

Leading Change: It's Hard to Do (Part II.)

1.) Change: It's Hard To Do — Part 1

In the last issue of The Leading Edge, we started to explore the dynamics of change and introduced a model based on the book *Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership and Change*, by Don Beck and Christopher Cowan, who introduced the concept to Nelson Mandela during the transition from apartheid to a non-segregated South Africa.

Specifically, we talked about where you are now and discovering your once and future organization. Did you try the exercise of finding an image that represents your organization today and one that represents what you'd like it to look like in the future? Or, did you try writing your organization's story from the different viewpoints of the executives in your company? (To read our last issue, visit Northwood Consulting, LTD : Change: It's Hard To Do — Part 1 from Autumn 2005.)

Now that you have a clearer vision of where you are now and what direction you want to go in, you're ready to look into the future.

Back to the Future

What could the future hold for your organization? How will changes in your industry, other industries, America, the world, your company impact you and your organization?

Beck and Cowan encourage you to "Search for future scenarios by sending your visionary scouts ahead of the flow so you have a sense of what is heading your way."

The purpose of this exercise is to challenge you to think about the unthinkable. You have created a vision of what direction you want to go with your organization. You may even have an idea of how you'll make your vision a reality. But have you considered the unimaginable? Are there any obstacles you haven't considered that could deter you?

In 1986, many typesetting companies weren't prepared for the new publishing software that decimated their industry. If they had been putting probes out, they may have learned about developments in the personal computer software industry that would impact them. Maybe they would have identified new opportunities versus oblivion.

Get your staff and management team ready for a trip into the future.

Preparing for a Trip into the Future

Here's what you'll need to start your trip:

- Curiosity
- Imagination
- A Brave Heart



An excellent guide for this journey is Peter Schwartz's *The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World*. Think of it as the Fodor's or Frommer's for time travelers. For the first leg of our journey, you need to map your present location.

Leg 1: Driving Forces

What social, economic, political, environmental, technological factors could impact you? Maybe these trends won't affect you directly, but what's happening in your clients' and suppliers' worlds that could impact them and ultimately you?

What happens if Iran cuts off its gas supply? After the Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco trials, what if Congress passes more regulatory legislation? What's the impact of baby boomers beginning to retire in great numbers? What new technology is in the pipeline? Be curious about the world you live in, not just the industry you work in.

Identify all the factors that could impact your organization over the next several years. Then choose the two to four that have the highest likelihood of impacting you. Remember, many typesetters weren't looking at technical changes in the software and hardware world when they got blindsided!

Leg 2: Creating Scenarios

Here's where your imagination comes in. Create scenarios using each factor and trend that you identified as key. Write scripts or stories around several plots.

Schwartz encourages you to develop plots that "best capture the dynamics of the situation and communicates the point effectively," so choose several possible scenario drivers. If our typesetters were doing this 20 years ago, they might select technology and the trend for faster turnaround as two drivers. From this, they would identify possible scenarios:

1) affordable technology that delivers quick turnaround, 2) expensive technology that delivers quick turnaround, or 3) affordable technology that is too complex for the layman to learn yet increases turnaround.

One of these scenarios could negatively impact typesetters, one of them could have a neutral effect and the third could create an opportunity. What actions would typesetters take to prepare for these possible scenarios?

Final Leg of Your Journey: Implications

From the scenarios you created, what have you learned? Did you identify plausible scenarios that would impact you? What vulnerabilities did you uncover? What opportunities could occur?

How will you know which scenarios are most likely to occur? Schwartz recommends identifying a few indicators to monitor over time. By observing them, you will be able to see which scenarios or combinations of scenarios are unfolding. Because you have already played out plausible outcomes of each scenario, you will be able to detect challenges and opportunities earlier in order to take advantage of them.



To take a journey into the future and to create that future takes a brave heart. You will discover unexpected treasures that will enrich your life, the lives of your employees and your organization.

If you want to take your own organizational journey of change with an experienced guide, call Northwood Consulting, Ltd. at 301.990.6331. Plus, learn more about Spiral Dynamics by visiting www.spiraldynamics.net or www.spiraldynamics.com.

2.) An Exercise In Honing Your Leadership Skills: Tell Me How To Treat You

Giving recognition to staff members is one of the least expensive ways you can boost productivity and increase retention. Take out the guesswork with this exercise from Vasudha Deming's *The Big Book of Leadership Games*.

Ask your employees to take 10 minutes to complete the following questionnaire:

Following are some questions about what types of rewards and recognition are most meaningful to you. Answer the questions honestly and completely. Nobody but your manager will see your answers.

1. What are some of your favorite hobbies and interests?
2. What are some of your favorite retail stores and online retail sites?
3. What types of rewards are most meaningful to you?
4. What are some "small" rewards that you would be delighted to receive?
5. What are some "large" rewards that you would enjoy?
6. Outside of tangible rewards, how do you like to be recognized for your hard work?

Each person appreciates different ways to be recognized. As a manager, it's your job to uncover each person's preferences. By taking the time to do this, you will be rewarded with a more satisfied employee.

Remember to find opportunities to reward your employees using their own suggestions within several weeks. You'll demonstrate your seriousness about the exercise.