

Implementing Change In The Workplace

There is a saying that “the only thing constant is change.” All of us experience some form of extensive change in our lives and in the business world. Change seems to be an ongoing endeavor to implement increased profitability and efficiency. This comes in the form of consolidation, downsizing, changing job descriptions and duties, automation, technological improvements, continuous improvement training and other measures to improve business results. However, many businesses and organizations ignore the first and foremost obstacle to change, which is the fact that virtually no one likes change. When employers execute a change in the work place, typical employee reactions are:

- ◆ *Well here we go again!*
- ◆ *Is this going to affect me?*
- ◆ *Am I going to have to learn something new?*
- ◆ *This is only going to create more work for me.*
- ◆ *They tried this before ...*

Recently I heard a story of a company that released a number of personnel in a downsizing effort and the president told the remaining employees, “Change is good and if you don’t like change, you shouldn’t be working here.” I highly doubt that this message was accepted in a positive manner.

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Motivational Quote

I don't measure a man's success by how high he climbs, but how high he bounces when he hits bottom.

– George S. Patton



Before initiating the change, get employee feedback.

Follow These Steps - To Become An Ideal Leader

As a leader in your organization, how much impact do you have on its performance?

Probably more than you know. You may have been a leader for many years now, or recently promoted. Your organization may be a for-profit

business or a church organization. It may be a not-for-profit community service organization or a local sporting organization. It matters not. What matters is that your leadership of your organization will directly impact the results you get.

It has been said that people get the results that they deserve. If leaders are not getting the results they desire, the first place they should look is in the mirror. What leadership traits are being exhibited? As a leader of your organization, consider the following test: Take a moment to paint a mental picture of someone you hold in esteem as a leader. Focus on appearance, actions, habits and lifestyle.

When your picture appears sharp and clear, ask yourself these questions:

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Besides ignoring the fact that change will not be readily accepted, many companies initiate change without considering if it falls in line with their strategic plans. In fact, many times changes are made as the result of desperation. If you are going to implement some form of change in your organization, follow these simple steps.

1. Ask yourself if the *change* falls in line with your strategic objectives.

2. Be aware that there is likely to be some adverse employee reaction to *change*.

3. Devise a PLAN as to how you will formulate and initiate the *change*.

4. Before initiating the *change* get employee input. Ask them what they think; "How should we do this?" If it is their idea, they will more readily accept it and they will become a part of the *change* instead of an obstacle to it.

5. List, clarify and quantify the adverse affects (if any) of the *change* to your employees. Be honest and upfront.

6. List, clarify and quantify the benefits of the *change* to your employees. (Give the "bad news" first and the "good news" last, as the last impression is more lasting.)

7. Communicate the *change* to all employees from the standpoint that it will be beneficial to them all. Avoid the "we have to do it" and "that's the way it is" approaches.

8. Be prepared to address both negative and positive reactions and allocate time to discuss these reactions with your employees. Do not be vague in your communication as this implies there is "something hidden." There is nothing employees dislike more than a lack of information or the feeling they are being "left in the dark."

Remember that change affects those attitudes that are the cornerstone of employee morale and productivity.

Source: Mike Kirkhoff, VP, Resource Development Group, LLC.



To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must cultivate our personal life; and to cultivate our personal life, we must first set our hearts right.

– Confucius

We must become the change we want to see.

– Mahatma Gandhi

Web Site Of The Month

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- ◆ What specific skills and characteristics does this person possess?
- ◆ How does this person relate to others personally, professionally, and socially?
- ◆ What does this individual do that elicits respect and admiration?

When you've thoroughly examined the qualities that you feel make that person an effective leader, ask yourself one more question:



- ◆ Was this leader born with such well-developed leadership traits?

Hardly. Characteristics like being a good communicator, motivator, mentor, or coach are all developed. Creating an energizing vision, mobilizing teams, and generating commitment are all learned skills.

Now that you have developed a list of qualities of an "ideal leader," qualities that you believe are necessary for your success as a leader, what can you do to attain them or perfect them? Since all of these traits can be developed, each person in a leadership position must strive to perfect them. I am sure that the "ideal leader" you pictured works constantly at improving those things that make him or her successful. That's the type of person they are, because they wouldn't be where they are now if they didn't.

'Realize that the degree to which you lead your organization, team, or committee to success lies in your hands.'

Your ability to lead both yourself and others will enhance the quality of your work as well as your life. The quality of your leadership not only determines your future, it determines the future of your organization and the lives of all those who follow you.

Leadership is first being, then doing. You must become the person that your position requires. In other words, you must assume the traits of the leader. That is done first by determining what these traits are and then practicing them in every aspect of your life. All of a person's actions come from years of habit formation. Replacing old habits with new ones takes commitment, perseverance, and time, but the rewards will be plentiful. It is difficult to do alone, and that's OK.

It is not a sign of weakness, but rather one of strength when you start to realize you are a synergistic being, interdependent on others for your success. Some people use a coach, some prefer to be part of a team, others have a mentor, and still others use a friend or significant other that can help them through the process. No matter your preference, the key is to imagine the point in time when someone views you as his or her picture of the "ideal leader," and then set your course to become.

Submitted by Jerry Fons, Leadership Development Group in Pewaukee, WI. 262-513-5944.

one **minute ideas**

Prioritize Your To-Do List

You can quickly focus on the top priorities of the day if you color-code your to-do list. Use bright colored markers or highlighters for the most important projects.

When Employees Come Back From Vacations

Schedule a meeting to update them on the status of projects, activities, goals, new employees, terminated employees, etc... This will help them get on track quickly and also show them that they're an important part of the company/team.

Is The Information From Your Meeting Being Shared With All?

To ensure the information and decisions from your meetings are being shared with employees, end each meeting with a quick brainstorming session asking: "Who needs to know this information?"

List the people on a flip chart then assign members to share the information with that person.



Start Out On The Right Foot With New Hires

Companies spend a lot of money recruiting and hiring new employees, only to forget about them when they start.

Here is how to start off correctly with your new hires:

- ❖ **Inform everyone** of when the new hire will start working, and ask him or her to make a special effort to make that person feel as though they made the right decision coming to work here. Make them feel a part of the team.
- ❖ **Introduce the new hire** to each employee with pride and excitement during your group meeting.
- ❖ **Create a buddy program.** Pair the new hire with an employee who has a great attitude and respect for the company. Have the employee be their mentor for the next couple of months and to observe how the new hire is coming along. The buddy should meet with the new hire weekly to find out if they have any questions about the job, or need help with their job, or to find out if it is what the new hire was expecting.
- ❖ **Throw a welcome party.** During the new hires' first week have a little get together with coffee and donuts. This can make a lasting impression. Don't throw a party for employees that are leaving.



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