



Mastering Change

1.) Quick Quote to Consider

"The future never just happens; it is created." Will and Ariel Durant, The Lessons of History

2.) Mastering Change

Recently, Northwood Consulting, Ltd. completed a 3-part on-line Management Development Series for IBM's Americas Marketing Managers. Mastering Change was the topic. With the turbulence we've all been experiencing with our boom and bust economy, we thought you might be interested to learn about how to become a Master of Change. Here's an excerpt from our presentation.

Change is a process. Not an isolated event. Mastering Change is about your ability to adapt to change. Even when you initiate change, you cannot predict the impact on others nor the outcomes (desired or not).

Coke Cola's introduction of the new coke is a classic example of not being able to predict change. Coke was prepared. They did market research, tested promotional strategies, and conducted taste tests prior to launching the new Coke. Yet despite all the planning, they could not control the market's reaction to the product. Nor were they prepared for the reaction they received.

How do you react to change? Are you a resistor, an adaptor, a learner or all of the above (depending on the circumstances)?

Resisting Change

You need both growth and stability to thrive. It's not surprising that people may resist moving from a stable and comfortable state to one that is different and possibly unpredictable or chaotic. Resistance is normal and effective managers expect it and work with it. Resistance is a sign that people care and are involved. You need to find out more about yourself and your staff's beliefs, ideas and attitudes toward any proposed change in order to be prepared for mastering change.

There are typically 4 reactions you can expect when you initially introduce change:

- * Shock: This is a normal reaction if significant change is not the norm.
- * Anxiety: Expect this if the consequence is uncertain and likely to remain so for a period of time.
- * Anger: You'll get this reaction if people have no say in the change and how it's implemented.
- * Expectancy: People who relish the prospect of change and the opportunities it may bring will welcome the prospect of change.



People who react from expectancy are your change champions. These people relish change and have bought into your proposal. Gain their active support and involve them in promoting your intentions. You don't need everyone on board to accept change initially. Research indicates you need about 30% of your staff to turn the tide in the direction of change.

To help the people that will be impacted by the change, involve them in the planning process. Getting their commitment will motivate them to support the change. For people who initially react with anxiety or anger, this is a way of helping them manage or embrace the change.

How Change Hardy Are You?

To find out how change hardy you are, take the following quiz. Choose the answer that most closely resembles your normal response. Now be honest with yourself! No one is going to see your answers unless you chose to share them. Check off either A or B.

1. Do you typically look at change as a nuisance or an opportunity?

_____ A. Nuisance _____ B. Opportunity

2. Do you tend to view change as making it potentially easier or harder to achieve your goals?

_____ A. Easier to achieve _____ B. Harder to achieve

3. Do you get frustrated that new initiatives don't seem to stop and you feel over-whelmed or each new initiative is an opportunity for improvement?

_____ A. Initiatives don't stop _____ B. Opportunity for improvement

4. Do you quickly propose contingency plans to handle existing and new commitments or do you reject new opportunities because they do not fit into your current plan?

_____ A. Propose contingency plans _____ B. Reject new opportunities

5. Do you treat change as an event to get past or as a way of life?

_____ A. An event to get past _____ B. As a way of life

To score your results from the quiz, scroll to the bottom and add up the number of points you got for each response:

If you scored:

5 Congratulations! You're a Change Master.

3–4 You're change hardy but probably are still buffeted by change occasionally.

1–2 You do not embrace change easily.



0 Do you ever feel like a deer caught in the headlights?

Quiz adapted from *Successful Managers Handbook* by Susan H. Gebelein, et al.

Adapting to Change

Your answers to the quiz are just some things for you to reflect on. If you didn't score a 5, here are some ideas to consider about helping your staff or team adapt to change.

1. Give your team or staff the long-term vision. Then, let them decide how to reach the goals.
2. Make sure your staff has the tools it needs to be successful.
3. Make your staff's jobs easier by removing possible obstacles.
4. Allow your team and staff to focus on what truly matters.

Recommended Reading about Mastering Change

Leadership from the Inside Out by Kevin Cashman

Successful Managers Handbook by Susan H. Gebelein, et al.

Change Management by Colin Rye

Drive Your People Wild Without Driving Them Crazy: Leadership Lessons for a Chaotic World by Jennifer White

3.) Let Northwood Consulting Turn You Into A Change Master

If you weren't completely satisfied with your score from the above quiz, let the Northwood team help you learn how to better adapt to change. Call us for a 30-minute free coaching session today!