



TOPIC: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

TITLE: TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT

A friend of mine defines insanity as "doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result". Although I always chuckled at this definition, I am aware of how often we do exactly that! We get caught up in doing something over and over again because we are convinced it's the right approach, or by force of habit, it's what we've always done. And, we continue to do it even after it's stopped working.

I recently ran across this story and wanted to share it because it reflects some challenges we experience in both work and life. The story is from the book, *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and goes as follows:

I'm sitting in a quiet room at the Milcroft Inn, a peaceful little place hidden back among the pine trees about an hour outside of Toronto. It's just past noon, late July, and I'm listening to the desperate sounds of a life or death struggle going on a few feet away.

There's a small fly burning out the last of its short life's energies in a futile attempt to fly through the glass of the windowpane. The whining wings tell the poignant story of the fly's strategy: Try harder.

But, it's not working. The frenzied effort offers no hope for survival.

Ironically, the struggle is part of the trap. It is impossible for the fly to try hard enough to success at breaking through the glass. Nevertheless, this little insect has staked its life on reaching its goal through raw effort and determination.

This fly is doomed. It will die there on the windowsill.

Across the room ten steps away, the door is open. Ten seconds of flying time and this small creature could reach the outside world it seeks. With only a fraction of the effort now being wasted, it could be free of this self-imposed trap. The breakthrough possibility is there. It would be so easy.

Why doesn't the fly try another approach, something dramatically different? How did it get so locked in on the ideas that this particular route and determined effort offer the most promise for success? What logic is there in continuing until death to seek a breakthrough with more of the same?

No doubt this approach makes sense to the fly. Regrettably, it's an idea that will kill.

continued on next page



TOPIC: CHANGE MANAGEMENT
TITLE: TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Trying harder isn't necessarily the solution to achieving more. It may not offer any real promise for getting what you want out of life. Sometimes, in fact, it's a big part of the problem.

If you stake your hopes for a breakthrough on trying harder than ever, you may kill your chances for success.

By Price Pritchett from Chicken Soup for the Soul
Copyright 1993 by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen

How often have you watched a fly do exactly this? How often have you seen your employees do this? And, how often have you done it yourself?

My question for you is where are you banging your head against the windowpane? What behaviors and actions do you continue to do, even though you are not getting the results you desire?

My challenge for you this week is to identify one area where you have an opportunity to change your behavior or try a new approach. Commit to one action you will take differently this week and take the time to measure the result.