaos is the only constant in life, therefore being able to predict and adapt successfully to trends that allow for change is essential to survival and success from the individual to the organizational level.

I invite you to listen to what Harvard professor John Kotter has to say about change. After all, aren't all of the issues that I outlined to begin this piece caused by changes in the marketplace or world conditions?

You, I, and our organizations must shift our thinking from safety and stability to one that embraces the notion of change/chaos as the only true constant in our existence.

Dr. Barrett has an earned PhD in applied management and decision sciences, with a specialization in leadership and organizational change. He also holds a MS in organizational leadership and a BS in organizational management. In addition to these degrees, Dr. Barrett has completed several executive certificates focusing on various areas of management and leadership development.

Dr. Barrett is proud of his academic accomplishments, as they are the product of his long and sometimes difficult journey out of poverty. Along his journey, Dr. Barrett served honorably in the U.S. Air Force, participating in several vital overseas operations in the Middle East and Europe. He has also taught organizational leadership courses at the graduate degree level at Mercy College. This desire to develop leadership whether it be in myself or others is what drives Dr. Barrett. Dr. Barrett currently lives in NYC, where he runs The Barrett Center for Leadership Development, LLC (<http://www.TheBarrettCenter.com>) and produces The Barrett Leadership Blog (<http://www.TheBarrettCenter.blogspot.com>).

## Setting Goals With Lean Thinking

Lean is not a set of tools, a set of procedures to follow, or a series of logical steps. Lean is a thought process, a culture, and belief system. So the most important thing is how to change the thinking in your organization so that lean happens. First we need to identify our goals. For this we use position goals.

Instead of looking at how to change a situation from the outside we examine it from the inside to discover its potential energy and find the energy flows. In other words, we need to determine the natural forces of flow or the starting point position of the situation and then use this flow to achieve the results we desire.

As we implement lean, the focus is not on the lean tools but instead our own thinking of what the customer needs, wants, and values. We look for ways to build flexibility into the system to handle the variation in customer demand instead of forcing the customer to fit their demand into our system. We look for solutions that increase flexibility and create a more agile system. Your thinking governs your performance. So, if you fail to change your thinking, you have failed to truly implement lean.

When we start with the right goals, we are working towards the right answers. The result is to end up with the right solution to the right problem. If you understand the flows inside your organization then you are half-way to thinking lean. The other half is to understand how to use those flows and the lean tools to achieve your goals. That is the power of position goals and lean thinking together.

Chris Anderson, President of <http://www.Bizmanualz.com>, has been at the forefront of deploying lean business best practices since 1995 delivering Policies, Procedures and Forms; lean ISO quality systems implementation; and strategic marketing services to help business owners achieve the growth and expansion they envision.

**Change Leadership - The Keys to Success**

You may have been selected by your executive to initiate and see through some change program in your organization. Or you may have decided that the time has come to make your mark by dusting off the cobwebs in your workplace. However your change role came about, you have a challenging task ahead of you.

Consider this sobering thought. In spite of the importance of successfully implementing workplace change for maintaining your business's competitiveness, most change initiatives fail to deliver the expected organizational benefits. This failure occurs for a number of reasons:

- \* absence of a change champion or one who is too junior in the organization
- \* poor executive sponsorship or senior management support
- \* poor project management skills
- \* hope rested on a one-dimensional solution
- \* political infighting and turf wars
- \* poorly defined organizational objectives
- \* change team diverted to other projects

Do you recognize one or more of these in your organization from previous initiatives? You have probably experienced already one major cost of such failure. The cynical and burned out employees left behind only make the next change objective even more difficult to accomplish. It should come as no surprise that the fear of managing change and its impacts is a leading cause of anxiety in managers.

Your first step in becoming a successful change leader is fully understanding your organization and matching the initiative to your organization's real needs. This means not just adopting the latest management fad. Recognize that bringing about useful and meaningful change is fundamentally about changing people's behavior in certain desired ways. It is not primarily about installing a new system or rearranging the organizational structure. If people in the end do not behave and work differently, then the money and time spent in "doing stuff" is wasted.

You will see from the above list of reasons for failure that lack of technical expertise is not the main impediment to successful change. Leadership and management skills, such as visioning, prioritizing, planning, providing feedback and rewarding success, are key factors in any successful change initiative. Concentrate on these skills that will help you get people on board and to keep them on board for the life of the project and beyond. Get your mentor or a training consultant to perform an honest gap analysis on your skill set and then get the coaching or training that you need.

Whatever change program you are implementing, one key area in which you need to pay close attention is the identification and management of your change program stakeholders. A stakeholder is any person with an interest in the change process or the outcome of your proposed change. Be politically savvy. Your stakeholders will bring a mix of competing interests and will often act to further their own power, influence and survival. An added challenge for you as change leader is that such political maneuvering is often disguised as impartial and rational argument. Think about who are your major stakeholders. Think about what you will say to them to get each of them on side. When you have done that, write up a stakeholder communication plan and make sure you follow through.

Another essential activity you would do well to not neglect is setting clearly defined and measurable objectives. Goal setting done well engages stakeholders and commits them to the program. Other benefits include focusing effort to where it is important and providing a yardstick for measuring program success. Are your program's goals fuzzy and hard to put a finger on, or are they specific and measurable? Do they link to the strategic objectives of your organization? Get all of the key stakeholders to work with you in devising the goals that will define the success of your program. Getting their input during the initial stages will give them a genuine "stake" in your program.

Fundamentally, it is people and not money or infrastructure that will make your organizational change happen. Change initiatives fail where roles and responsibilities are left unclear or not

agreed. In organizations with a toxic performance culture, many employees and managers spend much of their time and effort in hiding from responsibility. What are the key roles and responsibilities for bringing about the needed change in your area? Have you identified the key tasks for each person belonging to each of the four key change role groups: Change Driver, Change Implementer, Change Enabler and Change Recipient? Selecting the right people for the right roles is also critically important. Find out all you can about selecting, leading and managing teams.

I mention teams here because no matter what your change program is about, most likely the people working in the various change roles will not be working in isolation. More and more, results can only be achieved through people working collaboratively - in teams. Are your teams of the optimal size of around five to eight members? Is each team being led by the right team leader? Do they have the necessary technical and interpersonal skills? One reason why teams are much more productive than individuals working in isolation is that team members leverage off each other's strengths and compensate for each other's weaknesses. So, do your teams have the right balance of natural working styles? There will be times when one or more of your teams get stuck. When they hit a brick wall, make sure that you have a strategy in place for moving them forward. As you have already guessed, a permanently stuck team leads to a permanently stuck change program.

All this talk about the value of teams highlights the importance of training in skilling up teams and bedding in change. Many organizations, however, fail to benefit from the resources spent on training. Soon after the training is completed, employees continue to cling on to the old way of doing things. Review how successfully your organization is using training to improve people capability. Ensure that your change program has a well-articulated training plan based on a thorough analysis of skill gaps. I said that successful change is about changing people's behavior. So, make sure that your training programs focus on behavior change and are not simply about delivering the most content in the shortest possible time. To help bed in the new behaviors, budget and plan for lots of back in the workplace support. Change will not happen if your

managers do not actively support the training. Make sure that they "walk the talk" and are not simply feigning approval in front of the executive.

Even if your training is well delivered and supported, a proportion of your employees, customers and suppliers will resist your change efforts. Unless you have a well thought out strategy for dealing with negative reactions, these resisters will wear your program down until it fizzles out or ends with a bang. Find out which of your resisters are actively fighting out in the open and which are working from the underground. Sometimes the reasons given for resisting change are a smokescreen. In these cases, you will need to do some digging to reveal the real reasons for the resistance. In some instances, resistance is a natural reaction to the proposed changes. Help these people work through the psychological process of denial, resistance and finally acceptance. Importantly, develop a strategy before implementation for identifying sources of resistance and for turning it around.

You have before you a huge task fraught with uncertainty, but filled with incredible opportunity. The above guide to being a triumphant change leader is not the last word on how to bring about successful organizational change. In fact, it is just the beginning for you. Read all you can about leading, coaching and influencing people through change. Your most important and rewarding lessons, though, will be learned as you apply your new found knowledge to your real-life change initiatives. I suspect that the most important lesson that you will learn is that to be successful your change program must not be your change program. I wish you well on your journey.

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About the Author:

Leslie Allan is Managing Director of Business Performance Pty Ltd; a management consulting firm specializing in people and process capability. He has been assisting organizations for over 20 years, contributing in various roles as project manager, consultant and trainer for organizations large and small.

Leslie is also the author of five books on training and change management. Find out more about change management <[http://www.businessperform.com/html/change\\_management.html](http://www.businessperform.com/html/change_management.html)> and download the free introductory chapter to his practical guide, *Managing Change in the Workplace* <[http://www.businessperform.com/html/managing\\_change.html](http://www.businessperform.com/html/managing_change.html)> .

## UCME 1X

You see me one time. This is someone's license plate in the community that I am living. Since it is on a Corvette, at first I just thought it was funny. The more I saw it, the more it got me thinking-it's true! We make decisions all the time based on this simple philosophy.

Prospective clients normally make their decision about a company with the very first person they meet or speak to and within the first minute. WOW that is a lot of pressure! It sounds like interviewing for a job . . . wait it is!

Think about when you hire a new employee. You are very selective, want the most for the best price and try to decide if you will like the person's personality-if they will fit. Is this someone you can work with? Is this someone who your current team will work well with? Will this person be able to help us grow? Will this person be able to grow with the company? A lot of companies believe that most skills can be taught while personality cannot.

This is why it is so important to have a strong culture and to define what it is that your company stands for. By taking the time to define this, you create a work environment with standards for how decisions are made, a set of expectations for how customers

will be treated and employees will interact, and you establish boundaries of what is right and wrong.

By defining your culture you also create what your internal perception and a desired external perception of your company. The internal perception is how the employees perceive each other and how they perceive the company. Do they work for a company that they cannot stand or is it a company that they feel supported by and takes care of them?

When people hear [insert your company name], what do you want them to think? What do they need to think in order for you to turn the prospect into a client? This is your external perception or your brand. Money can only buy so much; eventually true colors always reveal themselves. This being said, why risk walking a path that will end up costing you more in the end. Take the time and do it right from the start: define your culture so your culture becomes your brand and your employees and clients are saying the same message because they WANT to.

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## Small Business Change Management

Change is an ever-present component of small business ownership. The ability for small business owners to effectively

manage change lays the groundwork for growth and helps build the foundation for the development of a positive corporate culture. What can small business owners do to make themselves better change leaders? What are the most important factors to consider when managing change?

### Have a Plan and Take Small Steps

Change is something that your small business is sure to experience. A great way to prepare yourself to manage change as a small business owner is to develop a change plan. Take a look at all facets of your business and write a simple list of strategies that take into account possible changes in each functional area. "Build a big plan with small steps. A 'big' plan isn't an enormous impenetrable document, it is the summation of big ideas necessary to build belief and overcome inertia...it functions as an overlay across the business to keep initiatives in balance" says Philip Stanley, Founder at Minutecoach in the U.K. "For the owners, small steps mitigate risk and allow fluidity of movement. If the pace of change gets a little aggressive or laggardly, you can jiggle your blocks into a new pattern."

### Communication

One of the most important components of change management is effective communication. Terri Maurer, Planning and Strategies Consultant and Owner of The Maurer Consulting Group in Cleveland Ohio believes that "communication is the key to a smooth passage of change in any organization. Getting as many people as possible into the change process, even if it involves no more than gathering input from staff through management, will do much to move the process forward." She also mentions that keeping your team "appraised of what is going on and why" should facilitate a smooth transition. "Utilize as many channels of communications as possible: face to face meetings, company memos, e-mail, newsletters, company intranet, etc."

Vijay Shah, Engineer and Operation Manager at Bauer Controls in Detroit, developed the following list of change management best practices:

\* Communication: Every change requires communicating the goal to all who are involved. And listening to the all who are involved

\* Humility - Understanding the constraint of your resources and making sure you do all in your power to accommodate.

\* Democratic dictatorship - As someone said, "The Roman empire was not created by committee", you need to communicate/listen but then take quick decision. It may not satisfy everyone but it will allow you to move forward knowing that you communicated with humility.

\* More Change Management Ideas

I will leave you with a few more ideas on change management derived from "The Biggest Mistakes in Managing Change" (Carol Kinsey Goman, Ph.D.):

1. Appreciate and acknowledge the importance of people in any change initiative. "Organizations don't change. People do -- or they don't." Whenever possible, include your employees in any change discussions and recognize that each person may react to a specific change differently. Let people know the reasons for change and include them in any change planning conversations.

2. Treat change as a "mental, emotional and physical process" as opposed to another business "event". Acknowledge the fact that change may be a very emotional process for your team.

3. Direct, honest communication is the best policy. Don't attempt to "protect" your employees by withholding facts about any pending changes or trying to spin doctor the details. Also be aware of communicating change in a timely fashion - people are smart and will figure out pretty quickly that something is up. If you create an information vacuum by ignoring the need to communicate changes quickly, your team will fill the vacuum with their own interpretation of the changes are taking place.

4. Believe in the potential of your group and their ability to embrace change and flourish. "Trust in the innate intelligence, capability, and creativity of your employees -- and people will astound you."

Mark Smiciklas is a Vancouver Marketing Consultant. His firm, Intersection Consulting, helps small to mid-sized businesses address challenges in the areas of marketing, management and business development.

To find out more about Intersection Consulting, please visit <http://www.intersectionconsulting.com>

For more thoughts and ideas on marketing and management for small business please visit the Intersection Blog at <http://www.intersectionconsulting.com/blog>  
<<http://www.intersectionconsulting.com/blog/>>

## Corporate Tai Chi Now - 7 Elements to Show Why Five-Minute Corporate Tai Chi is Profitable Now

Corporate Tai Chi is the business application of tai chi, a martial and meditative system of exercise. It holds many alternatives for the corporate world as a stress management tool and an attitude enhancer. For those unfamiliar, tai chi is the slow, fluid movement originating from China, practiced at parks, studios and beaches throughout the world. It has been taken to the corporation because of its synergistic fit and cascading benefits.

It has been demonstrated worldwide that certain drivers predict employee productivity which drives profit. I will touch upon seven: stress, recognition, leadership, benefits, environment, economy and industry competition. They are all related to each other, one affects the other and they are all affected positively by corporate tai chi.

STRESS

People become stressed from not having a "relief valve" system in their corporate structure, no matter how much they enjoy their work. Corporate tai chi offers this relief. Daily, there are studies citing how stress at work is directly related to revenue stream and how employees function at a higher level without it. So one could conclude that less is more. Less stress, better health and on-task focus. Better health, less sick time. More time on task, more productivity. Better focus, higher task completion. More productivity, more profit.

### RECOGNITION

It is a known fact that one of the biggest drivers of productivity is employee recognition. Many people say that the number one reason they leave a job is because no one has praised their worth, that they are invisible. The installation of enhanced working conditions such as corporate tai chi or other mind/body programming is one way to recognize employee worth, comfort and value. This is demonstrated by the popularity, low turnover and stability of companies today, like Google, best-known for giving this holistic type of recognition. Less turnover, less expense. Less expense, more profit.

### LEADERSHIP

The strength of the leadership in a corporation strongly influences productivity. If you are loyal to your leader, you will produce more. If corporate tai chi is installed, you will see a more balanced leadership as the program diminishes the stress levels of the leadership. If the leadership is calmer and more focused, it will be more efficient, with more presence, with better direction. If leadership installs effective programming to balance the team, productivity rises. Of course, loyalty to leadership means better work. Better work, more production, more revenue.

### BENEFITS

When you think about it, the expression "what's in it for me" may come up, whether we are attached to the principle of trade outlined in Ayn Rand's book, "Atlas Shrugged," where we agree that it is our responsibility to produce for our own benefit or whether we study humility. As employees, we look for benefits, even if the benefit is benefitting others. As leadership, we do the

same thing. Corporate tai chi is a benefit that has the potential to destress, recognize, tune up and, ultimately, increase revenue. Worth considering.

### CORPORATE CULTURE

A peaceful corporate culture is a strong one. People take on the qualities of their surroundings. Because tai chi creates balance, energy and motivation; corporate tai chi has the chance to create worklife balance and elevated culture. The peaceful result of tai chi practice has the chance to permeate the corporate environment and revitalize it. As the corporate culture grows, the employee feels more at home. The more devoted the employee, the more s/he is likely to stay. The less turnover, the less expense. The less expense, the more profit.

### ECONOMY

Most of the world does not have expertise in economy. What we know is how many jobs are available and how long it takes us to get another one if we lose or quit one. Because our economy is in stress, corporate employment is insecure. The more a company invests in the employee and her/his job, the more the employee values the job and dreads the pink slip less. If corporate tai chi or some meaningful program that directly benefits the employee is installed, people feel more secure because the company has made the investment in them. If corporate tai chi beats stress, helps focus, enhances worklife balance; employees, potentially, supercharge their production levels. If rightsizing causes people's job descriptions to inflate to accommodate the duties of the no-longer-employed; a "relief valve" tool like corporate tai chi helps overall. More productivity, more revenue.

### COMPANY COMPETITION

There are lots of statistics about how people choose one company over another factoring in benefits package, job title, location of company, the company's position and a great deal more. If company A and company B offer the same position and benefits package, but company B has a corporate tai chi program, company B would beat its competition and win the employee. This is an oversimplified look at some of what people leverage when comparing companies. Once an employee is with a company, the

more the company invests in the employee, the more leverage it maintains against its competition. The more leverage, the more stable the employee. The more stable the employee, the better work performance. The better the performance, the more revenue.

### CONCLUSION

In order to excel, we have to embark upon new territory as well as take wisdom from the past. Tai chi is an old discipline that achieves tremendous effects. Marrying it with corporate life seems to hold the values of the old with the trends of today, thus: corporate tai chi has arrived. There is a study in developmental stages to more definitely correlate corporate tai chi and increase in revenue. But the elements described above try to verify this conclusion.

Diane Gold is available for corporate and personal tai chi, kung fu, chi kung, stress management, consulting. Training is available traditionally and virtually. She has a study in development to correlate corporate tai chi and increase in revenue. For all services or if you wish to become involved in the study, or if you ha, she can be reached through [d@dianegold.com](mailto:d@dianegold.com) </d@dianegold.com> Further reading on corporate tai chi: <http://www.dianegold.com/corporatechi> Coming on Valentine's Day: the Launching of <http://www.virtual-tai-chi.com>

## Managing Change - An Occupational Health and Safety Perspective

OHSAS stands for Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series. It was developed to help organizations control and minimize Occupation Hazards and Risks. The 2007 version of OHSAS 18001 lays a strong emphasis on Change. Occupational Health, Safety Assurance Standards are today adopted by many organizations as part of their corporate governance requirements. Managing the change is not a simple exercise. Change can hit an

organization all of sudden or it can sometime be regulated and planned. An agile and a flexible organization will respond to change in much more positive way than an organization with rigid and straight jacketed setup.

It is often said that only thing which is permanent in this world is change. One like it or one don't like, change will take place. If we are prepared, we can take them in our stride and move on and if we are not prepared then change will get over us and we will be doomed. So the best way to tackle the change is to keep ourselves informed and updated. An updated person will be more aware about the world dynamics and can weather the storm in a much sober and calm way.

OHSAS 18001:2007 devotes substantial portion of its written standards on change. When an organization gets certification under OHSAS 18001 standards, it is deemed that the particular organization has an Occupational Health and safety Management system in place.

Any change will require a reassessment of operations and activities which are associated with occupational hazards. Controls are required to be reassessed so that OHS risks arising out of change can be addressed.

These New Requirements of 4.3.1 in OHSAS 18001:2007 covers the Four Important Concepts.

- \* Identification of Hazard(s) associated with "Change".
- \* Assessment of Risks Associated with "Change"
- \* Consideration of the OH&S Hazards and Risks Prior to the Introduction of "Change".
- \* Implementation of the Controls needed to address the hazards and Risks associated with the "Change".

Ineffective management of change is a leading cause of accidents in workplace. To quote US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB):

In Industry, as elsewhere, Change Often Brings Progress.

But it can also increase Risks that, if not properly managed, Create Conditions that may lead to Injuries, Property Damage or even Death. Ineffective Management of change is one of the Major Contributing Factors in many of the Incident Investigations conducted by CSB.

Virtual Web Symphony <<http://www.edunetsys.com/blog>>  
: A blog by a management and software consultant, SEO and SEM expert, E-learning evangelist and all weather Guru.

## How to Lead and Influence Change

You know for years we have held the majestic eagle as our sign of a good leader. It soars so high above everyone else, has a beautiful wingspan, eyes that can see it's prey from miles away and uncanny accuracy in getting it's food. Definitely a leader. Definitely something we should admire and look up to. Definitely the way we should be if we want to lead, right? Wrong!

I think eagles are one of the worst animals we can model after as leaders. You see, they don't play as a team. They build their nests in cliffs where no one has access to them. They take care of their young only. They do everything for their young and when they feel they are ready they just push them out of the nest and say, "fly or die" Now I ask you, is that a warm environment to work in?

We need a new way to look at leadership. You see, leadership is no longer a position, it is a way of thinking. So whether you are a secretary, a foreman, a sales person or an executive you all should be leaders. You should feel you are the master of your work space every day . And every day you should ask whether you would hire yourself tomorrow if you were the owner.

In order to be a good leader there are several key traits you need to exhibit.

First you need to be a clear communicator. You need to have a clear vision that you can share with others. Most companies I meet with have a long mission statement that even the CEO can't remember. A good mission statement should be one you can wrap your arms around and use to judge whether you did a good job today. When Les Wexner, Chairman of Limited designed Victoria's Secret his mission was "to design a store where Cybill Shepherd would love to shop for lingerie". This gave his people a clear vision of what to look for as they designed the store. Bill Gates mission is to "put a computer on every desk". This is something tangible that every person can see and can act in accordance with. One telephone company I worked with switched their mission statement to "your best friend's on the line." This way every person could make sure their voice tone, and actions matched what they would do for their best friend. Within 3 months their sales rocketed to the highest they had every had.

Now, you might be saying, but wait that is the CEO's job to come up with our mission statement. Not so. You should get together with the other people in your department and decide what is the one key reason you are all there. What is the one result you all want to see and then come up with a mission statement that fits that goal and gives passion to your team.

The second key ingredient in a leader is they are very "WE" focused. They see themselves as supporting others and working towards a united outcome. They are willing to take all blame and share all victories. They don't worry about how to make their job easier, they worry about doing what is right. If you are a true leader you will share information you have with others. You will want to draw out the best in others. Job descriptions become irrelevant. What is most important is what needs to be done to get the result you desire. You will think outside the box and work for solutions never thought of before. Finger pointing doesn't happen with true leaders. They instead want to know how the problem can be fixed. They want to know what caused it so people can learn

from it and not repeat it. They do not shame or embarrass others. They are the first to point out good things that others do.

Good leaders lead as well as follow. They don't worry about how others perceive them. They know that some of the best ideas can come from others around them so they keep their ears open. They know that in order to lead they need to continually learn so they see themselves as teachers and students at the same time. They welcome new ideas and suggestions from others.

"A leader is not someone you look up to because they are the best. A true leader is someone that looks in to you and draws out your best." Anne Warfield

And lastly, good leaders are willing to set guidelines. They know that in order to do a good job people need to know what is expected of them. They need to know the outcome they are working towards and they need to know what flexibility they have with decisions. Good leaders will share all that needs to be shared so people can achieve results. They look to shatter paradigms and see things in a new way.

So ask yourself, do you lead or do you follow? Do you take risks at your company or do you strictly follow policy? Are things going on at your company that you think should change? If so, have you taken the time to offer your ideas and suggestions? Do you take charge and work as a team?

I would like to see a new mode of leaders. Not eagles, that can be loners. From this day on think of yourself as a goose. You see, geese fly in a V formation. And since the lead position is tiring, the lead goose will fly to the back and new goose will take the front position. Because their outcome has been clearly communicated they don't worry about flying off course. If one goose gets hurt, then two geese fly down to take care of the wounded goose. They never leave one goose out to struggle on its own. Just imagine how your company would soar if it was full of geese as leaders!

When people want to know how to say the right thing at the right time, they call Anne Warfield

<<http://www.impressionmanagement.com/>> . As the leading Outcome Strategist, Anne helps people negotiate, present, sell and lead by managing perceptions, since perceptions become reality. She does this by showing you how to speak so people WANT to listen to you.

## Yet, I'm Servicing a New Generation

What do you mean ... "yet?"

"I am a product of my generation," was to let you think about where you were born, in what kind of an environment and under what kind of condition. What if I was born in the nineteenth century somewhere in 1860?

If you turn this up-side-down you get another statement: although I am a product of my time; I am servicing a new generation.

Things have changed between the time you were raised and the time you have gained your experience. The current time has its own demands in sense of what is important.

As parents have conflicts with their children in raising them this is often about different values. What was important when we were young and what is important NOW. Those parents that stick too much to the tradition of their own times cannot live in peace with their children.

In business this is not very different.

Of course a manager should contribute with what he has learned in his professional life, yet he should also open up and

consider what is the difference in the time he lived and NOW. What is currently important?

This requires some flexibility. Most of all because what is important continuously changes. In 2007 performance management was still fashionable, now it is risk management. And those who cannot capture these changes will fail as a manager. They will fail to connect with their environment, team, organization... with the people around.

The real challenge remains not to completely turn to wherever the wind blows, but knowing from what direction will certainly help the sailor (manager).

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## An Invitation to Change

When times are good and the economy is strong, business flows in and out. What I mean is - you seek (or prospect) new business and prospective clients seek you out. Many business owners will say that growing their business is easy during these times. However, when times are softer and they have to pull the business in they don't do as well. Many really struggle.

When a salesperson has been humming along, working their system for a while, they may find their system becoming ineffective. Or they've grown their base so much that the prospect field is shrinking. In some cases they've spent so much time adding clients they've been neglecting the ones they have.

The way I see it, these are invitations to change. The reality is this - nothing stays the same. Times change, people change, needs change, the economy changes. The best approach is to be

open to that change; really to be expecting that things might change. Then when it happens it won't be so surprising. You'll be more open to going with the change, rather than fighting against it.

As we visit each scenario you'll notice a theme. Keep an eye out!

1. Difficulty with the pull of sales.

The way to combat the difficulties of gaining business only through the pull is to master that process. When things are good - when you don't need it as much - it's easy to get complacent and relax. Unfortunately, it's not the best idea. If you realize that you always have to be selling, that you can't rely on the random request, you will be at ease with the selling process. Then, if the time arrives where the only business out there is business you go get, you'll be skilled at the process.

2. Mark Twain said, 'If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you always got.' Well, not in this case! There's a big danger in sales of getting too comfortable with your process. What happens is you lose your fire, your edge; you get stale. The result is fewer sales. So, what do you do to prevent this from happening? Keep an eye on your process and change it up. Develop different strategies. Keep things interesting by changing HOW you do what you do.

This same principle applies to the problem of a shrinking prospect base. The one you are used to targeting has shrunk - no doubt. But, if you have different strategies that include targeting different prospect types, that field will remain big enough to hunt in.

3. When you are so invested in adding clients that you neglect your current clients, you run a huge risk of losing them. Change your focus - or I should say split your focus between sales and account management. Both activities are essential to business growth. And consider this - there may be more business to gain

from current clients. You can grow your business right where you are!

Now, did you notice the theme? The invitation to change occurs during the process - not once the problem has appeared. Did you see it? The solutions I discussed are designed to keep you out of trouble in the first place. I invite you to change your methods so you are always ahead of the curve, on top of your business, growing all the time no matter what environment you find yourself in.

No need to RSVP! You'll know if you've accepted my invitation by your results!

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## Work Smart - Live Long

Whether you are a pigmy in Aftica or an NBA champion earning \$20 million a year, a good days work is equally important. When work is bad, we lean on our family and that pressure usually

creates its own disasters. So, I am here to bring a little consciousness into the way you work. (If you need it)

Work has to be fun. Even the President of the United States has fun and compared to our little jobs, that's a big one. The fact of the matter is that if you don't enjoy your work, you sabotage it, or you.

So, I'm talking to leaders about designing good jobs right? Wrong....

I'm talking to you because it's you who decides how to react to your circumstances. It's total BS to say that we can all have perfect, creative, wonderful work days, everyday. That's just not real. However, what we can have is an attitude that can turn the most shitty situation into a blessed one.

It doesn't matter how ugly your boss treats you, or how much boredom you measure in your work. It's up to you, and your attitudes, to fix, change and take control.

Running from job to job looking for bliss is a fools game. Every job has its ups and downs. Sure, we want to evolve toward bigger and better things, but if you run from hardship, it's like getting the toilet roll end caught in the back of your pants. You just bring the problems with you.

So, I teach independence. Independence from other people's stuff, and independence from your own stuff. Yes, independence from your own emotional ups and downs, rationalisations and blame games.

### Step 1. Turn up happy

When you walk in the door of the office, how do you feel? When you sit down to your desk what's the first thing you do? When you break for stretch time, what do you eat or drink or smoke? You see, many people commit self sabotage right from the start of the day...

## Step 2. Do it good

Doing a good job is such a mess. What's good and who said so? If the client isn't happy, did I mess up? Or is it the client? If I did my best but it wasn't good enough, whose fault is that? The key here is in improvement. Too many people think they reached the peak of their performance instead of realizing that they are at the bottom of it. There's infinite room to improve, everyday.

## Step 3. Balance

Balance what? If you enjoy your day's work, then balance means time away doing other things. But if you hate your job, or the people in it, or you worry till your nose falls off, then, balance takes on a whole different and dangerous meaning. You'll probably hit the bottle or go to yoga. But nothing is going to balance a person who hates their work, or who plays victim to circumstance.

## Step 4. Get a life

You are not this machine that's split into bits that are independent of each other. Your health affects your work, and your work affects your relationship and your relationship affects your money. So, when people suggest you learn to partition your life, tell em to shove it. Of course, if you are an emotional fruit cake and can't deal with your emotions then partitioning is a survival skill and until you learn to get over your ego faster, then you may have no option but to partition your emotions.

## Step 5. Compete

It's a dog eat dog world. Walk down the street with money dangling out your pockets and you'll attract hyenas. Learn to compete with the world and people around you without trying to beat them, or wish them ill. There's a way to improve your performance without beating people. You can win without wishing people ill. In fact, the more you help others to win your race, the faster you'll go. Go figure...

## Step 6. Learn to Shut down

My friend does yoga. She thinks and talks and her eyes glance everywhere. So really she looks like she's doing yoga but really she's just adjusting her body while she thinks. Yoga, meditation and shutting down are skills to stop, or at least focus or slow your thinking. This is real rest. Now, anyone can do this sitting on a cushion in a Himalayan monastery a million miles from reality. But can you do it when all around you is gone to crap? That's the art of shut down. Nature is the best teacher.

### Step 7. Keep your Power

Every time you react to a situation you empower it. Everytime you react to a person, you empower them. Better not to empower people by reacting to them. You don't do them a favour by empowering their dumb side. Better to empower people by acknowledging their gifts. Delinquent youth learn how to get a reaction from negative behaviour and therefore become empowered. That's only because the opposite didn't work. So, learn the blank stare. When someone is rude or dumb, just let them have their own ideas. Hold your power, don't waste it trying to fix, mend or correct people who don't ask for it.

Work well

Chris

Chris Walker writes and speaks about global and personal consciousness. <http://www.chriswalker.com.au> Chris helps people live the best life possible. He is a champion for human rights in community, corporate and family circumstances. His work is based in nature, but he incorporates his extensive knowledge in Zen, Tibetan Healing, Yoga and an MBA. Walker is unapologetically honest in helping organisations and individuals find harmony within themselves. His teachings around the human condition, success and happiness are astonishing in their simplicity and intuitive compassion. A remarkable insight and a resultant capacity to heal, guide and inspire people on their path. This is his legacy. <http://www.innerwealth.com>

## Got Business Acumen? What is It? Why Do I Need it and How Do I Get It?

I heard a great talk a few years ago from one of the highest ranking executives at a major company. She advised the audience to think of the three words or phrases that you would want people to use to describe you when you are not in the room. Why when you are "not in the room?" In her view, many of the most significant decisions that impact your career will be made by others when you are not in the room. Whether you get promoted or not, or win the business or not - these decisions happen behind closed doors after you leave. She then advised the audience to think of the three words that people actually use to describe you when you are not in the room.

So while you are thinking of your list, I'd like to suggest that one of the critical phrases that you need is "business acumen". Business acumen represents a person's knowledge and ability to make profitable business decisions. Do you have business acumen? More importantly, do others perceive that you have it? Do people respect your knowledge and ability to make business decisions?

Business acumen is critical to your career development in any industry you choose, in every function, and at every level of leadership. If you look at surveys of what CEOs want from their CFOs, CIOs, or leader of sales, marketing, operations, or human resources, they want "business partners." I recently spoke with one CEO who says that his biggest talent challenge is finding people who have "functional expertise with general management perspective" - in other words, people with a strong understanding of your business. When customers are surveyed about what they want from the supplier sales people who call on them, they want "sales people who understand my business." When you read press releases that announce executive promotions, they frequently state that the person hired "has the business acumen to lead our company" going forward.

Developing your business acumen will create opportunities for you, while the lack of it may hold you back. So how do we develop it? To make sure we focus our efforts effectively, let's start with the definition of business acumen - a person's knowledge and ability to make profitable business decisions - and break it down into the components of knowledge and ability.

Knowledge involves an understanding of how businesses work. This knowledge encompasses understanding of customers, competitors, technology, and regulatory issues that is then translated into a profitable course of action. Applying this knowledge requires both analytical and creative capacity. Analytical skill involves evaluating alternative scenarios to determine the attractiveness and viability of different options. Creativity, applied to business issues, involves developing new options and possibilities for the future. This scope of knowledge is a necessary component of business acumen.

Ability to make decisions is the second key component. Ability to make decisions involves two elements: capacity at the individual level to make decisions and a leadership ability to engage others in decisions and their execution.

Let me illustrate these distinctions with an example of why both elements are important. Let's suppose you are deciding whether to sell shares of a stock that you own. You first apply your knowledge to evaluate the stock. You apply your decision-making ability to sell the stock. When you visit your mouse on your online brokerage account, your trade is executed. This example does require personal decision capacity, but requires zero capacity to engage others in the decision and its execution. You decide, you execute, and it is done.

Now consider business decisions like entering a new market, acquiring a competitor, bidding on a major new customer account, developing a new product, implementing a new IT system, or establishing a joint venture. Engaging others in decision-making and execution is a central piece of the puzzle. As a leader, making a good business decision involves an assessment of your organization's ability to execute it. If you decide to move forward

but your organization is unable or unwilling to execute that decision, then how good was the decision in the first place?

This capacity for group decision making and execution requires both group process knowledge and emotional intelligence. The end result is a decision that involves other people and depends on them for execution. If you proceed blindly without this input, you will make poor decisions and get poor execution.

So part of business acumen involves group dynamics. It also involves you and your personal need for approval. If you can't help a group make and execute a decision because you need their approval, you will fail. They may like you, they may or may not respect you, and you are unlikely to make and execute good decisions.

If you are committed to developing your business acumen, then I suggest you focus on three areas: building your business knowledge, increasing your self-awareness and capacity to make decisions, and increasing your ability to engage other people in a decision-making and execution process. When it comes time for your next career move and you are not in the room, your increased business acumen will be a huge advantage for you.

Ron Wilder is the author of the upcoming book, *Business Model Breakthrough: The Executive's Guide to Leading Business Model Innovation and Execution*. Is your business model broken? Download, free, the first chapter of Ron's book from <http://www.alignedaction.com/welcome/free-newsletter> to learn what you must do. Ron helps business leaders create and execute winning business models, to develop the business acumen needed to identify and capitalize on opportunities, and to take action to build successful, sustainable businesses and fulfilling lives. You can reach him at <http://www.alignedaction.com>.

## Stop Fixing the Blame - 5 Steps to Effective Problem Resolution

For some reason, whenever something fails, our first reaction is figure out who is at fault. We want to know who screwed up so we can yell and scream at them. We get so upset that something went wrong that we focus all our attention and resources in trying to figure out who screwed up.

How does placing blame make anything better? All it does is force you to find fault with one of your workers. In many cases, the worker that gets blamed isn't even really at fault; they simply become a corporate scapegoat. This breeds mistrust, anger and resentment in your workforce which leads directly to low productivity.

If you think about it, this really is counterproductive.

Wouldn't it be better to fix the problem? What we should do is:

1. Figure out exactly what failed.
2. Isolate why it failed.
3. Fix it.
4. Take the necessary steps to ensure it doesn't fail again.
5. Educate everyone involved to avoid future failure.

### What Failed

While this seems obvious, it oftentimes isn't. Generally we think we know what failed. In all cases, failures are either systemic or procedural. Systemic failures are caused by a breakdown in either hardware or software. It is an error that must be tracked down and fixed by specialists.

Procedural failures are far more difficult to identify. These are the failures caused by poorly designed workflows and proce-

dures. In many cases, procedural failures are blamed on systems (making them look like systemic failures) but you can always tell the difference because procedural failures are usually the ones that never seem to get fixed! For procedural failures, you need process experts that can analyze your workflows to identify bottlenecks and breakdowns.

### Why It Failed

Once you know if it is systemic or procedural you can then explore the reasons why. Could it be outdated software? Poor procedures? Outmoded processes? When you know why, you can then fix it once and for all.

### Fix It

Until you know What and Why you will never fix anything. Now that you know, spend the time and money to get it fixed correctly. The last thing you need is problems rearing their head every few weeks. You should not be fighting fires at work! You should be building value. You cannot build value if you are always chasing after problems.

### Necessary Steps

For systemic problems this means planning for obsolescence. It means planning to replace old components and systems in a timely fashion to avoid costly work stoppages. For procedural problems it means rewriting procedures and processes to ensure the smooth flow of work within your organization.

### Education

Everything you do in your business should be documented. That includes how you handle problems! Let your people know what they need to do the next time they encounter a similar problem, otherwise they will swamp your technical support.

### Conclusion

Now you have some tools that will help you to stop fixing the blame. Start fixing the problems in your business and you will be amply rewarded for your investment.

FREE e-Course that will teach you how to virtually eliminate your computer costs at NearlyFreeIT.com <<http://www.nearlyfreeit.com>> .

Business technology coach Louis Rosas-Guyon <<http://r2computing.blogspot.com>> teaches you how to eliminate 90% of your computer costs without sacrificing quality or performance. Louis is a business technology coach with a 10 year track record of helping his customers work smarter.

## Motivating Change - Resistant Employees

In business today, change is inevitable. Not only is it inescapable, but the speed of change seems to intensify as each day goes by. What this means to your business is that you really need the performance of every person in your company to constantly be on the upswing. So you can imagine how important it is that executives, management and supervisors alike take a constructive approach towards change management in order to consistently drive these improvements within your organization.

Now, change is growth, so it is generally a positive circumstance for your company, but nothing kills change like the resistance of the people within the business. How do you overcome employee resistance? Good question. Frankly, it's pretty difficult to get people on board with change if they really don't want to embrace it. There is no doubt that change is difficult for many people, and often you will hear employees lament about company transformation with sad reminiscences of 'the good old days' - and

by that they mean the 'good ol' "pre-change" days'. Just listening to these stories brings visions of productivity trickling away like sand through your fingers. No one wants to see that. So leaders within a transforming company need to find ways to effectively manage the change. So how can your company create an effective change strategy that trickles down from top leadership into implementation by management and team leaders? Let's take a look at a few techniques that have worked for us and our clients:

1. Be upfront with your people. As soon as you know that change is a foot, you need to begin preparing the people in your company. It's no big secret that one of the best ways to overcome resistance to change is to inform people about the change effort in advance. Let them know what is coming up, how this impacts them, what you want and/or expect from them in relation to the change and the anticipated time frames. Being honest and clear in your communications is the key to setting the stage for successful change and helping your people to feel calm and collected about their situation.

2. Keep the lines of communication open. Communicate often and regularly about the change within your company. In order to achieve a constructive change environment, it's imperative that you know how to communicate the changes to your team. Continually explain what you want from the people within your business, and allow them to openly communicate their concerns, issues, fears or perceived challenges related to the change. Honestly explore those thoughts with them. After you've made the decision for change, it's a strategic move to ask for your team's thoughts and participation in implementation. Encouraging your people to find innovative solutions for managing your company's change has double benefits. Not only does it bring inventive solutions to the table that might never have been considered, but it also empowers your people to feel a sense of control and comfort during the acclimatization period. Win-win for everyone.

3. Be clear about the need for embracing the change. If you observe your people showing resistance, speak openly and honestly to them about this. During a major company transformation is not the time to "pussyfoot around" and worry about further

upsetting dissatisfied people. If you need them to embrace the change, it's only right that you communicate the importance to them and make sure that they understand the consequences to both themselves and to the company as a whole if they continue to resist. There is no bite in the message unless defined consequences are communicated clearly.

4. Allow accountability. We are all personally accountable for the manner in which we decide to handle change. It's important that you don't take responsibility when some of your people are not embracing the change within your company. You can not make people do what they don't want to do. It's important to be clear with everyone, to care about their feelings and the issues they are facing, but in the end, each person needs to be personally accountable for either stepping up or stepping out.

5. Be Realistic. Lastly, know that if your people are putting up a lot of resistance to change, the likelihood is that this roadblock will always be there. Don't expect a sudden "a-ha!" moment where they see the light and out of the blue embrace the change. Some people may "go along to get along", but they won't be happy and they won't end up supporting the change. Productivity issues, absenteeism and conflict are all signs that you'll have to watch for - they mark resistant attitudes.

Change in today's business climate is simply a fact of life. There's no doubt that in order to be a real contender, your company has to change with variations in the market. To ensure that your business culture is a driving force for productivity, it's imperative that you have people who are able to adapt to these changes easily, and without resistance. Creating this sort of affirmative change management culture is not always easy, but definitely worth it. Take the time and make the effort to learn ways to effectively manage the change in your company. Your productivity results and profit margin will be a glowing tribute to your efforts.

Linda Finkle is a leading expert on organizational communication strategies and human potential development. As CEO of her executive coaching firm, Incedo Group, Linda has helped countless leaders build internal communication and conflict

resolution strategies. She brings about changes in attitude and leadership style that yield dramatic results. Company profitability is an inevitable side effect. Learn more at <http://www.IncedoGroup.com> <<http://www.incedogroup.com/>>

## Consciousness at Work - A Personal Survey

1/ Do you have a lot of emotional ups and downs around your work life?

2/ Do you have uncertainty about your future security?

3/ Do you use the words hope and pray a lot at work?

4/ Do you go home more tired at the end of the day than at the start?

5/ Are you thankful for what your job provides?

6/ Is it easy for you to take a few minutes and calm yourself each hour or so?

7/ Do you see goodness coming from what you do?

8/ Are your relationships at work and with clients harmonious or fake?

9/ Are you always looking forward to doing something else even when you are at work.

10/ Are you drinking more than 5 cups of coffee or 5 glasses of wine, beer or spirits a day?

So, lets review each one

1/ A yes here means you are killing yourself at work. It's personal sabotage and it'd be wise to get your papers, finances and personal relationships in order. This consciousness leads to an early death.

2/ Uncertainty about your future means that the financial success of the business controls your personal financial security. If so, you're operating at the lower end of human consciousness and this is going to lead to desperation in either physical or financial terms. It is far wiser not to hinge your life on the day to day, month to month success of your work life.

3/ These words have their place. But, when it comes to hanging the success of a business on hope or pray for it, you're placing the responsibility for destiny in the wrong hands. You were given the power and skill for success at birth. Try lowering the risk profile of your work / business circumstance.

4/ A yes here is a warning. No partner deserves to be treated as the home care service. Work these days is 90% mental and good mental practices will lead to good use of energy. High tension, emotion and boredom lead to exhaustion so, this tiredness is a warning that you are not managing you mind or your metabolism well. Suggest you change your exercise program, diet and though process at work.

5/ Thankfulness is a choice. Even the worst situation has a perfect balance of positive and negative so, there's always something, 50% of things, to be thankful for. Focusing on the bad news attracts more of it.

6/ One important skill for living and working with consciousness is the ability to shut down. These days TV and alcohol form the process but they are not totally effective. 10 minutes in a deeper state of calm and non activity has the equivalent benefit of 5 -6 hours of TV. So, you can certainly see the benefit of stillness sessions at work. That's conscious.....

7/ I state repeatedly and primarily from experience that personal happiness comes primarily from good work. Now, we can't obliterate the challenges from work but, if we believe the work we do is worth doing, in other words, is a worthy use of our time, we'll breeze through the challenges like a bird. But, if we think our work is fruitless, has no real meaning or even has negative social consequence, nothing we do outside that work can counterbalance the affect of it. Bad work creates a unconscious mind.

8/ For me, this is the most interesting. Did you know that the most stressful jobs on earth are those that require people to smile at people who are totally rude. That means they have to fake relationships. Those professions include flight attendants, customer service desks, and nurses. Harmonious does not meet nice. It means - like a musical note, a fluctuation between high and low. The more infatuated the dynamic (gee you're amazing) the more resentful (gee you're awful). Infatuation and resentment are the unconscious ends of real harmony.

9/ Creating a job that you don't want to run away from is important. If the work is so boring and unchallenged then, people start living in the future. That's where accidents originate. There are many people who have mastered the art of being in the future and as a result forgot to pay their bills in the present and went bust. Learning to be here now is a core consciousness skill.

10/ There are four substitutes for conscious living. I mean conscious living leads to happiness and when people are unhappy they seek one or all of four substitutes for it. Those four are:

a/ Food and Substance (includes coffee, alcohol, drugs)

b/ Greed. The competitive and sometimes mindless pursuit of success and wealth for its own sake. This can also include over consumption of anything.

c/ Sex. The unhappy and bored individual will seek the source of happiness in sex.

d/ Spirituality. A happy person doesn't need it.

To get a grip on conscious versus unconscious behavior at work, just look at your life expectancy. Ask an honest doctor whether the way you are living and working is lengthening or shortening your life. Conscious people live longer.

You might also ask whether you are taking unnecessary risks and whether these are stimulated by inspiration or desperation.

Consciousness at work can really make a big difference to your success, your relationship and the length and joy of your life.

### With Spirit

After thirty years of exploration and trial and error, Chris Walker settled on the Universal Laws as a guide to life wisdom and well-being. See <http://www.chriswalker.com.au> After completing his MBA Walker packed his consulting bag and went to Nepal, India and Japan studying Yoga and Zen, and finally returned to his beloved Australia to share his new model of Business leadership, Life and Wellness. Based on the Universal Laws Walker transcribed his knowledge into the Laws of Nature, a better and more everyday way for conscious people to live in harmony. He is often known as the Spiritual Pitbull because of his Straight Talking Aussie approach to life, advice and leadership. Walker has written 8 books on the Laws of Nature including *Evolveyabastard*, an irreverent look at men in relationships and how they need to evolve to make it work. His earlier book, *Innerwealth* has remained a best selling book for business people looking for more conscious ways to manage. <http://www.innerwealth.com>

Walker confronts myth. He challenges fixed paradigms. He digs for truth. He is unapologetically honest in helping organisations and individuals find harmony within themselves and with the world around them. His teachings around the human condition, success and happiness are astonishing in their simplicity and intuitive compassion. A remarkable insight and a resultant capac-

ity to heal, guide and inspire people on their path. This is his legacy.

## Are You Voting For Change? Be Careful What You Ask For

Barack Obama campaigned on the theme of being the candidate for change. That's a message which is resonating with many. And then there is Mike Huckabee who was promoting the Fair Tax (not the flat tax). That's one concrete measure, which if implemented, would cause a dramatic change in the United States. It would eliminate the IRS and more importantly put an end to tax code manipulation by Congress. One drawback to the fair tax is that the transition would be painful.

Although people may say they want change, its human nature to resist it. We're creatures of habit. We like ease and comfort. Many people stay in jobs they hate because of fear of the unknown and fear of change. How many do not stop smoking or shed excess pounds because the process of getting to the goal is uncomfortable, painful, or downright scary.

And then there are the changes in the US and global economy. We can no longer rely on bank, financial markets and blue chip stocks. Gas prices have soared and have come down. People were flocking to high fuel efficiency cars. Now that prices are substantially lower, they may need to change their thinking again.

A few months ago, my good friend, Rev. Angela Harrington Rice, announced "Life Designs 2008" which facilitates change and self actualization on a personal level. Angela's announcements included the statement "Change is good and inevitable". I think all would agree with the inevitable part, but there may be some debate about how good it is. And, most would agree that there are

many things that other people, our country, and the world should change. I love the saying by Mahatma Gandhi "Be the change you want to see". It puts the onus back on us.

Companies putting in new technology, software or systems would do well to incorporate change management programs. People like to feel like they're an expert in their jobs. A change in new systems and technology will inevitably require employees to learn new skills or to do things in a different way. So, another consideration when implementing software is business process re-engineering / improvement / management. New systems may have great potential benefits. But if it is not used, circumvented or resisted, companies have wasted time and money to implement.

The cure for most of what I call "post implementation distress" is an assessment, diagnosis, and remediation service. Key parts of the cure and healing process are change management, process improvement, documentation and training.

You may be a high achieving senior manager or executive, leading your company through uncharted waters. And you probably are very good at what you do. But on a personal level, how well do you adjust to significant change? Change is not easy even for a superstar. If you're voting for change, you want it to be as effective, successful and stress-free as possible.

Ideally you had good project management and governance (Independent Verification and Validation -IV&V) on the front end. And ideally you have budgeted for resolving people issues at the beginning of the project. If you've already implemented, wouldn't it be prudent for your organization to get the cure for Post Implementation Distress? Or, at least incorporate a change management program?

Got Post Implementation Distress?

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12 Sins of ERP Implementations

Visit <http://www.CurePostImplementationDistress.com>

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"Reducing The STRESS of Software Implementations Worldwide"

## The Runaway Project of Doom

The first step to take control of a run-away project is to evaluate your goals. What are the stated goals of the project? Then you need to figure out why these goals are not being met. Is it caused by poor planning? Poor performance? Inadequate resources? What?

Poor planning means you are in a world of misery. If you are just woefully unprepared for the job then you need to get to work and design a plan that will get the job done. The US Army teaches the 5 P's: Proper Planning and Preparation Prevents Problems. Get a plan together ASAP and get to work. Once you have your deployment plan you have to reset everything and start fresh. Good luck, but chances are you will catch endless flak for this error.

If you are plagued by poor performance from your team or suppliers then you need to look into replacing them. With the current job market in most parts of the world you can make very valid threats about firings. You don't need to be a bully but some people just don't fit into every work environment. Don't let personal relationships hinder you in this process either. I have had to

fire some of my closest friends because of poor job performance. Needless to say, we aren't friends anymore, but I blame them for that.

Whatever you do, don't be too quick to blame resources! In many cases you are asked to perform the impossible and are only offered limited tools. It happens. But this is when you need to get creative! If MacGyver could escape from anything with a paperclip then you should be able to develop an escape plan for your current predicament. First, you need to know what why you are implementing this project. What purpose does it serve? Who are you trying to please? What goals are there for this new system? Once you have that data, you need to narrow your focus to the absolute core requirements and ignore the "pie in the sky" features/requests that always seem to get included in every project. Once you know the real purpose you can start getting creative.

For example, one of our clients needed a computer server at a remote warehouse facility. We were told explicitly that we could not spend any money at all. We examined the real functions that the server would perform and we divided them into core requirements and requested capabilities. Then we narrowed down the core requirements into basic functionality statements. So, for example, the server needed to capture data from the shipping terminals which translates into the functionality statement: "retrieve and store data." Once we burrowed down to the real functional requirements, we realized all we needed was something that could store files for a short time then transmit them somewhere else. So, we simply configured an external hard drive to run Linux, connected it to the network and created our very own \$150 micro-server. We solved the problem by focusing on the heart of the requirements and ignored all the ancilliary functions that our client could live without.

Is this the ideal way to work? No. But that doesn't mean that it won't work. Just get your team together and have a serious discussion to identify the real core requirements of the project. Then focus on getting those requirements implemented in a logical sequence. Additional features and gizmos can be added in later on, as needed.

No one ever wants to hear about why you failed. Don't waste time on useless behavior, such as assigning blame. Instead spend your energy and resources on solving the problem. Then no one gets blamed.

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Business technology coach Louis Rosas-Guyon <<http://r2computing.blogspot.com>> teaches you how to eliminate 90% of your computer costs without sacrificing quality or performance. Louis is a business technology coach with a 10 year track record of helping his customers save money.

## Change Management Or How Progress Wrecks Everything

"The major advances in civilization" are processes that all but wreck the societies in which they occur."

~ Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947); Mathematician, Author & Philosopher

Every great leap forward, everything we've invented, every advance has caused major changes in how we live. As new technologies are born there are commensurate changes in how we do business. The fax machine nearly put couriers out of business. The explosion in home computer sales almost killed IBM back in 1993. The list goes on and on.

When Al Gore invented the Internet he re-wrote the rules of business. Every change in how we work causes a huge impact.

How we adapt to these changes determines whether or not we survive. Amazon.Com started as the Internet bookstore. They were a media darling with investors lining up to give away their money. The stock stayed high even when they were hemorrhaging money! Then the Internet bubble burst. But Amazon learned the wisdom of the long tail so, they added every product in the solar system. Now, what started as a humble bookstore has turned into the world's largest and most phenomenally well-stocked General Store.

Amazon recognized a major change caused by the Internet. They adapted, with some bumps, but now they thrive. But plenty of others never survived. Hopefully you weren't invested in any of them when they collapsed. And, no, I don't miss the sock puppet commercials. The Digital Age has made everything move faster. The Internet continues to evolve and change. You cannot stop the march of progress.

Best to pay attention.

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<p>Hard Measures - Consolidate &amp; Quantify</p>
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Even the rosier of economic predictions seem to be hyping us into a complete state of panic. Fortunately, my brothers and sisters in the Information Technology field have survived plenty of tumultuous times. I offer you two surefire ideas to help reduce costs: server consolidation and expense quantification.

## Consolidation

Depending on your server architecture, you may have several redundant servers. Unfortunately, these devices also incur costs even after their initial purchase. By eliminating these costs you can further tighten the IT belt. Just remember, there are redundancy trade-offs but you can't have everything. Hard times call for hard measures.

## Costs of Servers

1. **Electrical:** not just the power they use to keep themselves running but also the additional cooling demand from server heat output. While this is negligible on a per unit basis, if you have multiple redundant systems, the totals can escalate rapidly.
2. **Labor:** no matter how many automated services you have running, it is always wise to have a human check over all your servers periodically to ensure proper working order. More servers means more human time that could be spent on more profitable work.
3. **Licenses:** all your servers need software licenses and these add to total costs of the device.
4. **Hardware:** obviously the server equipment itself costs something and you will need to upgrade/replace the device eventually.

By consolidating your servers and eliminating redundancy you will save on capital, opportunity and recurring costs. You will sacrifice a measure of fault tolerance and you will force your remaining servers to work harder. However, tough times call for tough measures and if you are forced to tighten your budgets yet again, this is a useful tactic to employ.

## Quantify

There are too many business processes, departments and personnel that serve no real purpose. Perhaps they were originally created to serve some arcane purpose that is no longer required but no one has thought to "close the loop" and repurpose them.

I remember one client who had a Records Department with three very lovely ladies, none of whom could tell you what their job required. Basically they came to work every day and filled the day chatting or browsing the internet. They were always eager to help me with whatever research projects or other tasks needed doing, but it amazed me how they always had free time to help. Within a few weeks time, I had the company close the Records Department and transfer all three ladies into departments where there was real work to be done.

Hard times are upon us, we must quantify every expenditure. That means you must create a solid business case for every expense.

- \* Does it make sense?
- \* Is it necessary?
- \* What functions are performed for the cost?
- \* Can it be done cheaper?
- \* Can it be done better by someone else?
- \* Can we outsource it?

And, if you cannot quantify the benefits of the expense, then it should be cut. Period.

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## Ask Customers Before You Change

Be ready for change! Any change in an organisation can bring with it stress and doubt but be sure that it also brings with it competition and with competition come threat. This scenario is threatening businesses throughout the world as people are realising that change is something that is needed for survival. It is not a mere exercise.

But even now, changes are made in businesses that simply lap at the surface of problems rather than dealing with the underlying issues. And what are the underlying issues? The problem is that many of us simply do not know. Even if we think we know, many businesses implement changes that are simple decorative manipulations rather than things that will affect long term customer relations and, of course, sales.

A good example is that of marketing. This should rarely be an exercise to find ways to increase sales but rather an exercise to find out why customers are NOT buying. The best way to do this is to ask those very customers themselves. Yes, ask them.

It sounds counterintuitive but who REALLY knows about the buying habits of the population? I know myself that I'll buy from one company and not from another because of my ideas about them. Companies that give poorer service are less likely to complete a sale with me.

But what if a business actually gave me the chance to tell them why they are not up to my required standards? Do you think that I could give them information that would be valuable to them?

You bet I could. And this information cannot be got from anywhere else or by any other means. Companies should welcome this sort of feedback from customers and instead of reeling from the expected barrage of complaints they should be thankful that they have a chance to enhance the customer experience.

Then, the changes that are made can be aligned with the customer position in the overall structure. Although much change can be unavoidable, by combining it with an enhanced customer experience will enable greater customer recruitment, retention and interaction.

Mark Clayson is a professional, home business entrepreneur, mentor and speaker. Visit Start Work at Home <<http://startworkathome.com>> for more information on starting or developing a home business or his official site <<http://www.markclayson.com>> to find out more.

## Change - Ask Customers Their Opinion First

Change happens! With change comes competition and with competition come threat. Many businesses throughout the world are coming to terms with the idea that change is not only needed but is vital for their mere existence.

But even so, many decisions are taken that are contrary to good business sense. A prime example is that of marketing - most businesses will see this as a way to get customers to spend more money with them. But what would happen if we turned this the other way around? Let's say that instead of getting customers to spend more money we asked the question "what stops a customer spending money?" And how do we do that?

Ask them!

You may be surprised at the answers you get. Most of the replies will be valuable and productive. For example, customers may say that your phone lines are too busy or that your web site is

too confusing. Or perhaps your after sales service is not so good or that the products you produce do not live up to expectations.

The answers you get when you ask customers about you and your business will vary but one thing is sure - the information you get will be more valuable than gold dust. What a customer tells you about your service means more than anything you could ever find out at a board meeting.

And there is one more benefit of asking customers their views. That is, customers love to (a) be asked their opinions and (b) be able to have the opportunity to get something off their chest.

If you couple this approach with rewarding the customer for their participation then you are on to a sure fire winner which can help the change process in your business.

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## Be Ready For Change

In business, there are many things you can change but you cannot change change itself. Like it or not, it is here and always will be. Sometimes it can feel oppressive and counterintuitive. Sometimes it can feel catastrophic and even lonely. But change happens and businesses that plan for it and embrace it will profit more than those that drag their heels and complain.

Change can be the result of a number of things. Personal preferences, legislation, fashion and momentum. Sometimes it means a mere diversion to the norm in your business life and at others it can engender a total revamp of the business model.

Whatever the underlying reason, businesses that make provision for any change that is appropriate to their niche will find that, after the dust has settled, profits rise as a result. Indeed, some businesses are proactive, as opposed to reactive, where change is concerned and implement different working practices as soon as it feels likely to be necessary. This is good practice but takes time and resources to implement.

But, even then, the degree of implementation may be minimal in contrast to the potential gains. Changing for changing's sake means little and simply fuels the egos of those that suggest it. But change for a purpose can have lasting benefits that any business can learn and earn from.

When you consider it, change is there for a reason. The reason itself may be unpalatable to you and there may be a whole host of arguments why it shouldn't have been that way. But, those that stay one step ahead of the competition will find a firmer footing in the future, way after the changing process dust has settled.

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<h2>What to Do When Change Happens</h2>
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What a difference a year makes! We aren't so much leaping into 2009 as creeping with trepidation and fear. Never before has the heralding of a new 12 month period been met with so much fear, anxiety and gloom. Some blame the media for spreading the bad news but there's not one of us who won't be affected by the downturn in the economy; even if you never read another paper or watched the news again.

The sense of uncertainty in the economy means that businesses whether large or small will be working hard to stay ahead of the curve and focus energy and resources where it counts. In this time of social and economic turbulence being able to handle rapid change is a skill many of us will need to adopt.

As Carol Adrienne writes in her book *When Life Changes - Or You Wish it Would*, 'Life is not quite the same as it was. But then, it never really is. The pace of change seems to be picking up'. If at the start of the New Year instead of feeling hopeful and optimistic, life is starting to resemble shifting sands and the familiar comfort of your known world is in danger of becoming unpredictable and chaotic then don't panic too soon.

Change in life is inevitable, whether it is starting or leaving education, getting married, experiencing loss, or changing jobs. Nothing stays the same for ever. However, the fear of the unknown makes us resist change and want to hold onto the comfort of what we know. Ultimately this paralyses our ability to make choices, take decisions and spot opportunities or possibilities.

Being prepared for change involves flexibility, self belief and strength of purpose. Here are some ideas to help you manage change powerfully and purposefully.

1. Be prepared. Life is full of unexpected surprises. It pays to accept this as a reality and plan for changes in your life whether this is learning a new skill, downshifting or changing jobs. The ostrich approach isn't viable.

2. Take control. Ultimately you can only control or change yourself (Oh, how we wish we could change others!) When

you know this and put it into action it will create a strong sense of self empowerment. Then anything becomes possible.

3. Be purposeful. Having a strong purpose or direction in life will act as an important anchor. Whatever obstacles appear you will be able to navigate around using your overall direction or destination as your personal compass. How do you want the next 5 years to look?

4. Look for the silver lining. Once any feelings of shock, despair or anger pass look for the possibilities that open up. This might be a golden opportunity to reflect on your life purpose and follow any long held dreams.

5. Seek out support. When the scale or nature of the change is more than you can deal with on your own seek out others to guide, advise and support you whether colleagues, friends, family, mentors or coaches.

6. Remember, even this will pass. Even the most catastrophic eventuality will be history some day.

7. Look back to the past and see how good has come from change. You have survived life's knock backs. You will do so again.

8. Don't get into the blame game. Blaming others or turning in on yourself is a no-win path to despair. Take responsibility and deal with life head on.

9. Two things that are guaranteed to make you feel good instantly are exercise and helping others. One is good for the body, the other the soul.

10. Have a goal and set your intention to achieve it. Break it down into baby steps and pretty soon they will become giant leaps.

Facing change can sometimes be a difficult, confusing and challenging process for all concerned yet it can often lead to a much more exciting and rewarding future.

Susan Tomlinson provides bespoke solutions to help managers and leaders achieve success at work. Get her valuable tips and resources and the workbook "Speaking for Success" at <http://www.realcoachingsolutions.co.uk/productsandservices/success.htm>

## ISO 9001 - 2008 - Hidden Business Opportunities - An Opportunity to Reenergize Your QMS

The ISO 9001:2000 Standard has been revised after eight years. And the buzz is rapidly reaching a crescendo. We continue to receive numerous emails and phone calls regarding the impact of the new release. First, let me dispel any anxiety about the November 15, 2008 official "2008" release. There are no new requirements. The changes are largely interpretive, and focus on terminology clarifications. The changes to the ISO 9001 amendment, however, will have considerable benefit.

As a back drop, keep in mind that ISO 9001 is not just an International Standard for a Quality Management System. It is the world's most recognized business management standard. And it makes a strong business case. It focuses attention on leadership, business planning, organizational business processes, your customers (internal and external), measurement and reporting, and continual improvement. That translates to improved business results and a sustainable competitive advantage.

### Transitioning to ISO 9001:2008

The International Organization of for Standardization and the International Accreditation Forum have agreed to a smooth transition. Both standards will remain current for two years - until November 15, 2010. Registration of conformity to ISO 9001:2008 will be issued from November 15 on, and after a routine registrar surveillance audit, or a recertification audit against the new version. Also, as of November 15, 2009, all new registrations and recertifications must be to ISO 9001:2008.

Two years after publication of ISO 9001:2008 (November 15, 2010), any certifications that are still to ISO 9001:2000 will no longer be valid. This means that currently certified organizations in "surveillance mode" in 2008-2009 have until November 15,

2010 to be successfully certified to ISO 9001:2008. We recommend a proactive approach. If you can win in your marketplace every day - why put it off?

### Overview of the Changes

The points of clarification focus on outsourcing, documentation, management representative, employee competence, design verification and validation, process monitoring, control of nonconforming product and corrective and preventive action. But bear in mind, no "shalls" (requirements) were added or removed.

Examples of select changes include: In an attempt to clarify the term "outsourcing," notes were added that require the organization to identify processes (and the control of these) to be completed by an external party. With respect to documentation, the changes focus on improving the compatibility between ISO 9001 and ISO 14001.

The only significant addition to the management representative sub clause was to require that the MR be a member of the organization's management team. This means a contracted person could serve in this role as long as he or she is also considered part of management. The management representative does not have to be full-time.

With regard to competence of employees, a note was added to make training more pervasive throughout the organization. Training applies to all employees directly or indirectly responsible for delivering a service or producing a product (everyone that is part of the quality chain). A complete listing of changes can be found in Annex B (Table B.1) of the Standard. Also, note that there is better alignment with ISO 14001:2004.

### Potential Danger and Hidden Opportunities

The Chinese character for crisis consists of two parts - potential danger and hidden opportunities. Clearly, the amended release does not suggest a crisis, and the hidden opportunities far outnumber any potential danger. So, if you are anxious - don't be.

That said, perhaps the greatest potential danger is to dismiss this release, and to rationalize that there is no work to be done.

Even though there are minor changes, hidden opportunities abound. This is the ideal time to be proactive, and to re-energize your quality (business) management system. Ask yourself: Is your QMS integrated with your organization's vision, mission and values? Are your quality objectives aligned with your organization's business objectives? Have you considered the needs of your customers in developing your objectives? Are you using a balanced scorecard to evaluate performance (key performance indicators)?

You could drill down further and ask: How are you measuring "the voice of the customer?" Are your document and record control processes effective? Are your preventive and corrective action processes effective? Do you have an effective root cause analysis methodology? Do you have an effective organization-wide training plan? How do you evaluate the competence of your employees? Are you measuring the cost of quality, and driving waste and inefficiency out of your business?

### The Path Forward

This pragmatic path forward can be used as a guide to craft a game plan during the transition. It stresses the basic steps that your organization should consider, regardless of the maturity of your QMS.

\* Obtain a copy of the ISO 9001:2008 Standard. Copies can be purchased from your national standards body ANSI in the United States at ([www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org) <<http://www.ansi.org/>> ), the International Organization for Standardization ([www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org) <<http://www.iso.org/>> ), or from the American Society for Quality.

\* Review Annex B, and familiarize yourself with the changes to the Standard. This Annex (Table B.1) identifies the text changes between the 2000 and 2008 versions. It's a must read.

\* Discuss the transition requirements with your registrar. Remember you have two years to make the transition. We

recommend transitioning sooner than later. This is no time to procrastinate.

\* Determine whether the changes impact your organization. If nothing else, it will give you and your management team a better understanding of the nuances and underlying reasons for the change.

\* Use this opportunity to reenergize your QMS. Remember, "ISO" is a fundamental business model, and it is the foundation from which to build a competitive, customer-centric enterprise.

\* Schedule a meeting with your ISO Business Partner (consulting firm) to assist you with taking your QMS to the next level. Along the way, you should also explore ways to leverage your certificate to accelerate growth of sales.

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### About the Author

Stanley Cherkasky is the Managing Partner of Change Management Consulting, Inc. (CMC). Founded in 1993, Change Management Consulting is a global management consulting and training company dedicated to helping organizations of all sizes improve performance, achieve goals and advance leadership capability. As a full-service organizational improvement firm, CMC focuses on organizational and leadership development, compliance management (ISO 9001 and its derivatives), strategic planning and Lean Six Sigma initiatives.

Headquartered in Wayne, NJ with offices in San Diego, Dallas and Detroit, CMC has a proven track record in helping public and private sector clients implement pragmatic continual improvement initiatives that drive financially measurable results. CMC also has extensive experience in obtaining grants and funding assistance for its clients. Learn more at <http://www.cmc-changemanagement.com> or contact CMC at 973.696.7878.

## It's Not All About the Tech - People Are Part of the Process

Careful consideration at the end user level should be given any process, technology or application upgrade. Beyond the cost of the servers, equipment, software, licenses, integration and downtime, is going through it all only to have very few adopt the upgrade or, just as bad, use the upgrade as little as possible.

Now, it's only human nature - everyone resists change (even you). This is why it is imperative that you consider your end users early in the selection of any technology. A few things to mull over include:

- \* Use familiar tools where possible. Lots of things can be done with just a phone these days!

- \* Try not to add another physical thing to be cared for, charged or carried around. Web based solutions such as unified messaging do not require anything other than an e-mail address or internet connection.

- \* If you do add another piece of equipment, try to have it perform double duty. A Treo is the equivalent of a Blackberry? + cell phone (+PDA; +mp3 player, etc.)

- \* If you can improve upon a known process - all the better! Definitely upgrade rather than introduce new.

- \* End user training is vital. Factor in the cost for one on one, group or on line training for each type of user.

- \* Along with training, add end user manuals, reference materials and on line access to support for improved adoption.

Lack of training is often heard as the reason new technology fails. However, not all users are accomplished software manipulators nor even typists for that matter. If a software or technology requires all users to become so, it may not be your best option.

And a word of caution - don't just listen to some consultant say you have to make your workers do it "this way". The work your staff has been doing was in existence long before there was

any technology to help or any consultants to make money off of their recommendations. Sure, there will be instances where you'll have to say it's "my way or the highway" - but those should be few and far between.

In fact, poll your users - those in the trenches - ask them what they like and don't like about the processes, technology, software and equipment they use each day to perform their functions. Also ask about the software and processes used at previous employers and if they liked it better (and why). You will be surprised at how much valuable information and insight you get.

From that information you and your consultant(s) can tweak the tech to the work (and if the tech can't be tweaked you know you need to keep looking). The way I see it, it's much better to have happy staff than a happy consultant any day!

In the end, tailor the upgrade to the end user and not the other way around for the best possible return on your technology dollar investment.

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To learn more visit Andrea's main site:  
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To learn more about keeping yourself, your equipment and your data secure, visit: <http://www.legaltypist.com/security>

## Managing Change in the Workplace

Change is exhilarating. Change is terrifying. Change is badly needed around here. Whatever your attitude is to change, it is the most reliable companion you will likely ever have. It will always be with you so are better off making friends! Here are three tips on managing change in your workplace:

\* Understand that growth requires change. If you double the number of customers you serve, how will your current systems hold up? Review current processes to see how they will work if workflow increases. Be sure that your processes can handle the influx of customers.

\*Let go of the emotions around change so you can have productive conversations with those who are involved. For instance, if you are a manager and your employees are resentful of a needed change, you can help create a productive dialogue by letting go of your personal investment in the outcome. Simply discuss the situation without ego, anger, or pride. Your employees will be more open to understanding why the change is necessary, and you may learn something new as well.

\* Look for opportunities to invite change. Where can your processes be streamlined? What can you learn from spots where things bog down now? Are you using an employee's best gifts or simply using them where you need a warm body? Employees who feel like they are using their gifts are more likely to stay and put forth their best effort.

When you become an active participant of change, and you remain receptive to its gifts, you can learn from it and grow with it.

Julie Renee Holland is a business and life coach specializing in helping women create meaningful businesses. You can read more articles like this one at <http://www.wahmsolutions.com>

## No Bail Out - Start Planning Your Outcomes Now

Ok, so maybe you're mired, just like everyone else in this economy.

Take action now, just like so many other companies have done. Many organizations have had teams within that spend the better part of their day identifying industry uncertainties and creating scenarios of possible ways their industry could evolve.

- They identify bad things that could go wrong for their organizations - internally or externally (competitive, regulatory or environmental).

- They constantly ask the question of their executives, "What keeps you up at night?" From their discussions of what if, they create preparedness plans to deal with every conceivable negative eventuality they might face in the future.

- They have a good handle on environmental signals that could affect their business down the road.

These crisis preparedness units are constantly looking for factors that could bring their company to its knees. What is keeping us up tonight has been foreseen by several organizations. In fact, several reached conclusions about today's environment many months prior to our present economic situation.

They took the requisite action to prepare their organizations for today. Several realized there was no way out for their companies except to build a new company from within.

Based on the weaknesses of their organizations, they are even exploring ways to attack the organization from within before a competitor does. And this is being done under the watchful eye and funding of the parent company.

Kind of like building a mini titanic within, because they realized the probability of hitting the iceberg was significant.

But remember...it is one thing to be part of this exercise and another to have your management listen and be ready to take the appropriate action with obvious clouds on the horizon. We are dealing with now!

Take these steps. Set your executive team up for survival and more.

Identify the major forces of change that will positively or negatively impact your industry:

- Societal
- Regulatory
- Technological
- Business/Economic/Retail

Your team develops the implications for your organization:

- Risks and opportunities
- Which business models will thrive and which will crumble?
- What new practices or products would thrive or be irrelevant?
- Suggest viable new product or service offerings

<http://whiteassociatesms.com>,

Linked In - David S. White

## Change Your Strategy, Change Your Results

Change You Can Believe In - Is It Time to Reinvent Your Company?

Are you ready for 2009? Was 2008 your best year ever? If so, you are probably on track to having a terrific 2009. You can stop reading now, because your time is better spent implementing your growth strategy.

Still reading? Then you must want 2009 to be your best year ever! It can be, even with the reduction in consumer spending, increased costs, and an economic recession. All you have to do is...CHANGE.

The promise of change motivated voters to move Barack Obama from a junior senator position to the highest office in our country. It was a message that moved people from all walks of life. Change is necessary for growth, but it is hard to do and even harder to sell.

So, why did Obama's change message work? There is a high level of dissatisfaction and fear in America. The World Trade Center collapse left us feeling vulnerable to outside threats. The economic rollercoaster combined with executive predators, shows that we are also vulnerable to insider issues.

The same folks embracing change in America are your customers and prospects. They don't want business as usual. They want great service, reasonable prices, and genuine appreciation.

Watch out for diminishing returns

Insanity has been defined as "doing the same thing and expecting different results." If this is true (and I swear that it is), most companies could double as asylums because their marketing

teams create "new" plans by changing a few items in last year's plan and expect a better return.

Formulamatic business strategies always lose their effectiveness over time. Look at email marketing as an example. It was a blast when I sent my first email campaign for a direct marketing client. The offer was usual: 20% off the total order for one day only. The email was simple with a text only format and two paragraphs. The results were amazing.

### Instant gratification at your fingertips

We had two computers set up to watch the process. One sent the email using Outlook and Excel. The other monitored the website. It took about 30 minutes for all of the emails to process. Five minutes into the operation, we started to see orders coming in. Talk about instant gratification!

When everything was complete, the response was greater than the control (a post card mailing), the cost was substantially less, and life was good.

### Things have changed.

The same message sent the same way would have less response today. Why? Because the newness factor is gone. Your customers and prospects receive hundreds of emails a day. Most of the ones from your competition are offering sales, so it becomes a battle of "How low can you go?" Even if you win, you lose.

And, don't forget the ease to access. Anyone with a computer, Internet service, and 10 minutes can send a promotional email. And, they do. My inbox is bombarded daily with sale emails from a bevy of retailers. I receive emails telling me about their current sales. They are followed with emails warning that the sales are almost over. Next comes the ones to remind me that it is the last day to save. Two days later, the new sale begins.

The formula is: Promote sale >>> Remind customer of time line >>> Warn that Last Day is here >>> Blame the economy for poor results >>> Repeat

How to get started...

If you want to get ahead of the crowd, start with a blank sheet of paper and list 10 things that would help your customers. The first item on your list should be knowledge. It doesn't matter what you sell, your customers need information about how to improve \_\_\_\_\_ -- you fill in the blank. Don't confuse this with "How our product(s) improve your life" information. For example, if you are in the home improvement business, create emails like this:

- \* How to improve the curb appeal of your home
- \* How to reduce heating costs
- \* How to improve the security of your property
- \* When and how to reseed your lawn

You get the picture. The focus is on helping your customers. The secondary objective is to encourage your customers to buy their landscaping, insulation, and lighting products from you.

Change is hard.

It takes more time and effort than maintaining the status quo, but the rewards are worth it. Your first reward is an improved open rate. People open emails that offer valuable information. The next reward is a long tail. People save emails with information they can use. Then, there is the increase in sales, brand awareness, and loyalty.

But, wait! There's more!

Convert the how-to information in your emails into articles on your website and you win the bonus round: improved natural search rankings!

Don't believe it until you try it for yourself. Before your next email blast, create a sale email and an informational one. Using a standard A/B split, test them against each other. Your answers will be in the results. Once you take baby steps with change, move on to bigger things. Do your product offerings match your customers' current needs? Are your services aligned with expectations? Change is good. Start now and make 2009 your best year ever!

Debra Ellis is a writer, speaker, consultant and the founder of Wilson & Ellis Consulting. She has extensive experience as a multichannel company consultant and executive. She uses her experience and expertise to teach executives how to integrate departments, motivate employees, maximize return on investment, and successfully grow their business. She recently completed an e-book entitled "The New Rules of Multichannel Marketing".

Wilson & Ellis Consulting (<http://www.wilsonellisconsulting.com>) is a multichannel management consultancy specializing in transforming information into growth and profitability. In addition to strategic planning and consulting services, they offer hands on workshops and informational guides.

## Recruiting Firm Owners - Explode Your Revenues - Change the Planning Process

Much of what we as individuals and owners do in the name of planning and goal setting is a complete waste of time.

Yep, you heard me right. The process is about as effective as making New Year's Resolutions. Why? Personally and professionally we already know what we should do: Lose weight, quit smoking exercise more, professionally, our plans are loaded with build client/candidate relationships, be motivated make a lot of money.

WE WANT the benefits. WE know what to do and why we should do it and you even know how to do it. Yet most won't do what's good for them. Let's face it: I can tell you how to thrive in an off market in 3 simple sentences.

- 1) Do WHATEVER is necessary to speak with 15-20 people a day.
- 2) Arrange 3-4 first-time interviews a week.
- 3) Study recruiting and selling technique 45 minutes a day.

In a new book, *Strategy and the Fat Smoker* by David Maister he discusses why most plans done in the professional service arena fail.

My observation is that most business plans done by recruiters and owners are a complete waste of time. Personally and professionally, we know what to do:

"I need to plan"

"I need to make more marketing calls."

"I need to add value to my business relationships."

"I need to hire"

"I need to hold my people accountable"

Maister continues that many change efforts based on assumption that all you have to do is to explain that their lives could be better, CONVINCING them their goals are worth going for and show them how to do it.

This Assumption is patently false! If this assumption were true, there would be no drug addicts, no alcoholics, no bad marriages. We would say "Oh, that behavior is not good for me, "I'll stop of course" This is nonsense!

Yet our planning process and our goal setting exercises remain the same. As managers you set your office goal, and help with your team, and we replicate this same useless structure year after year. "Look how fabulous it would be if you were a fit, exer-

cising, in shape person." To which our usual response is "True, Now shut up and go Away!"

We all know what to do. Why don't we do it? THAT is an interesting Question.

The primary reason we do not work at behaviors we KNOW we need to improve is that the rewards and pleasure are in the future. The discomfort, discipline, frustration needed to get there in the immediate.

To reach our goals, we must 1st change our lifestyle and daily habits NOW!

We must then summon the courage keep up the new habits and not yield to old familiar temptations, i.e. email, then and only then, we get the benefits late. We as humans are terrible at delayed gratification.

How many have bought self improvement programs and not finished them? We end up with "shelf-help" not self help!

That's our pattern: Try a little, succumb to temptation, and distractions.

There is rarely any benefit from dabbling or trying only a little. As Maister says:

\* We can't get half the benefits of better marriage by cutting out 1/2 your affair

\* We can't cure 1/2 the problems of alcoholism by cutting 1/2 the drinks.

\* Losing weight may be the most important to you, but if you aren't willing to make the CHANGES that specific goal requires, its importance is irrelevant.

The same is true in recruiting, especially in a downturn. We can AND DO discuss setting goals, it's fun, it creates a "sugar high", BUT gets no where near the real questions.

Improving the quality of the goal setting exercise is NOT where the problem lies. The necessary outcome from these exercises can't be just the goal, but must become RESOLVE!

The ESSENTIAL questions of goal setting strategy are these:

- \* Which of our habits are we really prepared to change, permanently and forever?
- \* Which lifestyle changes are we REALLY prepared to make?
- \* What issues, i.e. call reluctance, fear of rejection, etc are we REALLY ready to tackle?

That's a different tone of conversation and discussion, and the reason we tend to avoid it. Discussing goals is stimulation, inspiring, and energizing!

But it feels tough, awkward annoying, frightening, and completely unpleasant to discuss the DISCIPLINE needed to reach those goals.

Just as all diets have flaws, so does each solution you will come up with but, which, integrated into your day can you ADOPT as a central part of your business lifestyle.

There is no shame in being average, to be "competent" if you are unwilling to pay the price of excellence. BUT, don't mislead your spouse, your manager or colleagues, clients, or ... YOURSELF with time wasting, demoralizing attempts to convince them you are ACTUALLY committed to pursuing the goal.

Bonus Tip: For more insight into properly building and running an executive recruiting firm enroll in the free audio program "The 7 Deadly Sins Search Firm Owners make and how to avoid them" by visiting <http://www.TheRecruiterU.com>

Learn strategies you can implement immediately to build a search firm generating several million in revenue from some of the simple mistakes made and witnessed by author Michael Gionta in his 19 years building his own multi-million dollar firm. Additionally, Michael works with owners of search firms who have pla-

teamed and want to break through to the next level of revenue and success.

## Employee Engagement and Profitability

Change Management Report: Employee Engagement, Customer Satisfaction and Profitability

Even in today's soft economy, there's a competitive edge overlooked by many organizations: employee performance management. That's the term for putting a strategic focus on achieving financial success through loyal customers and motivated employees. Justification for employee performance management is supported strongly by an Arcus survey of 2000 consumers.

82 percent of customers will stop using your product if they lose trust in your company.

Disengaged workers cost the economy \$30 billion or more a year. Companies with a strong link between enterprise strategy and rewards programs generate a shareholder return almost 40 percent higher than competitors without such strategies. Compelling reasons make it clear that employee performance management will become the predominant business strategy in the coming decade. "Customers, both retail and industrial buyers, are getting smarter about the value of service. They're increasingly frustrated and more willing than ever to take their business elsewhere. Employee performance is the key to success for any organization. We know, based on extensive business research, that employee performance is enhanced by systematic 'employee recognition', defined as an after-the-fact display of appreciation or acknowledgment of an individual's or team's desired behavior,

effort or business result that supports the organization's goals and values".

Loyal customers entail lower selling and processing costs and generate more incremental revenue and referral business. Companies that score higher than their competitors in customer satisfaction and repeat business have the upper hand in financial performance.

Arcus Employee performance management (AEPM) involves disciplines familiar to most business people but puts them together in a way that cuts across the traditional organizational boundaries. The question to ask is how can we deliver world-class service without world-class people? AEPM doesn't cost more money or add a new level of bureaucracy. It redirects resources to focus on what counts the most: motivating every employee, salesperson, and reseller to do as much as possible to attract and keep customers.

<http://www.arcusgroup.ca>

Arcus understands that clients want small, nimble consulting teams of seasoned people who have years of knowledge and experience. And they want practical, highly targeted information and insights to address their needs.

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Arcus is a leading research and strategy consulting firm whose mission is to help senior management solve their most challenging problems related to growth, organization and operations. We encourage you to review our experience, ideas and approaches on this site. Please contact us for a sample of our work.

## Leadership Lessons For Uncertain Times - Lessons For Leaders From We Are Marshall

The movie *We are Marshall* tells the story of the rebuilding of the Marshall University football program after a tragic plane crash in 1970 that killed nearly the entire team and the coaching staff. The university president came close to suspending the program when he was persuaded by students and the community to rebuild. Matthew McConaughey plays the coach who is brought in to rebuild the program.

In one scene in the movie, McConaughey throws out the old playbook and designs a new offensive scheme. He realizes that the playbook was designed for a different time and a different team with different skills. His current team needs a different approach to have a shot at success, as they are clearly failing using the old playbook. As the coach, he makes a swift decision and rapidly implements a new playbook which immediately begins to build the confidence of the team. While it takes a few games for the team to get it, they ultimately win again. While the story of *Marshall* is about the triumph of the human spirit in the face of tragedy, this scene also holds a great lesson for leaders in today's uncertain environment. If the environment has changed and we are to succeed, it implies that old behavior will not work. If you are the leader, you must do more than cast a vision or rally the troops with a motivational speech. You must identify what new behavior is required and help your team learn that new behavior as fast as possible. In the past few months, I have heard leaders at several different companies make bold pronouncements that "failure is not an option." Upon hearing this message, do you feel your morale, confidence, and optimism improving? Do you feel better about your company's prospects? I don't either. Here are four reasons why this approach is a big mistake:

\* First, it is intellectually dishonest, so no one believes it. Failure is, in fact, a possible outcome. The intent of this state-

ment is to assure employees that the business will survive and that employees will be ok, but this may not be true. Failure may not be a likely outcome and it is certainly not a desirable outcome, but it is within the realm of possibility.

\* Second, it insults the intelligence of your employees. Why go to all of the effort and expense to recruit knowledge workers, who are supposedly very smart, but then treat them like idiots? Smart people understand that uncertainty exists. Pretending otherwise is insulting.

\* Third, because this statement is often presented with great confidence and swagger, it shuts down meaningful dialogue. This approach suggests that by the sheer will of the leader, we will prevail. By saying "failure is not an option," the leader is really trying to have the final word on the subject. The leader is frankly tired of dealing with the question and would prefer that people really just get back to work.

\* Fourth, this statement absolves employees of responsibility. By taking the weight of the option off the table, it puts it all on the shoulder of the leader. This approach is the exact opposite of empowerment and actually increases stress among employees. Stress occurs in high-demand, low-control situations, and increasing demands on people without giving them a reason to believe they have control doesn't work.

So how can leaders use the lessons of We Are Marshall to deal with economic uncertainty and anxiety more effectively?

1. Acknowledge the pain, frustration and fear of the situation. While a business failure or job loss is not life or death like the Marshall tragedy, it is immensely painful. Recognize that employees are wondering about their future but sitting idle in the face of fear is not a solution.

2. Acknowledge that we face significant uncertainty and it will likely continue for some time. There are multiple contingencies that depend on the overall economy, customers, competition, regulatory changes, and possible mergers or acquisitions. There may be several scenarios which we can envision, some good, some not so good. It is up to us to make decisions and to take action to capitalize on the best opportunities available.

3. Honestly assess your current situation and communicate the truth. Clarify your current cash position and how long you can operate under your current structure. Do you have weeks, months, or years of cash? Demonstrate that you have adequate resources to operate without being paralyzed by fear. This approach will help everyone in the organization grasp reality and move forward.

4. Like the coach at Marshall, make sure you have the right playbook and right team for this environment. Clarify your best market and customer opportunities to focus on during this period. Based on your current product and service capabilities, where do you focus? For example, if you have an installed base of customers, evaluate how to maintain or expand your business with them. If you are pursuing new customers, make sure that your value proposition and lead generation activities are focused on the best opportunities. Make sure that you have the right team in the right roles, and make decisions quickly if changes are needed.

5. Accelerate your operational planning process so that every single person in your organization knows their roles, responsibilities, and objectives for the near future. Instead of long term plans, these should be ninety-day plans which are revised a quarter from now. It is essential that each person have clear direction on their contribution. Hold your direct reports accountable for ensuring that each person they supervise has an individual action plan.

6. Specify what you will NOT do. Clarify which markets, customers, and opportunities you will not focus on during this period. It is essential to focus all of your time, energy, and resources only on the best customer opportunities in this environment. Identify specific ways of operating that may have served you in the past, but which will not work in this environment. "Keeping doing what you've been doing" is a recipe for disaster.

So how do you handle the question "are we going to survive?" Let me suggest a blueprint for what you can say. My recommendation is to outline very specific actions that are required to succeed. The time for big sweeping vision statements is not now. Try something like this: "I understand that all of you are concerned about the current environment, how it will affect our business, and what it means for you. You may be expecting me to

say that bankruptcy is not an option. We are currently generating (or burning cash), so our risk level is high/medium/low and we are confident that we can operate for at least a year. Technically, failure is always an option if we fail to execute our plan - that is the nature of business. So let's focus on the specifics of our plan: We will focus on specific customers and offerings. Make sure to name them here. This means that our sales and marketing organization must immediately refocus our lead generation, prospecting, and sales activities on this set of customers. We are going to not focus on other opportunities for the near term.

Our product development organization will focus on these specific projects for future growth, name them. Our operations groups will ensure that we are meeting all of our commitments effectively and efficiently. We are all responsible for managing our cash effectively. All of these specifics require each person in the organization to play a specific role. In the next thirty days, we will make sure that these specifics get translated into individual action plans for everyone - and each one of you will be asked for your best thinking about how we can innovate, execute, and thrive in this environment. My direct reports are accountable for making this planning process happen. I welcome any further questions on any aspect of the business and commit to communicating on a weekly basis as events unfold. I appreciate the commitment each of you is making to the company." The coach of Marshall challenges the players to "lay it on the line until the final whistle blows, and if you do that, we cannot lose." As the leader, you cannot ask for this commitment until you work through a specific game plan that can win. Do you have a specific game plan? If not, it's time to get to work.

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Ron Wilder is the author of the upcoming book, *The Executive Fieldguide*. Download, free, the first chapter of his book from <http://www.alignedaction.com/welcome/free-newsletter> He helps entrepreneurial, business-minded and result-oriented professionals learn, apply new knowledge, make decisions, and take actions that result in breakthroughs to new levels of performance, as they

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## Is Imagination More Important Than Knowledge?

Albert Einstein was once quoted as saying imagination is more important than knowledge. Now he may have been referring to the world of physic and advanced mathematical equations beyond the intellectual realm of the average human being. But that statement could certainly be applied to the rest of life as well.

Over the course of my life I have had the opportunity to work with, and for, some of the finest and smartest people. However, what I have noticed is that not all of them had the vision to match their brain.

As in starting any business venture, not only is it important to seek help from people you trust and who's opinion you value. You should also seek the advice of those with imagination and vision.

I had a business partner once who only saw things in black and white. Not blue, not green, not purple...simply black and white. There was no vision on what the company could be.

For me this was extremely damaging to our operation, as it kept the company from doing everything it could.

Business is not always about the numbers. Sometimes it's also about how you get those numbers. And it is always about how you get your message out to the masses. Sometimes it takes unconventional or unorthodox ideas to accomplish this.

In order for a business to be all that it could be the owners cannot get locked into what is spelled out for them in their college textbooks. If it was actually like that there would be no Google, Apple or MySpace.

If that were the case we would all still be listening to vinyl records and not CD's and iPods.

Starting a business today requires forward thinkers who can look into the future and think--what can be,.... not what was.

This does not mean that you as a business owner must come up with radical ideas, it could mean you simply look at a simple everyday problem and come up with a way to make it to make life easier concerning that problem. Your solution may even be very simple.

The fact that you came up with a simple solution to an everyday problem says a lot about you.

I have a friend who, after noticing his wife burn her ear with a curling iron, invented a simple cover for women to cover their ears. Simple solution to an everyday problem.

Maybe your forward thinking won't even take the form of a new product. Maybe it's an idea. Remember the Pet Rock. The idea of selling something that you can simply pick up in the forest or on the street astounds me. But, just as the "inventor" of the Pet Rock showed us....it is possible.

So, 52 years after his death, Albert Einstein is more correct than ever....Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Virgil W. Magee is the Deputy Director of Media Analysis for Strategic Communications for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's International Security Assistance Force in Kabul, Afghanistan.

In his position he is responsible for the identification and analysis of local, regional and global media trends pertaining to

multinational ISAF and North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) alliance missions and strategic objectives for 38 partner nation defense and foreign affairs ministerial-level organizations, NATO and United Nations mandated missions.

A native of Chicago, Illinois, prior assuming his current position, he served as director of public affairs for the U.S. Air Force's only active-duty special operations wings, the 1st and 16th Special Operations Wings and the 505th Command and Control Wing located at Hurlburt Field, Florida. As the chief there he was primarily responsible for serving as spokesperson and chief press liaison, representing an active-duty, reserve, guard, civilian, contractor and dependant population of more than 30,000.

In addition to his role as spokesperson he oversaw each division within public affairs, including community relations, internal information, media relations, website implementation and maintenance, newspaper publication, magazine publication and security policy review. Under his leadership the unit was awarded several Air Force Special Operations-level awards including best newspaper, best public affairs officer, best feature articles, best article series and best sports articles. His office also captured the best public affairs office in Air Force Special Operations Command award and was nominated for best Air Force public affairs office.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, he deployed to Saudi Arabia as the advance officer for the U.S. Air Force's public affairs campaign. Laying the groundwork for a 16-person team responsible for conveying the air and space power story to the American and international publics.

**Making Change Last - How to Get People on Board**

## Employees are Assets, aren't they?

It's a mantra repeated again and again; 'employees are our most important asset.' Are they? Assets are things a company owns, they are fixed, and they have a nasty habit of depreciating in value. I don't think employees meet any of these criteria!

Employees are investors in a business. They come into work and choose how much of their energy and effort to invest, in return for their salary and benefits, and the intangible benefits their job gives them. Learning, social connections, challenge and satisfaction are just a few of the intangibles that motivate employees to invest more in their work.

## Effort is Discretionary

Given that all employees have a choice about how much they give (beyond meeting the basics of their contract), it's no wonder that when change comes about their response is sometimes mixed. Often, they're attached to what they have, this is why they seem to resist when something new comes along. It's not so much that they don't want the new, more that they want to keep the old.

To achieve change that people are committed to we need to take care about how we implement it, regardless of what the change itself is. When people have had the chance to say their piece and feel that their opinions have been considered, they are far more likely to commit to change, even if they don't like it. A badly implemented change that has positive effects for employees is less likely to be implemented with gusto than a well managed change.

Here are three steps for making change stick within your organisation. Following them will increase the likelihood of your employees committing to the change, making changes more likely to result in lasting performance.

## Step 1 - Be Open

We all know that it's a good idea to communicate a lot when we're implementing change. Have a few key messages and consistently plug them, saying them again and again in different ways to make sure they get through.

Hmmm...How much do you trust a salesman who talks all the time? Do you like it if they keep telling you what they want you to know, regardless of what questions you have, or the feedback you give? With change management in a company it's just the same. Your employees have opinions they want you to hear and respond to, and they have questions they want you to answer.

"You create the culture by the conversations you have. If you want to change the culture, change the conversations." Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe

Employees need to know that what you say is believable, that they can trust you. If they get different answers to their questions from different managers, or you appear to change your mind from day to day, they are not likely to see the change as credible, or to act on it. If you don't know what the answer is to a question, say so, and commit to finding out. People much prefer honesty to hog-wash.

### Be Open

1. Explain your thinking to employees, and be honest
2. Give employees time and space to ask questions
3. Listen to their opinions, with genuine interest

### Step 2 - Involve Your People

Management have the right to make decisions, they lead the company. However, they don't always have the best information at their finger-tips, they often don't actually do the work that satisfies customers in the business.

Involving employees in the changes you plan makes good business sense; they will be able to identify opportunities, spot risks, and help you work through the practicalities of a change.

The very fact that they've been asked will increase their engagement with the change process.

### Involve Your People

1. Ask for employees' ideas and input
2. Consider the input and suggestions that you get
3. Give employees feedback about their suggestions
  - a. Explain what you are taking on board and how it will be used
  - b. Explain why when you decide not to implement a suggestion

### Step 3 - Be Clear

Once you've consulted and involved people, the time comes to make decisions, and act. It is very important that your employees are clear about the future. They need to know what has changed, and what the impact is on them. If roles have been made redundant, who is handing over work to whom? Over what time-scale? What work will cease to be done, and what new activities will be taken up? What are the new targets?

Communicate clearly and concisely what is now expected. Remember, you may give one message, but each person you give it to will hear slightly different things, we're all unique. This is the time to be really consistent, and patient in making sure each person understands the impact of changes for them. Treating people with respect and dignity is crucial to making sure that they continue to give their discretionary effort to your business, or that they leave as an advocate, rather than a critic.

### Be Clear

Explain clearly your final decisions and the impact on employees

- a. What are the new goals?
- b. What is their role in meeting them?
- c. What new ways of working do they need to follow?
- d. How will they be measured?

### Closing Thoughts

When you have to implement change, it often needs to be done swiftly and decisively. This need not mean that you railroad people through it, if you do the change will last only a short period. With a sense of urgency, brief people, and get them involved, they will increase the quality of your decisions.

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Courage Consulting is here to help your people reach peak performance, in times of change as well as times of stability. To make sure change sticks in your company, take the first step and call Fe Foreman on 07814 735253, or contact [enquiries@courage-consulting.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@courage-consulting.co.uk) < /enquiries@courage-consulting.co.uk> and we can think through what kind of support will help you most.

## When Change is No Longer a Dirty Little Word

Change. What a powerful word. For most people it elicits an immediately reaction. It has meaning... but what meaning does it have for you?

The study of human nature tells us that when things are suddenly different our primordial response is one of fear or at least caution. When we believe that something is happening that will cause things to no longer be the same our basic instinct is to pull back into a defensive response of fight or flight - because if things are not the same then whatever is different could pose a threat to us!

But there are also learned responses or behaviors that can take place as well. Some change we welcome, like new versions of

our favorite products. This isn't always true of course, but certainly products that have a high rate of advancement often elicit anticipation. What will the newest gadget or game system look like? What will I be able to do tomorrow that I can't do today?

When we see something that is different as new and exciting then our desire for that newness can also become addictive. Once our response is registered as exciting versus threatening we are drawn to newness. Job, partner and location are examples that can actually become addictive.

Why does our response to things being different sometimes become addictive instead of eliciting a flight or fear response? That's where things get really interesting. Again, back to good old human nature. While we (people) nominally seek stability in our lives that stability can lead to boredom. What really wakes us up and brings us to life? When something HAPPENS. Something different. Something that is NOT part of stability.

### Human Response is Contradictory

Human nature in respect to change is actually contradictory. While we often outwardly seek stability, we internally thirst for difference. It's our nature. That's just the way it is.

The best place for us to be is where we have a balance of stability and newness. That's a big part of the approach to process improvement I have founded and one of the foundational concepts responsible for its phenomenal success. One of the goals we should strive for is to find ways to operate safely within the balance of stability and change. It helps us to make our observations from a unique perspective while granting us the permission to challenge those things we instinctively know are not the right thing for us to be doing.

A resulting dynamic from this is the key to the future of greater success in adaptation. What we are finding is that as we move into a state of personal and organizational balance, the organizations we work for are becoming more agile with change being a natural behavior (rather than an imposed directive) with-

out the need to challenge the stability of the organization. We don't need to re-engineer wholesale - instead we become engaged in an ongoing process of continuous improvement that actually enhances stability by clearly aligning these activities with a common process goal.

### "Balance" Fosters Growth while Maintaining Stability

This balance is in itself something new for us. It's the first time we've had a place to go for help in striking the balance that is right for us, the context of our organization, and the external forces (market, economy, etc.) that are the loci of the pressure we all feel. As these factors exert varying influence on us, our activities adapt as well keeping us in balance regardless of how things are different.

So perhaps we should start thinking about how our personal balance ends up being the gyroscope of the business - the thing that keeps the organization whole and successful while all of these external forces whirl and swirl around us. That description is probably a lot more accurate than you think.

Customer alignment, advanced improvement, rapid but balanced change, retention of focus throughout, new observations that help us immediately do the right things for the right reasons. These are some of the benefits awaiting us.

### About the Author

Terry Schurter is an internationally recognized Thought Leader, Director of the nonprofit International Process and Performance Institute, Author and highly sought-after speaker. To learn more on Terry's perspectives or contact Terry please visit: the International Process and Performance Institute, <http://www.ipapi.org> or his personal website, <http://www.tschurter.com>.

## Economic Uncertainty Causes Workers to Quit-&-Leave and Quit-&-Stay

This is a true story about two great workers - Ben and Jason. Much about them is typical of today's Generation "Y" twenty-something workers. They were both hired by The Company during a campus recruitment program. They both are extremely talented and high-performing professionals - considered "high potentials" by their department head. And they both resigned within one year after being hired. They are prime examples of the direct and indirect casualties in today's "war for talent." Even during the worst economic conditions, there will always be a "war for talent" in order for organizations to successfully meet the ever-increasing challenges of uncertain times.

Who the casualties are in this scenario may be surprising. An obvious casualty is the organization itself. When The Company lost Ben and Jason, they lost valuable resources in whom much time and money had been invested. Then, additional time and money needed to be invested to bring other valuable resources on board to replace these "lost" employees.

In today's uncertain world of work, there are two types of talent loss:

### Those Who Quit-&-Leave and Those Who Quit-&-Stay?

This is a new definition of talent loss caused by today's more complex world of work. While turnover (quit & leave) is costly and disruptive, Quit-&-Stay? (disengaged workers) is often more problematic because of the devastating impact on productivity and morale within teams. Ben and Jason were Quit-&-Stayers? for several months before finally leaving.

Other less visible casualties include the "manager" and co-workers. When a valuable resource leaves an organization, co-workers are left feeling the loss not just from the leftover work load, but from more human perspectives. Researchers at Cornell University in their study "Ecology of Careers Panel Study" discov-

ered that employees are developing stronger ties to co-workers and increasingly rely on them for important personal connections. Interestingly, men are much more likely to have most of their strong ties to co-workers (14% for men, compared to 6% for women). Anytime an employee loses one of these key connections, as in the case of the friendship between Ben and Jason, the organization's losses increase exponentially.

Ben and Jason were valuable resources that made strong contributions. They were seen as motivated and effective. When they left, they left behind a sense of betrayal for their co-workers. "If Ben and Jason could just leave like that, I guess the organization isn't that great, after all - maybe I should be looking around, particularly with all the uncertainty in the economy." "Why should I work so hard?" "Maybe, there is something better for me outside this organization, too, even if times are tough." Suddenly, the option that there is may be a good opportunity outside the organization becomes a clear reality for employees and a wedge develops between the organization and the rest of the employees.

The manager is often seen as the loser in the war because he or she was not able to win the employee's commitment and zest for the job. The manager failed to motivate the employee to want to stay and contribute to this organization, and employee confidence in the manager can erode. Much research has been done on what motivates employees and there is strong consensus that people managers have the biggest impact on motivation and retention of employees.

Interestingly, motivating employees to stay in organizations longer does not necessarily have to be a big pinch to the organization's wallet. Money is one of the lesser motivators for employees especially if the "softer" motivators are present.

Over a decade ago, in *First Break All the Rules*, The Gallup Organization's Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman converted 25 years' worth of interviews with more than 1 million workers into a metric which they call the "Q12" that defined the bottom-line impact for employee workplace satisfaction. Further, they found that they can make strong predictions about how these

employees will perform in their workplaces by asking them the 12 questions. Not one of those 12 questions deal with compensation.

Explains Buckingham. "We set out to prove that if your Q12 scores go up, you'll lose fewer people, face fewer worker-compensation cases, suffer less shrinkage, and earn higher profits." Sure enough, they got precisely those results. Employees who answered "Strongly Agree" to the 12 questions were 50% more likely to work in business units with lower employee turnover, 38% more likely to work in more productive business units, and 56% more likely to work in business units with high customer loyalty."

In Gallup's newly released follow-up book, *12: The Elements of Great Managing*, they continue to link profitability to employee engagement:

\*\* Business units with many actively disengaged workers experience 31% to 51% more turnover than those with many engaged employees.

\*\* Disengagement-driven turnover costs businesses millions of dollars every year. Replacing an entry-level or frontline employee costs 25% to 80% of that person's annual wage. Replacing an engineer, a nurse, a salesperson, or other specialist costs between 75% to 400% of his or her annual salary.

Clearly, effective managers who create and foster trusting work environments win the war on voluntary attrition. In these work environments, employees believe that they are treated fairly and they experience sincere recognition for work well done. In return, employees do a good job, because they want to succeed for themselves and for their managers. Research continues to show that employees work well for "people," not for "organizations."

Ben and Jason could have been retained. With the right tools, the right processes, and the right organizational commitment, high-performing talent can not only be retained, but motivated to even greater heights of productivity and personal job satisfaction. And, in the case of Ben and Jason, the cost of losing

that kind of high potential talent was even worsened by the fact that they both ended up with a major competitor. The only real and lasting solution is for organizations to begin implementing practices that value and leverage the talent that they already have.

Solutions for both Quit-&-Leave and Quit-&-Stay? must include two fundamental principles:

1. One Size Fits One.

Organizations have come to realize that there are no average customers. There are no longer any average employees, either. A further complication: for the first time in organizational history, there are four generations working side-by-side in the workplace. The younger Generation Y brings challenges to the workplace that require speedy resolution or they will quickly move on - during times when your organization needs top talent more than ever.

2. Employee Ownership for Workplace Satisfaction.

Too long, managers have been held solely accountable for employee dissatisfaction and talent loss in their teams. Just as in any relationship, there must be authentic communication between the two parties about priorities and unmet needs. Until employees can articulate their workplace satisfaction priorities, organizations can only continue to guess at each employee's priorities and values.

Research indicates that an engaged worker is three times more effective and productive ... an objective that could mean the difference between winning and losing in today's marketplace.

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Change Resources Group has been successfully providing services to organizations in the area of change management for over 20 years to address the impacts of a wide diversity of change challenges, such as new leadership, consolidations and mergers, site relocations, restructuring, market and customer changes, and high growth.

CRG's team building division, Creative Reality Games, has executed a wide range of initiatives designed to help our clients maintain levels of service excellence, while improving team cohesion, productivity and profitability in a constantly changing world of work. This division has become known for its innovative retreats and team building events using current reality TV formats, such as: The Amazing Race, Apprentice, Survivor, Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?

Pat Thornton, M.B.A., (founder) has several years of experience in Canada and the U.S. with multi-national organizations, and as an executive coach in private practice. She began her human resources career at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. where she gained experience in public sector administration. Subsequently, she worked in Philadelphia and then New York City, where she developed a comprehensive background in customer service and sales training. After relocating to Toronto, she spent several years as a senior HR professional with multi-national organizations.

Pat's community service activities have included serving on the board of directors and as vice president for a multi-branch community credit union; member of the board of directors for a community social service organization, former vice president and member of the board of directors for a national association of women entrepreneurs; and volunteer facilitator/Mentor with Covenant House for employment re-entry workshops for youth.

Pat holds dual citizenship in the U. S. and Canada and has extensive experience in Europe and Asia.

## Things Do Not Change - We Do

We live in a world of constant change, and even though the vast majority of these changes are for the better, change is still something that many people - and therefore many organisations -

can find extremely difficult to deal with. Why is this, and what can be done to help people embrace change rather than fearing it?

### The nature of change

Change is all around us. Changes can be small or large, but the overall impression they create is of a world that is in a constant state of flux. Change may be welcome, but for many of us, the reaction to certain changes will be one of automatic resistance, which in turn often results in stress.

To accept change is akin to getting used to a new pair of shoes. The new shoes may be more waterproof, more hardwearing and better looking than our old ones, but they will almost certainly not be more comfortable until they are worn in. The amazing thing is that (assuming they are the right size and they fit properly) we often cannot envisage how or why we were so reluctant to put them on in the first place.

By definition, going forward involves some change, in order to keep on course. An organisation is either continually improving or it is failing, because no successful organisation can afford to simply 'stand still'. This is why it's so important that employees are given all the tools they need to help them embrace change and new ways of working - i.e. to feel comfortable in their 'new shoes'.

### Why is change so difficult to handle?

People are programmed into a pattern of behaviour with which they feel safe (their 'comfort zone'). Change can threaten this feeling of safety, and people can feel disempowered by change - particularly if it is imposed on them or challenges their accepted thinking. It is therefore vital for people to understand clearly why imposed changes are necessary, and how those changes will impact them, their position, their responsibilities, and possibly their remuneration and future prospects.

One reason that staff may resist change is if they don't think they will be comfortable in the new job environment or able to meet the new standards etc. If a change, particularly a fundamen-

tal change, is imposed within a company, a proportion of the staff affected will be bound to be dissatisfied. It is important to listen to their concerns and not to dismiss them out of hand - some of their worries may be valid and it is important for management to acknowledge this.

### How to make change work

If your organisation is contemplating a major change, you can help to facilitate this by taking account of the following:

? Think through the change and what is required of the personnel affected, in detail, so that a clear plan of implementation is available. Be aware that some retraining may be necessary and have a plan of action ready to implement this.

? Staff will respond best if they feel involved in the decision-making. Maybe they cannot be involved in all the major decisions, but their implementation will involve a number of smaller steps and they can almost certainly be involved somewhere (and add value by bringing in their experience).

? Everyone copes better with change if they feel at least in partial control of it. It is the feeling of being out of control that can be frightening to most of us. So involve your staff, as far as possible, in their own areas of the change. Perhaps set up an implementation team involving a member of staff from within each department and reporting up to - and down from -management.

? Keep everyone informed as far as is possible of timetables and details. The imagination and concerns of staff can run riot when they are kept in the dark, particularly if they are anxious about the change. Regular meetings are essential and even if time is short, don't abandon them. Make sure that the planned changes are clearly understood at all levels.

? Don't give in to the temptation to impose changes without consultation. Unless you can persuade your staff to buy into the change by means of the steps above, they may leave or become demotivated, neither of which will benefit the company. Similarly, a

culture of fear (where staff are actively discouraged from conveying concerns or showing vulnerability) is counterproductive.

? Everyone works better where they can see the benefit for themselves. So take time to think through not just the overall plan of the change, but how it will affect and benefit individuals, then 'sell' these benefits to those affected. Don't oversell them though, as staff will subsequently disbelieve anything you say. It is far better to be honest and admit that some things still need to be worked through, as this will help to build up trust with your employees.

? People need to feel they have some input to enable them to overcome their fears and anxieties. If you encourage them through this stage, they can become great advocates for the change and will work with you instead of automatically resisting.

? Accept that everyone's capacity for change is different and some will respond quicker or more easily than others.

? Try to break the change down into manageable parts so that the overall change does not seem too overwhelming. Consider running a pilot operation to smooth out the glitches and allow input from users.

? Once the change has been implemented, don't allow any return to the old ways or allow this as an option.

### Preparing your organisation for change

Because change is so much a part of everyday life, your employees will benefit greatly from initiatives that make them more resilient. At its most simple, this means helping your employees maintain a healthy mind, healthy body and the positive mental attitude needed to approach change as a challenge and opportunity for improvement.

We all know that eating healthily, exercising and not being overweight are important, and we also know exactly how to achieve this (whether we do it or not!). To have a positive mental

attitude may prove more difficult, and many of us are totally unaware of how to build our inner strength, with the consequence that when there is a problem, obstacle or required change, our internal capacity is not always sufficient and sometimes our mental manoeuvrability is too slow.

So how do you build inner resistance and strength? How can you prepare yourself for the challenges and adversities you will come across in the months and years ahead? One thing is certain, and that is that if you are not sufficiently resilient, your inflexibility will mean that eventually you will become an obstacle and instead of asking for your co-operation, colleagues will simply ignore you or go around you. We all know that the only way a skyscraper or any very tall structure can remain upright is for it to possess an inherent ability to move - albeit ever so slightly - with the prevailing wind and rain. We have to do the same, by learning to work with the forces we meet, moving and giving a little when the conditions demand it.

'It's not what happens to you, it's what you do about it'

The greatest challenge of all, in terms of change, is how to deal with adversity. I met W Mitchell, the US TV host, author and professional speaker, who lives and breathes his ethos that 'It's not what happens to you, it's what you do about it'. Here is a man who has overcome two life-threatening traumatic accidents that left him severely burned, without hands and paralysed. He has had to survive numerous operations and extensive plastic surgery, but talks to audiences from his wheelchair as if he were a tank commander addressing his troops. He has a quiet confidence and a measured delivery that possess an almost magnetic quality ... you cannot help but listen to his every word.

W Mitchell has overcome so many adversities in his life, and has come out the other side with strength and determination. 'Before I was paralysed there were 10,000 things I could do. Now there are 9,000. I can either dwell on the 1,000 I've lost or focus on the 9,000 I have left,' he says.

There is no doubt that the traumas W Mitchell has gone through have changed him as a person. His life script was not one that he planned and yet he takes on each challenge with an acceptance and gritty determination. His life experience makes him into the person he has become, his message is forceful and memorable, and he is a success story that we could all do well to try to emulate.

How we could all benefit from such inner strength and such a positive outlook!

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#### About The Author

Carole Spiers MIHE MISMA

Carole Spiers combines three roles of Broadcaster, Journalist and Corporate Manager in the challenging field of stress management and employee wellbeing.

Over the past 20 years, she has built up her corporate stress consultancy Carole Spiers Group (CSG), with prestige clients such as Sainsbury's, Rolls Royce and the Bank of England.

Carole is frequently called upon by the national and international media and provides keynote presentations on stress-related issues.

Carole was instrumental in establishing National Stress Awareness Day?.

## Change Acceleration - Ten Steps to Implement Change Faster

The economy has changed -- and we have to change our businesses in response if we are to weather the recessionary storms. What is more, we need to move quickly. Here are 10 things that any company can do to accelerate successful change implementation.

1. Articulate clearly the business problem that the change is supposed to solve Many change programmes run into the ground because they lose sight of the purpose of the change. Clarify, for everyone, what the problem is and what success looks like. Doing so will drive decision-making and ensure that you keep focused on the goal, despite inevitable distractions.

2. Identify the new level of performance that you want Know how much better things need to be. A big jump typically needs much time and many resources; a small jump needs less. Don't shoot for the stars if you only need to get to the Moon.

3. Identify the areas of highest leverage In practice, most of the value delivered from a change will come from no more than three or four things. Know what these are: small adjustments here will yield big results.

4. Set local standards for performance For each area of high leverage, set a local standard that demands and drives higher performance -- just for that area. This is what people will see, and it is something to which you can pay sustained attention.

5. Set triggers Under pressure, people revert to those styles of working where they are most comfortable. They forget to work differently, or they don't pay attention to the new way.

Prevent this by setting an external trigger: a signal in the job that tells people, in effect, that "now you need to work in the new way."

6. Set up a feedback engine If you need people to work differently, you need to manage them differently -- to pay attention to the new things you are asking people to do. If you want your new ways of working to stick, set up a feedback engine to drive continuous attention to the new ways of working.

7. Make the new ways of working easier If you want people to work differently you need to make it easier than the old way: yet most businesses implement change by doing the opposite. Instead, design your new ways of working to be as explicitly easy as possible, and preferably much easier than the old ways.

8. Make the old ways of working harder At the same time as you make the new ways of working easier, you can make the old ways of working harder. Put in extra steps, or make it more inconvenient to do things the old way. Make the new way of working the path of least resistance.

9. Deliver early and get feedback Perfection costs too much and takes FAR too long. Don't wait to get it right. As soon as any part of the change that you are introducing has been developed, get it in front of the people who will have to live with it, get quick feedback -- and repeat. It is much easier for people to assess the effectiveness of a change if they've had a chance to see it and try it -- even if it isn't perfect.

10. Don't get buy-in You can waste more time trying to secure 'buy-in' than anything else. Don't. Some people will never buy. If the change is necessary, don't offer people a spurious choice -- instead, implement your change by following steps 1-9 above and watch as performance improves quickly.

Some of these ideas are easy; some require some significant thought and effort. Regardless, however, if you adopt these tenets, then your change projects will deliver faster and more effectively. Good luck!

Mike Bird is a director with Bloomstorm, the Business Change Specialists. Bloomstorm helps companies who are striving to get a quick, practical return from their business change initiatives. Go to <http://www.bloomstorm.com> to find out more about Bloomstorm and what we do.

While there, sign up for our free monthly newsletter, Bloomstorm Briefing, to get practical tools and techniques to help you implement change more effectively in your company.

## Creating a Culture of Workplace Accountability

In an earlier article we defined accountability as being answerable for your actions or lack of actions. It's doing what you say you will do...doing what you have agreed to do, even when it means going outside of your comfort zone. It is a serious matter because without systematic accountability in an organization there is little chance of high performance.

What happens where there is a lack of accountability? Non-performers thrive while the diligent staff picks up the slack. The stress level rises, communication drops and territorialism is rampant.

How does an organization go about creating a culture of accountability where everyone agrees to work together for the good of the organization and actually does so. The culture of a company takes on an element of accountability when employees are self-motivated to contribute to the overall success of the company. Throughout history however there have been many examples of companies that relied on threats and intimidation in order to assure accountability. This works so long as the supervisor is always present with a gun to everyone's head to assure compliance. When the overseer turns his/her back however, the employee's behavior may revert to something less than accountable. This kind of work environment fosters an adversarial relationship between management and line workers where the best case is that

line workers will only do the minimum level of production in order to avoid getting fired.

So, the standard of accountability must rely on something other than external control. Experts have noted that organizational success happens when all staff are focused on the same goal. But how does this happen? First of all, everyone needs to hear what the organization's mission, vision and goals are...and hear about it repeatedly. This necessitates a lot of interaction between management and line staff. The second part of these conversations includes a specific plan for everyone in the organization to follow in order that their piece of meeting the organizational objective is followed. Everyone from top to bottom should feel like they own an important piece of the process in order for the organization's overall goal to be achieved. They should see that their job and the way it is done makes a difference. This awareness should guide their work behavior from one hour to the next. Company leaders need to help everyone see what specific behaviors will lead to the company realizing its goals and which ones will reduce the possibility of that happening. When achieving the company's goal becomes important to the employee so that it drives specific behavior, accountability levels tend to be very high and remain so on a consistent basis. Finally, employees need regular feedback about how the company is doing and about the importance of their efforts to organizational success. When success is not achieved, leaders need to search for systemic reasons why rather than look for some employee to blame. Success on the other hand needs to be recognized, celebrated and rewarded.

If you want to increase the performance of your organization and save thousands of wasted dollars from going down the drain because of unaccountable and unmotivated staff, check out Larry's newsletter. It's free and is distributed twice a month. Each issue is short, to the point and has an article of interest to organizational leaders. Visit on the link below to subscribe.

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## ERP White Paper is the Key in Dealing With Change

Change is inevitable. If there is one thing that is constant in this world, that is change. With the changing needs of the business, everything must change. Change happens from business processes to management. Every aspect of the business must move with the flow or else the company will eventually become stagnant. That is why every business process must be in sync with the rest of the business. Those who resist change can get left behind. There are still people who are resistant to change which creates problems for the company. The company needs to go with the flow in order to survive and not everybody understands that. That is why there is a need for the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning. So all the problems brought upon by change in management will be addressed. In order to make sure that expectations are met when it comes to ERP, read the ERP White Paper first. So you know what you will be getting yourself into and what you will somehow have an idea on what to do when hurdles happen.

The key reason why ERP works especially whether you work for a big or small company is because of the database integration of many business functions. Do you know that most non-manufacturing companies, as well as, non-profit organizations use ERP and is now part of their systems? That is why all the other types of industries are following suit. Thus, there is an increasing need for ERP White Paper because as soon as everybody knows what an ERP does, the ERP white paper will cease to exist. So let us take advantage of what is readily available now, while it is there, than look for it when it no longer exists. Although, by that time there will be people who are well-versed when it comes to all aspects of Enterprise Resource Planning.

Cheryl Forbes owns and operates the website  
<http://www.erpwhitepapers.net>  
<<http://www.erpwhitepapers.net/>>

## Should Employees Have Any Say in Business Decisions

Many decisions are made in any business day to day. As for the decisions of new clients or expansion it is the executives of a business that make these decisions and certainly they have the information to do so. But in the every day workings of the organization there are hundreds of decisions going on every day. In any job an employee may have it will be the procedure to ask a manager when a problem arises or for the employee to take care of the problem. This will come down to how well the employee is trained and how much trust management has in the employee. There is no problem with the employee reporting back the events of the day but having the employee make decisions usually takes care of the customer faster.

When a decision has to be made about changing a procedure in the department or maybe it does affect the entire business it is often beneficial to get ideas or feedback from the employees. This can be done in a meeting or by a survey. The employees are the ones doing the jobs and can often see that a problem may occur or suggest a slightly different way for the procedure or implementation of the procedure. This also empowers the employees and let's them know they are valued. Instead of everything just being handed down, it lets them know they are part of the process.

Though I would not suggest this for every decision the ones that directly and immediately affect the employees might be the ones that involve them a little. It should be the goal of any business to make employees feel a part of the business and that they matter.

Liz Cosline

Author of:

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One Voice (publishamerica)

Unexpected Knowing (publishamerica)

Notice for Arrival (publishamerica)  
<http://songofoneunexpectedlife.info>

## Leadership Coaches - 10 Signs of Leadership Gone Wrong

Leaders sometimes lose their way. That does not make it right, but it does make them human.

2008 is history which became painfully personal for many people. The stories of leadership failures exploded with graphic illustrations....insurance companies, investment companies, several banks and the auto companies, just to name a few. Those too big to fail became human with too many stories and examples of arrogance, greed and incompetence. Leadership failures created a tsunami of distrust of business and government leaders. Before recovery, leaders need to understand all the signs of leadership gone wrong.

Here are 10 signs of Leadership Gone Wrong:

1. Stubbornness
2. Being closed to ideas, adjustments, feedback
3. Not accepting accountability and responsibility
4. Ignoring bad behavior
5. Greed
6. Arrogance
7. Lack of focus, clarity of objectives

8. Dishonest
9. Playing the blame game
10. Self centered and uninspired

Take a moment and assess your traits - do you sometimes ignore bad behavior? (Sign #4) Maybe, you accept bad behavior. Or when you see it you walk away. For some leaders, it may be they think they know all the answers, so they stop listening until the situation becomes a crisis. (Sign #2) Either response dismisses the needs of creating a prosperous and healthy company and workplace. It may feel easier to 'avoid' but is it 'better'?

Elegant Courage is ethical leadership which can be learned...it is a choice. One first step is honesty with what is truly going on in the organization. Hope and trust can be restored with a commitment to clarify and ensure acceptable behavior. Whether board member, leader or employee...all have a choice.

Jodi Wiff and Mike Krutza have tackled big issues and big challenges. Over the years, they have been involved in just about every important phase of business. They lead an organization through tough times. The company was losing \$300,000 per month. Employees and directors were hostile with each other. Here's what they created..the company was described by employees as the best place to work..Profits were \$500,000 per month and the company was one of top in 10 in capital of similar companies in U.S. <http://lighthouse-leadership.com>

Key is their innovative approach to leadership. Jodi Wiff developed the mantra Elegant Courage <<http://www.lighthouse-leadership.com>> Jodi lead the cultural turnaround which was core to financial recovery. Jodi innovatively helps people gain clarity how they feel so they muster the courage to do whats right. Mike is innovative and persistently explores new ideas. Together, their raw intuition from their years of experience allows immediate penetration into your issues. Brought to bear in combination, makes a powerful one two punch.

## Overcoming Resistance to Change

54 percent of wars between nations end in negotiated settlements, but only 24 percent of civil wars end that way. (Source: Reuter) Opponents in a civil war usually have to lay down arms before peace is reached. Once they do so, they both have to trust that the newly formed government will protect them. Since that government is likely to be under the control of the stronger side, the weaker side is left with no way back - if the peace breaks down.

It seems that the most inclusive approaches to change management do get people to work on "negotiated settlements" or to come up with plans together. But once the sheen is off the attention to this particular change, mistrust begins to creep back in. It has to be with power - or lack of it.

There is no easy answer, but here are some things I think are worth considering:

1. Mistrust usually runs deep and people are rightfully afraid to make deals with those they fear. Agreements made during planning meetings must be protected strongly by the most senior leaders.

2. It is easier for people to give lip service to agreement than it is to actually live by fine sounding words. (Look how many marriage vows turn out to be empty words. And those promises were made to people who were in love!) In planning meetings be thrilled when former warring parties even agree to minor concessions with each other. These are more likely to be sincere gestures.

3. Examine the structure/system/culture - call it what you will - that reinforces old behaviors. Often our organizations inadvertently reward some and punish others. Two groups can make a real effort to work together, only to find that the organization is used to the old ways of working. And pretty soon things are back to the status quo.

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## Top 5 Questions About Implementing Open Innovation

A series of executive roundtables on open innovation conducted around the United States and in the United Kingdom in late 2008 generated much debate. Even so, common themes developed around questions dealing with implementation, conflict over intellectual property, creating open innovation networks, and creating measurement systems. Here are my answers to the Top Five Questions on Open Innovation:

How do I implement open innovation in my organization?

The biggest issue with implementation is that you cannot simply copy another company. Too often a CEO mandates an open innovation initiative because it works for another company and thinks it can simply be duplicated. It just doesn't work that way. Another issue comes as a result of the lack of company-wide engagement. A go-getter director initiates a program for a department, typically R&D, and the rest of the company is indifferent or even resistant to the changes.

Finally, implementation deals with an intangible problem created in a company probably already in shock from too many recent changes to the organization, making it unable to process yet another restructure or corporate culture adjustment.

Every company is unique and must develop an approach to open innovation that fits its needs. Make sure the engagements are

the right size. In several cases clients expressed remorse that an open innovation project took two full quarters to implement and then came the realization that the market potential for the project is too small, making the open innovation effort seem trivial.

How do I strike a balance between open innovation and intellectual property?

The big challenge for any company that has not mandated open innovation from the highest level is that legal departments will try to preserve the status quo. As a result, the legal framework is too rigid and stifling to open innovation operations. And all too often traditional executions of legal agreements take too much time to generate. Easily half a quarter can be lost waiting for legal documents that would allow you and the client to start working.

A significant legal improvement for joint development, usually associated with open innovation, occurred in 2004 with The Cooperative Research and Technology Enhancement Act of 2004. Before the revision, Section 103(c) provides "a safe harbor for inventions that are the product of collaboration involving co-inventors within a single company. However, scientific research is increasingly being conducted jointly by multiple companies, universities, government labs, and/or other entities." That is why the Create Act amended the law so that with joint development agreements in place, entities can patent the research from joint projects as commonly seen in open innovation.

How do I assemble a good open innovation network?

Without a network, open innovation is dead. We examined the different types of connections: solution bounty, internally prequalified, business partners, suppliers, and crowd sourcing:

1. A Solution Bounty offers a reward for offering a solution to a specific question. On the positive side, it is easy to establish through a third-party, and typically you will find an extremely large number of innovators connected. Some of the disadvantages include the tendency towards innovation against specification which can be too myopic. And transparent problem briefs signal strengths and weaknesses to your competitors.

2. Internally Prequalified typically exist in the largest companies in OI. IP issues are handled upfront and the framework supports innovation-against-specification and mission innovation based on the closer engagements between the client and members.

3. Business Partners typically are rich in resources compared with typical small innovators, and they are more inclined to think bigger and understand the innovation mission. Some detractors with engaging business partners include the danger that the partner can claim the joint project and you end up boxed out. Also, make sure IP issues are addressed up front.

4. Suppliers have inside knowledge of your strategy, and ideally, are more likely to generate disruptive technology. Supplier relationships tend to mitigate IP issues, too. If they value your business, they have a lot to lose if something fails. So normally, suppliers do not squabble over IP so they can maintain client relationships.

5. Not all businesses have strong opportunities in Crowd Sourcing. If you are in such a business, crowd sourcing builds customer loyalty and practical knowledge of your value proposition. The primary detractor is the cost associated with managing customer-feedback processes.

How can you evaluate open innovation?

As with any field that is new, no final answer is available. We can start by examining how open innovation compares to traditional internal methods. Compare the results and time to market of open innovation to previous methods. Ultimately, open innovation should increase profitability compared with only using internal methods.

To assess open innovation by output, we can ask a series of questions. What percentage of sales came from externally licensed technologies? Is this percentage increasing or decreasing compared with 2-3 years ago? What percentage of net income last year came from technology licensed out to other companies? Is this percentage increasing or decreasing compared with 2-3 years ago?

In assessing opening innovation in terms of time to market, we should ask how long does it take for patented ideas created inside the company to be transitioned to the firm's own products and services? Has this interval changed in the past five years? How? What percentage of internal ideas are offered for external license? How much time elapsed between the patenting of ideas and their external licensing?

What are the biggest advantages of using open innovation?

While this wasn't a common question, and the participants were already sold on using open innovation, I want to address it to end on a positive note. The two key benefits are speed and the ability to capitalize on knowledge and labor regardless of where it resides.

Speed. Open innovation fosters faster exchanges of ideas through innovation action networks and shared development. Open innovation is more agile, better able to deal with uncertainty of markets and enables technology development processes that are more adaptive and efficient. Every company is facing greater demands to respond faster to their market and open innovation can enhance those efforts.

Distributed knowledge and labor. Organizations can more effectively capitalize on skilled labor that is mobile and independent. We are reaching the end of knowledge monopolies based on conventional business models. Globalization trends require increased knowledge to compete in other markets. However, in practice, companies are reducing their internal knowledge bases in an effort to run lean. The best way to meet knowledge and labor limitations is to use open innovation methods.

Open innovation is about more than a small change in R&D. It has the potential to revolutionize business. But at this stage of the revolution, the open innovation process is chaotic. My advice is to get involved early, fail quickly and often, learn from your mistakes and develop best practices for your company.

About Nerac

Nerac Inc. (<http://www.nerac.com>) is a global research and advisory firm for companies developing innovative products and technologies. Nerac analysts deliver custom assessments of product and technology development opportunities, competitor intelligence, intellectual property strategies, and compliance requirements through a proven blended approach to custom analysis: review of technical knowledge, investigation of intellectual property, and appraisal of business impacts. Nerac deploys analysts in diverse disciplines to help clients discover new applications, serving as a catalyst for new thinking and creative approaches to business problems or identifying strategic growth opportunities.

## Personal Development For Entrepreneurs - Your Biology Wants to Prevent You From Making Changes

Your survival mechanism should be pleased with itself; you are still here. Depending on how pleased you are with your life to date, you may agree more or less with how well your instincts worked. But you are here and likely in one piece, so on a primal level, your survival system succeeded, and it will continue to do its job, scanning your environment for possible threats.

At the survival level, change is a threat because it brings the unknown. And the unknown may be good or bad news, who knows? Status quo feels at first glance safer, at least until proven otherwise. So when you want to change your habits for example, you are fighting your primal instincts; no wonder it's so difficult to make a change stick.

You might manage to make yourself behave differently for a little while, and then before you know it, you're back to your old ways because the instinct took you back to your old way before you realized it. It's doing its job and its drive is, well, primal.

What can you do to counteract that force; how do you change successfully?

One word: awareness. Even better, two words: constant awareness.

Change represents the unproven, there's no way around that. Your job is to use your mind to show your deeper instincts that status quo is more dangerous than change. Remind yourself of the negatives of not changing, and of the gains from changing.

Doing that once is not enough, as your instincts will drift you back to your old ways unless you remind yourself often of what you want to do and why. That's one of the reasons why having some source of support especially at first, can improve your chances.

If you want access to more information on how to be more purposeful, attractive, profitable and less stressed as a business owner, check out <http://www.WhereBusinessMeetsSpirit.com>

It is created by Helene Desruisseaux (Helene D.), who combines years of upper corporate management with research in the fields of personal growth, energy psychology, and mind/body/soul integration. She helps entrepreneurs design their businesses around their purpose and unique personalities, so that they can have both success and a high quality of life. Yes, even in this economy.

**An Air Battle - On the Ground**

In the aviation world, one hears of competition and disagreements in the skies, but in India, over the past year, an air-related battle has been steadily brewing -- on the ground.

Ground-handling is all the work on the ground relating passengers, cargo and aircraft. It involves passenger check-in, aircraft cleaning, aircraft handling, fuelling, baggage handling, cargo handling, boarding and disembarking passengers i.e. attaching the aero-bridge or ladder, etc. It does not include engineering functions, and catering. Most passengers remain blissfully unaware of ground handling, since much of it happens out of sight, and is transparently to us, till there is a hiccup.

In India, most domestic airlines do the ground handling themselves also called "self handling", as they find it cheaper. Some foreign airlines with extensive operations to a given city, also do self-handling. Other airlines outsource the ground handling to either Air India or private companies like Cambata Aviation.

This has produced what I can best describe as an "organised zoo" at most Indian airports, especially the larger ones. As per the government, currently, more than 50 ground handling agencies, employing over 70,000 people, operate in India, which in many ways leads to chaos and congestion, especially at Mumbai and Delhi airports.

The duplication of equipment is enormous, as is the consumption of space used to store them when not in use, which is significant. The multitudes of companies and people involved, have also created a security nightmare in terms of administration.

To address these issues, in 2007, the Government of India laid down a new Ground Handling Policy (GHP). The Indian Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued a circular dated September 28, 2007, and the Airports Authority of India issued a notification dated October 18, 2007 - to be effective January 1, 2009 that essentially said, airlines cannot employ their own staff for ground handling, nor can they engage any outside agency at the six major airports (Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chen-

nai, Hyderabad, Bangalore), other than from a basket of those pre-selected by the airport operator. Simultaneously, the new policy also clarified that only domestic airlines can handle the ground services at the other smaller airports.

The idea was noble, and does make sense. The six major airports were to have selected two ground handling agencies, each, to provide services, using "competitive bidding to ensure that the best-equipped ground handling agency is selected.", but, as with any government initiative, it got lost in translation to policy, and flawed in implementation.

A taste of the "competitiveness" was given earlier this year, when the government had to back down from implementing this policy, after airlines boycotted <http://aviation.deveshagarwal.com/2008/03/rgia-rebellion-lessons-for-bial.html> India's first private Greenfield airport, the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Hyderabad, citing the exorbitant prices demanded by the private ground handling agents. The back-down affected the revenue plans of all airports, especially the privately operated ones at Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, and Hyderabad.

A government affidavit in a recent court case also gives us clues to some of the motives behind the new GHP. The affidavit admits that "upkeep, development and upgradation of the airport infrastructure require financial resources, which are to be raised from airport-related services such as ground handling. This ensures generation of income not only for the airport operator to maintain the infrastructure, but to ensure orderly growth and development of the airports."

Another fundamental flaw is the inclusion of passenger facing services such as check-in in the ground handling policy. Check-in is a core customer service and product differentiation function for airlines. To expect airlines to exclude themselves from this critical function, is outright naive, and has expectedly, invited protests and non-cooperation from the airlines and their staff.

Another factor, and for this, one has to blame decades of left-leaning, communist hugging, Indian labour laws, that allow an organisation to hire a person, but never to fire. Government being the champion of these laws, and by extension all government controlled entities, have thus created a culture which tolerates unheard levels of incompetence, indifference, and sloth, in some cases bordering on criminal.

The state owned carrier, Air India, is also, one of the biggest ground handlers, but has formed a separate joint venture company Air India-Singapore Airport Terminal Services (AI-SATS) for ground handling. In most countries, one would logically expect a smooth transfer of employees to the new company and minimal disruption, but not in this case. After all, SATS has operational control, and will demand maximum productivity from these employees.

Naturally, incidences of union led disruptions have erupted over the last month, as the implementation date draws closer. A union called CAJAF (Civil Aviation Joint Action Front) has been protesting

<<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/002200812131812.htm>> , disrupting ground operations, and in a totally deplorable incident, Air India staff, part of CAJAF, beat up the COO of SATS <<http://travel.asiaone.com/Travel/News/Story/A1Story20081222-109631.html>> , Mr. Karamjit Singh.

Thanks to the inclusion of passenger check-in in to the GHP, and exclusion of foreign carrier, employee unions of of foreign carriers, Gulf Air, British Airways and Saudi Arabian Airlines have challenged the notifications in court claiming this would lead to job losses for over 50,000 workers. Staff of other airlines are silently cheering them on.

I must congratulate the government on achieving the impossible. In one fell swoop, the policy has united domestic and international airlines, as well as trade unions in their wrath. While the employees fear the new policy will divest a staggering 15,000 people of their jobs, airlines fear that it will affect customer services.

A new approach to ground handling is critically required, but it needs to be done with cooperation and rational expectations from all sides. Everyone will have to compromise to reach an amicable solution. The question is will they? As usual your comments are requested.

The author Devesh Agarwal is a Director at a company in the Power Over Ethernet domain, and a specialist in value chains. He can be reached via Bangalore Aviation <<http://aviation.deveshagarwal.com>> , an independent aviation, airports, airlines, travel news and opinions blog based out of Bangalore, India, with real time Bangalore flight arrival & departure information.

## Do We Really Need to Go All the Way to the Top?

Last week I was in Warm Springs, Virginia, a wonderful little town nestled in the Allegheny Mountains, enjoying a much needed getaway with my wife. Feeling a little restless we decided to take advantage of the beautiful vista's surrounding us. We were encouraged by some friends to visit Ingalls Overlook They said there was a "short" trail that led to the top of the mountain and, should we take it, we would be rewarded with the most spectacular view in the region. Since it was so clear, despite the freezing temperatures, we decided that we did not want to settle for just the good view. We wanted the best view!

Though a bit of a steep climb the first few minutes were delightful, but soon the cold air and high altitude began to take its toll. Lungs burning and heart racing we came to a clearing that had a good view, and I began to think, "I like good views best."

I knew that Lea was cold and tired, "Do we really need to go all the way to the top?" (We missed the sign that said 2.4 miles to the top and back) Should we just turn back now?" It was at this point, the point where we were willing to settle for what was good, that we had an unexpected surprise... we saw another couple walking toward us. And you guessed it, they were descending after experiencing the view at the top

We greeted each other and through a short conversation we quickly discovered numerous connections. We had graduated from the same college and knew some of the same people. As we ended our conversation they strongly encouraged us to keep going to the top. "It will be worth it," they said, "you won't regret the effort!" So with renewed resolve we kept climbing the mountain.

We finally made it to the top and discovered that, in deed, it was worth the effort. The view was breathtaking. It really was the best!

As I trekked back down the mountain I began to reflect on how much like life this little adventure was. Three things stood out to me.

1) There is a really good reason why we need to invite others to hold us accountable to our goals. Why? Because when you are in pain...your goals want to change! I wanted to reach the top, but when things became challenging and painful, my thoughts headed down hill. My negative thinking was giving me permission to quit. Therefore we have to be careful to guard our thoughts, and make them work for us and not against us.

2) We need encouragement along the way. No matter how strong and independent we think we are, when we are tired and in pain, a word of encouragement is needed. It is especially empowering to hear from someone who has been there before us. It may be a quick conversation from an acquaintance or the sustained relationship of a coach, but we need others and their encouragement.

3) Perseverance always pays off. I am absolutely convinced that, as the saying goes, "The good is often the worse enemy of the best." Too often I am willing to settle for what is good because I am not willing to persevere through the challenge or pain. I quit too soon. But if we will not give up on our goal to experience the best, we will be rewarded with a life full of vistas that few others have ever seen.

Rolfe Carawan is founder and CEO of Carawan Global Communications and Consulting. Speaking to organizations ranging from Fortune 500s and high-tech companies to healthcare and non-profits, Rolfe has helped over 1/4 million people throughout America, as well as audiences on four continents. Rolfe uses his exceptional ability to communicate time-tested principles with humor and wit, and provides keen insight on successfully transitioning people through change, transforming human behavior, building unified teams, and overcoming generational gaps. Clients include Embassy Suites, General Motors, US Army, Lucent Technologies, GlaxoSmithKline, Consolidated Nutrition and Wayerhaeuser. With a gift for connecting the head and the heart, Rolfe's powerful message hits home every time and its effects are felt long after his presentation.

Inspired by his passion to relieve suffering and release potential, Rolfe has authored and co-authored several books on the power of principled living, including Profiles In Character and The Character Revolution. A man who decidedly "walks his talk," Rolfe founded and oversees a non-profit organization that has for 18 years provided families with strategies for successfully growing together, especially through the sometimes volatile transition of the teen years.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>How to Develop a Business Owner Mentality With Your Employees</b></p>
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Join me for a moment and think back to some of the the names and faces of previous employees. You know, the good ... the bad ... the ugly. The ones that did (or did not) make a positive contribution to your organization. I did this the other day and was immediately reminded of two extremely contrasting individuals.

First, there was Sandy. Great at first and we were impressed. She initially went the extra mile, seemed to work hard, and turned in superb work.

But very soon she began to develop an attitude of entitlement and a hidden agenda. I'll never forget the day it all came to light. We found she had used the company credit card to purchase "samples" of expensive items - for her own personal use.

After we let her go, even more things came to light and we discovered the credit card incident was only the tip of the iceberg. For example, she had consistently booked events at a very expensive, high-priced hotel chain - and collected all the associated "frequent flyer points" to her own account. Through the points she accumulated, she was able to take several weekend get-aways as well as use her points to buy a new laptop. But the frosting on the cake was her web browser. It seems she had visited many questionable websites - for no apparent reason except to find and set up clandestine rendezvous scenarios with other singles.

But, second, there was Ally. We had the good fortune of hiring her in a small, start-up business. She, too, started out with a bang. But she kept right on performing - and then outperforming - her previous levels of work.

Ally also had incredible insights and emotional maturity. She seemed to instinctively know what needed to be done to get this new business off the ground. She empathized with the owner's struggles and worries. It was almost as if she could feel what it felt like to walk in his shoes.

As it turns out, she was absolutely invaluable to the success of that organization. The company ended up paying her like royalty ... and it was worth every penny!

Now think about whom you'd rather have working for you? Someone with an agenda for personal gain, or one who has the best interests of the organization in mind? The answer should be obvious - you'd want the employees that views life from an owner's perspective. You'd want Ally any day of the week!

The question is how can we identify and develop, more employees like Ally?

Based on my many years in human resources and management, here are three things you should do:

1. Screen out the bad apples. There's a saying that anyone can interview well or even perform well during the 3-month honeymoon period. True. But then the real person begins to show up. Our goal is to find out who that "real person" is before they ever come on the payroll! One of the best methods of weeding out the bad apples is to follow all the standard HR hiring practices (completed application, background check, drug and drivers check, etc.). In addition to that, however, we must check references. No, I'm not talking about the "can you confirm if Joe worked there from X to Y dates" type of reference check. I'm talking about the kind of reference where you talk to a previous manager or supervisor. Where you can get honest answers to questions like, "tell me about Joe's work ethic," or "can you give me an example of a project Joe did for you that really impressed you and your customers?" And of course, never fail to ask, "given the opportunity, would you enthusiastically rehire Joe?" Enthusiastically rehire is the key phrase there. See, we're looking for the kind of people that previous employers can't help but just rave about!

Now, I know HR tells these previous managers not to give out references. But if they don't, who really wins? The good guys or the bad guys? The bad guys do. When a supervisor is afraid to give a reference, the bad employees are allowed to slip through. So, if I call for a reference and I'm told, "I'm sorry I can't give a reference," you are likely to hear me say, "Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. I personally thought Joe would be a great member of our

team. Unfortunately, If we can't get a rave review, we can't extend an offer." Then I'm quiet. Guess what? Many times, the person will respond (whispering), "Now, don't tell HR I told you this, but Joe was GREAT! I'd feel terrible if you didn't hire him just because I couldn't give you a reference. And by the way, yes, we would enthusiastically rehire Joe any day of the week. He made such a great contribution to our company when he was here." Now, that's the kind of reference you want! And if you can't get that kind of rave review ... don't hire the candidate, no matter how impressive they appear on paper.

2. Engage and empower. Once you have your great business owner mentality candidate on board, the ball is now in your court to develop that person. High achievers and top performers will not be motivated by a tight-fisted, micromanagement style. They are creative. They are ambitious. They think outside the box. And they are always looking for better and faster ways of doing things. Don't stifle that creativity! Let them run. Ask them for their opinion. Give them opportunities to work on projects that let them shine. And be sure to always give them lots of credit! It's the only way to get them engaged in what they're doing for you.

When it comes to empowering, I've always liked "Sherman's 6 Degrees of Delegation" model, designed by M. Harvey Sherman, former president of the American Society of Public Administration. He recommends, and I agree, that power should be doled out a little at a time. It's not unlike teaching your teenager about responsibility and accountability when they want to borrow the car. For example, you initially set up your expectations (where they're going, how long they'll be gone, and when they'll be home). After the expectations are set, they get to borrow the car for an hour or two. If that goes well (i.e., they're home on time and there are no dents in the fenders), then you allow a little more freedom next time.

Remember, these superstars must be allowed to earn increasing levels of responsibility and opportunity. If they don't see an opportunity with you, they'll look for another job that offers them the chance to grow.

3. Pay your performers generously. Finally, the tough talk. I know, you have a budget. You can't pay more than x amount of salary. Well, I'm here to encourage you to make an exception to that rule. Why? Because you can't afford to lose a strong player over a few hundred dollars.

For the most part, the "think like a business owner" person doesn't take a job just for the money. They're looking for the opportunity to add the skills and experience to their personal toolbox. But taking advantage of this attitude would be a fatal mistake on the employer's part.

Here's what I'd recommend. Set up a "pay for performance" metric where you can pay that person over and above their base salary. For example, if they design a more efficient process, pay them a one-time bonus of \$1,000. If they complete a project ahead of schedule (and your company profits), pay them another bonus of \$500. You get the picture. Like my grandma used to say, "don't be penny-wise and pound-foolish." Here's a quick mental check for you: do you want them working for your competition? Probably not. So, set up a generous pay-for-performance program for them. Trust me, it will be worth every penny.

### SUMMARY

So, if you want more employees like Ally, spend more time up front screening and interviewing. Then, when you find the right person, get them engaged and empowered by getting out of their way and letting them perform. If you give them room, they'll outperform everyone else on your team. And finally, don't be stingy about paying your top performers. Pay them fairly. Pay them more than fairly. Make it such an enriching experience that they'll willingly and richly contribute to your bottom line.

Follow these three guidelines, then sit back and watch as your key players start to think like business owners who deliver unbelievable results to your organization!

### Sherman's Six Degrees of Delegation

1. Take action - no further contact with me is needed.

2. Take action - let me know what you did.
3. Look into this problem - let me know what you intend to do; do it unless I say not to.
4. Look into this problem - let me know what you intend to do; delay action until I give approval.
5. Look into this problem - let me know alternative actions available with pros/cons and recommend one for my approval.
6. Look into this problem - give me all the facts; I will decide what to do.

Quoted from Harvey Sherman, *It All Depends: A Pragmatic Approach to Organizations* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1966), pp. 83-84.

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As a Human Resources professional, Bonnie lends over 20 years of experience in human resources, employment law, training & development, and sales management to each workshop and seminar. She offers management and communications training solutions as a corporate facilitator, professional trainer, and motivational speaker. Her custom-designed, high-energy programs include innovative, interactive exercises to ensure her curriculum has immediate application.

## The Error Proofing Component of the Change Management Toolset

Error Proofing is a process improvement that aims to prevent a specific defect from occurring in a production line. Effective error proofing involves detection of the error by the operator, feedback to stop the process, so that the error can be put right and problem solving by the improvement team to take corrective and preventative action.

Error proofing reduces the risk of:

- ? Operator injury
- ? Faulty products
- ? Machine damage and
- ? Defective product being produced or passed to the next process

The change agent's challenge is to change the culture within an organization so that the new mantra becomes:

Don't accept a defect  
Don't make a defect and  
Don't pass a defect on (to the customer)

Lean Six Sigma is a currently popular change management methodology in which the term for error proofing is Poka Yoke. The number one objective of poka yoke is to achieve zero defects.

Error proofing enforces procedures which are set in stone ensuring quality and almost entirely eliminating defects. As such, it:

- ? Eliminates the cost of product inspections since none will be necessary
- ? Makes waste costs insignificant
- ? Frees up operator time for the task at hand rather than problem solving and
- ? Promotes an attitude of continuous improvement.

A defect is a product that fails to meet set specifications whereas an error is any deviation from set process. In the error proofing process, inspection of the product occurs after each process is complete, so that errors can be detected close to their causative source. Once the causative process has been identified, the team then brainstorms all possible errors that might have resulted in the relevant defect. Quantitative data is recorded and special note of potential causes that occur on an ongoing basis is noted. Finally, the root cause is identified by testing out, often by a questioning technique called 5-Why which seeks to determine the root cause by repeatedly drilling down through asking the question why.

With knowledge of the cause of the error, the team can then conduct a solution finding exercise in order to develop an effective manual or automated, integrated error proofing system. Such a system might include limit or touch switches, photo-electric sensors or proximity switches. In all cases the triggering of the error proofing system will set off an alarm and/or halt the production process so that the error can be rectified.

Low cost error proofing devices which are inexpensive to replace make good economic sense. The ideal situation is to design a product that cannot be assembled incorrectly, so at best, devices should prevent the ability to make a defect. However, if the defect cannot be prevented, the device should prevent it from being passed to the next production process.

It is also imperative that the device provides prompt identification of defect location, allowing for quick troubleshooting. Error proofing deployment needs to be a rapid process since minimal disruption of the system means limited loss of income to the organization. Initial investigations to device implementations should certainly span, no more than a month for minimal process disruption.

Dividing the error proofing procedure into small steps each assigned to a named operator has proven a particularly effective approach when it comes to getting quick results. It has also been proven beneficial to run daily review sessions and to address issues raised promptly.

Assessment of the impact of changes made needs to be frequent. Further, as the system becomes more active in error detection, it will become possible to detect errors at an earlier stage so that new error proofing solutions should continue to be sought on an ongoing basis.

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## Change Management - Times of Increased Failure Risk in the Wake of Economic Meltdown

The economic melt down has created a new dangerous environment for organizational managers wishing to implement change. Senior management now have to take a very careful look at how any change is implemented to ensure that they increase engagement in the workplace BEFORE any change is implemented. That takes some very specialized skills.

People are stressed. There can be no argument about the levels of anxiety that most people are now experiencing through economic uncertainty, high prices and the added stress these place on families and relationships. These stressors also translate into added workplace pressures and potential workplace disharmony. That long planned change initiative you have been going to implement will only exacerbate the problem unless you are careful about how you implement.

First, review whatever part of the organization you had planned to change. Is it really necessary? Can you live without it taking place or is it necessary for your organizations survival?

If it is necessary then you need to balance the risk of failure with the resources you are prepared to use. Change is fraught with danger at the best of times. People resist change - always have, always will. So after you have identified the need for change and perhaps identified the desired result, think carefully about how to implement change without incurring the wrath of your people and a potentially fatal back lash.

Implementing change in these times of anxiety needs special methods to bring "on-board" the 80% of your people who will resist the change or actively fight against it. You need to clearly identify how the change strategy will be perceived by your people and whether they will see the change as being negative to their

welfare. And get the message clear in your head and the heads of your senior management - "Just because you are excited about and see the need for change does not mean the most important part of the process, your people, will ever agree with you".

In all the years of working with companies, large and small, to design and implement change programs, I have rarely seen a management team who really understood the immense damage their staff could do by reacting badly to a change program. That is why 70% of change program implementations fail to achieve anywhere near their stated goals. And by the way, normally trained HR managers, by themselves, rarely understand the complex emotional needs of staff who are forced to undergo a significant change program. If you have a budget to implement your change program, make sure you allow sufficient to provide the specialist emotional support that will encourage your staff to be actively engaged in the process. If you don't you will pay a severe price later on.

Gary Johnston is a psychotherapist and business consultant with extensive clinical and corporate experience in Stress and Change Management. He has wide experience in business management over 28 years and understands the special needs of both staff and management. He is a member of the Council of Clinical Hypnotherapists (CCH), AACHP and lectures in clinical hypnosis, stress and change management. Gary provides consultancy services to support HR and senior managers in change implementation.

Stress and Change Management resources  
<http://gmfint.com/>

Two Steps For Change
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There are two elements necessary for a change activity.

True Story: I was changing planes in Atlanta, and when I arrived at the gate, a line had formed for boarding passes. Naturally, a straight line was formed from the desk of the gate agent, and the agent was checking in passengers.

However, the line extended beyond the waiting area for that gate. By the time I arrived, the line spanned half the width of the concourse (hallway) which was busy with people walking to other gates. Almost immediately, the line extended to span most of the concourse, and through traffic was having to dodge stationary line dwellers to pass by.

The fellow in front of me looked at the traffic jam with dismay, then looked forward to the gate agent, anticipating some authoritarian intervention. None was forthcoming. The agent was alone and rushing to get passengers boarding passes. Since she was the only person who could do this, it was her very appropriate contribution to solving the problem.

I nodded at him and said, "We can do this in three steps." As the passenger at the head of the line was finished, and the line moved forward one space, I stepped to the side of this gentleman instead of forward. The fellow behind me, not wanting to look like he was trying to cut in front of me, stepped forward and to the side.

As the entire line moved one step, they all followed suit, with the line slightly skewed to one side. It was a little crooked because not everyone stepped to the side.

When the line moved up, I again moved to the side. The entire line followed suit, with side steps. At this point, everyone noticed that the through traffic was now flowing around the end of our line instead of through it.

Next, I took another step to the side. Since everyone had noticed the traffic flowing through without having to step over our

luggage and break the line, they were now willing to take more steps to swing the line completely around to the side.

New people had joined the line as this change was taking place, and had no problem following the pattern of the group.

What I was teaching here are two principles required for successful change action / servant leadership / community creation.

1) The change agent must be correctly positioned to lead the change. Someone more forward would not have the opportunity to make this change so easily, no matter how brilliant they are at seeing the needed action. This is why senior management is so often hobbled in leading change initiatives. They are too close to the head of the line. You often need someone farther down in the organization to be incited, whispered to, or (best of all) modeling behavior to be the change agent.

2) The initial steps do not require huge effort to follow. The guys at the back of the line had to move much more than the folks closer to the head of the line. If you ask for big action before they have the opportunity to notice the solution for themselves, you'll spend time and energy using authority, argument and logic to convince. Instead you could be engaging everyone's inspiration to adopt the change because they figured out the solution.

Nobody put me in charge, but it was fun to make a change and create an instant team. The fellow in front of me said, "I don't believe it. How did you do that?"

If you are thinking this sounds like fun, look around for your own opportunities to target a change, break down the steps toward that change, model it for the group by taking the first few steps toward the change, and keep moving into the change as soon as some of them begin to model the change back to you.

If you are a manager reading this, make sure you aren't a manager who would walk in and first say, "Who did this? What for?" until you've watched and noticed why the change was

adopted by the group. How open do you need to be to change agents in your midst?

I would add that change agents don't need to be the "leaders" of the group. Many change agents work quietly. Change agents will be doing something entirely different from helping check in passengers (the core mission), and their contribution may be very worthwhile and worthy of management support.

Laura Ricci

Supporting Good People Doing Great Things

Proposal Expert, Marketing Consulting and Training

Laura Ricci consults on marketing and proposals to win contracts. Visit my website for more information and contact me to help your organization <http://www.1Ricci.com>

## Five Principles For Leading Organizational Change

I'm currently working with an organization that is facing challenges similar to those faced by a half dozen others I've worked with - how to successfully change behavior along with systems and processes.

I've used five principles to lead organizational change in groups numbering 80 to 2800:

Principle 1: Every Organization is NOT Different "You must understand, we're different." The first time I heard that, I believed it too, and I allowed objections based on that belief to delay necessary changes by nine months. Instead of forging ahead, I pursued

compliance through consensus. I moved slowly. Fortunately for that organization, they were able to afford the delay.

The next client I worked with didn't have the luxury of waiting. Market share was evaporating. And they had less than six months to avert layoffs. So I pushed through all the objections and resistance and installed the system they needed.

I learned that while some customizing always occurs, it's never more than five percent of the finished change initiative. Don't delay by entertaining the "we're different" mindset. Find examples of others who faced similar circumstances and made the changes necessary to meet them. Find out how they did it - and then get going! Once the changes begin to work, you can tweak and adjust as needed.

**Principle 2: Do Not Require Compliance** People forced to change will find a way to sabotage the effort. Systems, processes and behavior are paths of thought in people's minds, and you can't take an inventory of how they're thinking. You can only measure the results, making it difficult to see the early warning signals of failure.

So don't keep your change plan a secret - but don't require people to comply with your changes. Even when change is presented as optional, you still have plenty of resistance to deal with.

**Principle 3: Let the Lurkers and Naysayers Join the Party Quietly** People change their minds easier if they aren't put in the position of having to take a public stand. Some organizations unveil their changes with great fanfare and then spotlight anyone who objects. That approach only provides a stage for the attention seekers who see an opportunity to derail the change effort. It also "sets their feet in concrete" - they become champions of their opinion and feel obligated to oppose you.

Don't embarrass these folks by singling them out. Instead, ignore their outbursts and whines. Once the party is underway, make it easy for them to slip in quietly through the back door - and welcome them when they do!

**Principle 4: Wait For Your Knight to Arrive** Don't target the group in most need of change or your most promising group. Rather, train your change agents and then wait for interested parties to raise their hands and come forward. There will always be people in enough pain or with enough ambition to try anything to succeed - they are your knights. And they needn't have shining armor.

Wait for just one or two individuals or groups who are ready to give your changes a try. Help them become successful, and watch the rest of your people follow!

**Principle 5: Make Your Knights Successful** Once the "early adopters" arrive, make sure they get everything they need to succeed. You'll be at the beginning of a learning curve, so your first attempts need resources lavished on them. You can always trim later; quick wins are essential to the success of your efforts, so don't be stingy. Throw everything at these early opportunities - failure is not an option.

The most expensive path to change is tiny incremental success that is unconvincing and delays universal adoption. When early successes happen, communicate them to everyone in the organization so the victories are obvious and convincing.

How Are Your Change Programs Going?

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Visit my website for more information and contact me to help your organization

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## You Don't Need a Vision

Lots of change management rhetoric exhorts managers to have a clear vision of the future. But what if you don't have a clear vision? Having been a strong aficionado of visions in the past, I have come to see that you can still move forward successfully with change initiatives, even without a clear vision.

In fact, being the contrary person that I am, I contend that a clearly articulated vision is not important, and can actually get in the way of the change you want to achieve. You do not need a clear vision to lead and implement change effectively.

My perspective is that first of all, as a leader of change, it is important to be comfortable with NOT knowing 'the vision'. Second, it is important to be clear about your intentions at the present time, and to listen for the intentions of those around you. Your listening to those around you who have different intentions, different backgrounds or come from different disciplines will surely lead to a new, spontaneous or unexpected outcome, one that leads you all forward.

The change projects I'm now involved in are much more complex than those in my early days when I was discovering the concept of vision and working to articulate the vision clearly. Nowadays no one seems to be clear about what the vision is - that's one of the key reasons I get hired. My clients are, however, able to articulate in some way what it is that they want to change. But this is not in the form of a vision. And spending time 'word smithing,' trying to turn it into a vision is a waste of time.

Any vision is only an intention by a manager or a project team. Furthermore it is often their intention for what someone else will do, such as front line staff. Managers in change projects, and middle-level line managers often find themselves in the unenviable position of having to wrestle with telling front line staff how senior managers want them to change.

If you don't do this by communicating a vision, what should you communicate?

The results of any change initiative are actually the outcome of the interweaving of intentions of those driving the change and those who they are trying to change, according to Norbert Elias. So as a leader or facilitator of change, all you can communicate is what your intentions are. Then it pays to listen carefully to the responses, and make your own response.

I began to despair a little when I first started to understand that we are a lot less in control than change management rhetoric would have us believe. But our actions as leaders and facilitators of change are still important and make a difference.

Don't waste time on "vision". Tell people what your intentions are, what you want to achieve. And then observe and listen closely to their responses. Your change efforts will be much more effective.

Stephen Billing works with organisations to create dramatic change without killing the daily operation. Areas of expertise include organisation design, restructuring, changing company culture, introducing new technology or new ways of working, developing leaders and sales and sales management capability and human resources.

With over 20 years of experience, he holds a Doctor of Management from University of Hertfordshire - his research investigated the role of consultants in organisational change. He has spoken at conferences in New Zealand, Denmark and Holland, and has published articles and book chapters.

<b>Employee-Consultant Frictions</b>
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I thought I will elaborate more this topic. If you have read the previous post I have touched on the fact that there is this ongoing "tensions" between employees and consultants. Which somewhat make sense as the two have a totally different mindset vis-a-vis of their role: consultants, if hired for the right cause are present for a specific issue, to solve specific problems (whose are the urgencies of the moment for the organization) that require specific expertise. Employees on the other end feel skeptical and useless in the sense that an outsider is coming to fix the company they belong to for years, their company.

Management should actively alleviate possible frustration by ensuring that consultants share their knowledge and train employees, they also should encourage employees to suck out as much knowledge they can from consultants by stressing on the fact that consultants are just "temporary helpers" and that the real strength of the organization is the employees. This will motivate employees to give the best of themselves and could possibly reconcile both parties for the better of the organization.

Now in my past experience, I have seen examples of management just wanting to reduce dependency on the consultant to the detriment of the organization's goal. If the cause of such situations is the result of a personal dislike for the consultant and not his ability to perform on the job, the best course of action will be probably be to try different means and new means of communication to see if that works.

<http://all-about-senior-home-care.com> <<http://all-about-senior-home-care.com/>>

Adama

<h2>The Hunt For Opportunities</h2>
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Ours is an unpredictable world. Many times, regardless of how effectively we plan, some things just fail. The dinner party that should have been great based on the planning, but the meal was a disaster.

The meeting's presentation that was well prepared, then the equipment failed. Or, in spite of great planning and diligent saving, the arrival of today's recession that shrunk the retirement account by nearly half. These challenging situations define our days. Some curse and yell; others see them for the opportunities they present. Inaugural Poet Maya Angelou writes, "I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he or she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights." Failures, changes and unexpected events have the ability to either destroy or advance; it is in our outlook and response that allows us to turn these failures into opportunities.

Thomas Alva Edison experienced repeated failures. His true success was not his invention of the light bulb, but rather his tenacity and outlook that believed failures were a means to gain new information and new perspectives. Our most successful employees are not those who land on their feet after every project or event; instead, they are those who have the persistence and optimism to learn from difficulty and use what they learn to re-imagine, recreate and re-experiment. They are the ones who have learned to be positive and to constantly hunt for opportunities.

Organizations that hunt for opportunities have the following qualities:

1. They create, support and live a culture that teaches, inspires and encourages employees to look for the opportunity in every event. Failures are unparalleled opportunities to reinvent success. These organizations "celebrate extraordinary failures and punish average successes." Effort, innovation and intent are celebrated; unusual, non-conventional and non-conformist perspectives are applauded. Occasional failures show that employees are pushing performance to the edge. As Tom Peters states, "A day without a screw up is a day without enough reach." These workplaces encourage their employees to focus on the positive; they

create a culture that is open, free thinking, and believes "yes we can."

2. They commit the time and effort to help employees learn their strengths and use them to develop opportunity-thinking. Each of us has the potential to be great at certain things; we each have intrinsic talents and strengths. Successful employees know their talents and understand that these talents help them to be naturally perceptive in certain areas; they commit to deliberative practice in develop these areas. They focus their hunt for opportunities in their talent and strengths areas, areas in which they have the greatest insight.

3. They focus on learning and actively solicit input from everyone. Organizations that hunt for opportunities are always learning, asking great questions and are exceptional listeners. They listen to new perspectives, facts, ideas and dreams. They listen to customers, employees, vendors and strangers. They read books, blogs, periodicals and newspapers. They read and listen to topics that may appear to be unrelated. They regularly ask, "how about," or, "what if." They assess what they hear; they consider everything. They then share what they hear with their teams to expand their hunt for opportunities.

4. They focus on exponential, not incremental, opportunities. All discussions of opportunities are directed to significant, not average, results; performance "lite" is unacceptable. They use the information they glean about the market, customer, strengths and trends to consider opportunities that have the potential to be significant. Successful organizations know that nothing lasts forever and that they must continually reinvent themselves - each time more significantly than the last. These organizations constantly review what they do; they focus on the exponential in their hunt for exponential opportunities.

5. They share success with everyone. Today's best ideas are not uniquely resident in management. Organizations that hunt for opportunities realize that opportunity-thinking must happen at every level. Therefore, all successes are openly shared and celebrated. Failures are communicated to inspire employees to re-

think, redefine and reinvent. In an intellectual workplace, innovation, inventing and opportunity hunting must be core expectations of all employees; every employee must watch, listen and communicate more effectively to identify improvements and opportunities. The more successes are shared with everyone, and failures are seen as a way to improve, the more performance- and idea-risks employees will take - all in the hunt for opportunities.

In today's uncertain recessionary period - where the regular, average or incremental approaches are not sufficient - successful organizations have mobilized their teams to be on the hunt for opportunities. It may be in a retail store that creates a new and more "hip" line of products that are less expensive to deal with reductions in consumer spending. It may be a restaurant that now opens at lunch, creates a mobile delivery van, or a special take-out section, to appeal to a changed demographic. It may be a community college that offers courses in basic money management, living on a budget, applying for jobs, or paying for college to accommodate the needs of local families, negatively affected by the recession.

Some people are distracted or discouraged by failure and change. Others see these as opportunities for greater success. This perspective comes is encouraged and supported in a culture that is on a constant hunt for ways to be better and to make a greater difference. Not only can the hunt for opportunities increase your success, but it may help you invent the next product, service or idea the rest of us cannot live without.

Jay Forte is a powerful performance speaker, consultant, author and founder of Humanetrics, LLC. He works with managers who want to be more successful in activating and inspiring exceptional employee performance, to significantly drive customer loyalty and improve company profitability. Jay, a financial executive turned educator, turned consultant, is renowned for producing significant results. He is a highly engaging speaker and his new book "Fire Up Your Employees and Smoke Your Competition; How to Invite, Incite and Ignite Employee Performance" is due out in January 2009. For information on keynotes, seminars and consulting, or to see the daily "BLOGucation," visit:

<http://www.humanetricsllc.com>, his new site  
<http://www.fireupyouremployees.com> or call: 401-338-3505.

## The Top-Down Approach to Organisational Change

Change is rarely easy for organisations. It is often met with apprehension and resistance. In order to be successfully carried out, the change process relies on a tremendous amount of influential leadership. The top-down approach to organisational change asserts that one or a few members of top level management should envision strategies and tactics first. The plans or goals are then communicated to and implemented by lower levels in the organisational structure based on hierarchical order.

Since responsibility for the organisation lies more heavily with members of top management than with lower level staff, it is necessary for the former to constantly strategize about the direction of the firm. Therefore when there's a need for large-scale change, it is likely to be recognized by someone at the top. This realization should prompt top leadership to reflect on what the end result should be. Hence, change is conceived at the top.

Because most organisations with a hierarchical structure count on the model that all levels of staff will generally look to their immediate superior for direction and leadership, the top-down approach to implementing change makes sense. Even in organisations where there is no clearly defined hierarchy, most staff will generally rely on top management to cast the direction for the organisation and provide leadership in realizing its vision.

Leaders are chosen because of the influence they are capable of exerting over individuals and groups. Introducing and implementing models of change that will transform the way an

organisation operates requires a tremendous amount of leadership. Overcoming resistance to and fear of change can only be accomplished through the support and influence of top level leaders. Top management is capable of infecting energy and passion for the necessary change, in a way that will allow it to be disseminated into and through the organisation. Only top management can begin to ingrain change into the organisational culture.

In many organisations, lower level management is focused arguably more on the task management side of business than on the people side of business. In order to effectively lead change, the efforts should emphasize the human side of change and focus on relationship management. For this reason, it is necessary for change to trickle down from the top, down through all levels. Top-level management should focus on spreading enthusiasm, engaging lower level management and staff members, helping them change their attitudes and activities on their own.

Unfortunately, there is a great tendency for change efforts to fail or not fully realize the end goal, so confirming that the leaders at the top are fully committed to helping the larger group to latch onto the change and own it become an even greater necessity.

In order for strategic change to succeed, it must be led from the top. Change leaders must absolutely focus their energies in engaging employees around the change and the necessary empowerment at the front line. Not until this really starts to happen does the change start to get driven from the bottom up, thereby increasing the chances of success.

Damien Clarke has been delivering Personal and Professional Change Management <<http://www.goal-setting.com.au/>> programs to businesses for over 11 years. His delivery style and natural charisma make him a sought after speaker. His own ebook *The Truth About Goal Setting* <<http://www.goal-setting.com.au/>> is proving a real success with people all over the world.

## How Can You Find the Seeds of Opportunity For 2009?

Lift Up Your Eyes in the New Year! Be of Hope and Good Cheer in the New Year

Starting a new year is good for many reasons. It gives us an opportunity to see the world with fresh eyes and imagine new beginnings. It also lets us reflect on all the good things that we have in our lives and project the good things that are yet to come. A positive attitude is key for the New Year, especially this year when it would be all too easy to dwell on our uncertain economy and our individual economic woes.

My personal philosophy on the economic times is this:

1. Economic downturns are cyclical. This economic downturn will be no different. We will come out the other end, wiser and stronger.
2. There are golden opportunities hidden in the economy. S/he who seeks will find them.
3. Stop reading the doom-and-gloom news and spend more time gathering with family and friends.
4. Hope and Faith will win over greed and fear if you maintain a positive attitude. Be good to yourself and kind to everyone you meet.
5. Learn what these economic times have to teach us. This is a transformative type recession, which will reward the nimble.

Here is my professional advice.

Now is the time to get back to the fundamentals of your business --

Understand your cash-flow; know the real cost of your products and/or your services; learn who your loyal customers are; be innovative and look for ways to grow your business and

increase your profits. Finally, do not take your eye off the ball; pay close attention to your business.

In addition to being one of those key pieces of information that you save for the moment a bluebird opportunity arises or a rainy day downpour occurs, why not pull this list out every six months to see where you can better manage your company. Feel free to add the notes or comments you want and change any words to make it your own. After all you gain when you internalize it and reap the benefits.

Bottom line? - Stop Profit Leaks Now. Apply this information to improve your profitability, re-engineer business models, and strengthen or gain competitive advantage in the marketplace.

And apply the free Fiscal Test available at <http://fiscaldoctor.com/fiscaltest.html>

From the author of the forthcoming book, 'Stick Out Your Balance Sheet & Cough: Best Practices for Long Term Business Health'.

From Gary W Patterson, <http://www.FiscalDoctor.com>  
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## Structure Your Business For the Future

An overwhelming majority of businesses in North America would fit into the category of small to medium size enterprises. There is nothing wrong with being in that category. Every large business started out that way.

The question is how to move your business to the next level. Generally, as a business grows so does the number of individuals involved in the day to day operations. This is in itself a good thing.

However, growth if not carefully managed it can spell disaster for a venture.

Take for example the business that starts out with three people involved. Between them they share roles perhaps as below:

- Vice President Marketing & Sales - Individual Number 1
- Vice President Accounting & Finance - Individual Number 2
- Vice President Research & Development - Individual Number 3
- Vice President Human Resources - Individual Number 1
- Vice President Public Relations - Individual Number 2
- Chief Executive Officer - Individual Number 3
- Chief Operating Officer - Individual Number 3

Perhaps the positions held were selected by the group because of the experience that person had in the respective area of responsibility. However, as the business grows it becomes clearly evident that the roles need to be assigned to new individuals. Unfortunately, the new person handling the position does not do things in the same manner, clients become dissatisfied, product quality suffers, business is lost, etc.

The issue can be as simple as not having a clearly defined organization structure and documented processes to follow. True, at the beginning the names on your organization chart may be repeated but as the business grows and new people come on board, the names can change while the duties and responsibilities stay the same.

Is your organization ready for growth, perhaps through the addition of a family member to the firm?

- Do you have a clearly identified organization structure?
- Do you have clearly documented position descriptions for each role?
- Do you have documented processes for each roles' activities?

If the answer to the three questions above is a clear Yes, then congratulations, you are ready for positive growth. However, if the answer is No, then it is time to take a hard look at your business' future and clearly identify Who does What When and How then document the process.

Gordon J. H. Newman, CPT Gordon is President of The Newman Learning Group Inc. an organization dedicated to providing value add solutions to improve the bottom line performance of organization and individuals. Gordon may be reached at [gordon@newmanlearning.com](mailto:gordon@newmanlearning.com) < /gordon@newmanlearning.com > or 905-790-2944 <http://www.newmanlearning.com>

## 10 Reasons Why Staff Resist Change

As the old cliché says, "the only constant in life is change." Why, then, are human beings so naturally fearful of and resistant to change? Given the fast-paced, technology-based world in which we operate, one would think that employees would be accustomed to accepting and adjusting to changes. More common than not, the opposite is true. For many people, their job is a significant source of structure in their life. Any thoughts or activities that stray from the comfort of this structure can be threatening and provoke insecurity.

There are many different factors that contribute to staff resistance when it comes to organisational change. One or more of these factors can be present in the consciousness or attitude of each individual employee. Being familiar with these factors can help organisational leaders manage and overcome opposition to necessary change.

### 1. Lack of Awareness

Staff members at various levels may not necessarily be aware of the underlying business need for change. Whether attempts have been made at communicating this to staff or not, it must be considered and dealt with. Another variation on this theme is that even staff members that do understand the underlying need for change may not necessarily be in agreement or be in line with the overall goals of the organisation.

## 2. Fear of the Unknown

Humans are prone to fear of the unknown. As mentioned above, many people view their job as an important source of stability in their life. At the very least, employees depend on their regular paycheque to take care of basic financial needs. Not knowing what situations can arise from organisational change can be scary. Employees can be afraid of what may happen, especially in cases of change where layoffs or reduction in workforce may be necessary.

## 3. Personal Predisposition

This is a highly personal factor and can only be analyzed on an individual basis. A person's predisposition to change is based on several factors having to do with the life experiences that have helped to shape him or her. For example, the way change and uncertainty were handled when that person was a child can have a small or huge effect on how the same person perceives and reacts to impending change as an adult. People with a strong predisposition to resisting and fighting change can have an impact on the next main reason that staff rejects doing things differently.

## 4. Peer Pressure

Some employees are known pushovers that often take on the plights of one another even if they are not directly affected. In some cases, these types of employees will buy into others' apprehension toward change without even necessarily understanding it.

## 5. History

Long-standing staff members have long-standing memories. They can exhibit negative feelings and attitudes based on simple misunderstandings, miscommunications, and conflict. The worst thing about this reason for staff denial of change within organisations is that some of the deep-seated history involved may have happened long before the current leadership took the reins.

## 6. Comfort Zones

Employees may be creatures of habit, knowing very well how to do what they do. Introducing change can raise questions about whether the employee's existing skills and experiences will be adequate to support and thrive in the new environment. This insecurity of whether one's skills will be enough to ensure success during and after change can contribute to resistance. In addition to the skills factor, individuals may be comfortable with the current state of things. The status quo may be providing a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment that staff members are just not ready to relinquish.

## 7. More May Be Less

Depending on what the organisational change entails, some employees are likely to suspect that they will be required to do more with less, or to perform more work for a smaller amount of pay. While this is not likely to be the case, it is important to evaluate this factor honestly and to address it in communications about change.

## 8. Trust Issues

This contributing factor of staff resistance to change is related to the corporate culture at the organisation. Managers who do not trust their employees are creating a climate of mistrust that is bound to be reciprocated. If employees do not trust the leadership at the organisation, they are likely to be skeptical of any proposed changes.

## 9. Loss of Control

Even great employees may resist organisational change. Competent staff members who are good at what they do and feel they have a handle on everything related to their job may feel threatened by the perceived loss of control that change can bring about. Employees can feel confused and powerless by being asked to change the way they think or operate.

#### 10. Fear of Failure

If staff members are happy with what they do and with the results they currently achieve, it may make the status quo too attractive to give up. Fear that they will not be able to attain the same level of success under new circumstances is another reason employees are skeptical of change.

These are only a few of the reasons why staff members in your organisation may resist change. It is evident that a common underlying theme among these reasons is fear. Fear can originate from a myriad of motivations and take on just as many variations. Realising that open communication and understanding will lay the foundation for overcoming fear is the first step in doing so. The type of communication that will help you understand why your staff specifically is giving change the cold shoulder is listening. Making your employees feel comfortable to voice honest opinions and doubts will give you insights into their motivations (or lack thereof). This is the best way of finding out which reasons are standing in your organisation's path to widely supported change.

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