



TOPIC: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

TITLE: MANAGING YOUR OWN CHANGE

"We must adjust to changing times and still hold to unchanging principles." - Jimmy Carter

My previous Coach's Corner focused on the four phases of change. This topic evoked several responses - it seems we're all experiencing some level of change. So, I'd like to dedicate today's issue again to change, but not as it relates to our employees but ourselves: managing your own change and taking care of yourself in the process.

Often we're so busy helping others cope with and accept change, we don't stop to focus on ourselves. Every change we experience, whether positive or negative, creates a transition - the time where we adjust, along with some tips from "Managing Transition" by William Bridges (a great book for anyone going through lots of change) on what you can do to help manage your own change transitions.

1. Identify what is truly changing.

Every change has primary and secondary effects. Create a detailed picture of what this change means for you: take it beyond generalizations of "more responsibility, or I'll be busier" to the actual duties and day-to-day changes you will experience. Although you won't predict everything, you will have a clearer picture of what's ahead.

2. Decide what's really over.

Clearly identify what you're losing, or will have to let go of. When you're still in a phase of denial, this can be hard to answer. However, the sooner you identify your loss the sooner you can move through the phases of change. The loss may be very personal: loss of a dream, a belief, something you created, or an image you had.

3. Identify what's not changing.

Continuity is critically important during transition. You might find yourself in a situation where it seems like everything is changing. Usually, there is a lot that isn't, both in work and life. It might even be a good time to bring back things that had continuity in your life at a prior time - old friendships, hobbies, interests that you may have lost sight of.

continued on next page



TOPIC: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

TITLE: MANAGING YOUR OWN CHANGE

4. Recognize it's a process.

Change takes time, and you often can't force its speed. You may go through a phase of confusion - it feels like a roller coaster, with up days and down days. Remember that it's all part of the process, and keep going.

5. Take time outs.

We can't continue to go at a fast pace without stopping for a short break. the time out is the time to relax, look at what you're doing, and re-energize. When it seems you don't have time for it is exactly the time you need to do it.

6. Focus on the possibilities.

When one door closes, another opens. Change can present an opportunity or possibility somewhere, and very often, we don't see it right away. Ask yourself the following question:

What do I want? What are my strengths? What resources do I have available? What am I ready to do?

Brainstorm possibilities, even the outrageous ones. Keep adding ideas and don't evaluate any until you've exhausted your thoughts. Experiment with one new thing everyday: maybe it's saying no to someone or something, trying something new over the weekend, even spending your lunchtime in a completely new way.

And lastly, I've heard of four important rules to live your life by, and pass them along because no matter what's going on in our lives, we can all benefit from holding true to these principles:

Rule One - Show Up

We often miss out on opportunities simply because we don't fully show up for them. It's not that we don't intend to, but very often we are focused on predicting our success and failure, blaming circumstances on others or not accepting responsibility. We can't create possibilities for ourselves if we don't truly show up for them.

Rule Two - Be Present

Give it your best shot, every time, every day. It's the difference between going through the motions, and showing up with all your passion, energy, talent and commitment. Your work, and your life, deserve the benefit of you.

continued on next page



TOPIC: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

TITLE: MANAGING YOUR OWN CHANGE

Rule Three - Tell the Truth

The most powerful action we can take is telling the truth. Very often, we say what we think we are expected to say, or avoid conflict or negative information. Although we may mean well, we may get the expectation wrong, be unclear on what we said or meant, or not feel good about how we are operating. The hard truth can be difficult to tell, but the truth will set you free.

Rule Four - Let go of outcomes

In the changing environment we live in, we not only try to do our best, but also create the most desirable outcome. Ultimately, we may not control outcomes, and when we try to, we often drive ourselves crazy. Learn to do all that you are able, and then let go of the outcome. A good friend once coached me to "focus on the activity without attachment to the goal". In other words, show up, do your best and stay unattached to the result.

I challenge you to spend sometime focusing on the changes happening in your life. Ask yourself the following:

Where am I not fully showing up?

Where am I not fully present?

Where am I not telling the hard truths?

And, where do I need to let go of an outcome?

Commit to one action step in at least one of these areas which will move you forward and help you adjust to the changes you are experiencing.