

## Leadership's Secret Strategy Fuels Change

Change: it can be good or bad, exciting or frightening, welcomed with open arms or objected to and rejected. The dictionary definition is to “make the form, nature, content, future course etc. of (something) different from what it is or from what it would be if left alone.”

But what if change is transformative, innovative - never done before, could revolutionize operations or require everyone in the organization to eliminate everything they've learned about a specific subject?

How do you make it happen? How do you get rid of the “we've always done it this way” mantra? In fact, how do you handle it yourself and prepare for all the aspects of what you are about to go through and expect your people to follow? You can't mandate change, wave a magic wand and make it happen. It takes a pioneering vision, preparation and positive reinforcement.

### Three Strategies to Fuel Change

Leaders are already doing more with fewer people, smaller budgets and limited resources, so in their desire to excel they are often tempted to move forward as quickly as possible – even if the change is a tsunami wave and will leave no one untouched. So where **do** you begin? Change begins with leadership and management.

**Make room for change.** Ideas can come from anyone and anywhere within the organization but transformative change is given life at the leadership level. You need to make room for all the tentacles of change to enter your thought process both mentally and emotionally.

Get rid of any thoughts, ideas, preconceived concepts and memories that are standing in your way. Empty your thoughts and feeling about the imminent change so you can properly prepare for the expression, implementation and positive reinforcement change requires to be successful. A great way to do this is to use a tablet, write down all of the negative thoughts and things standing in your way and then get rid of them by shredding the paper. Do not let those items flow back into your thinking; this allows you to move forward. Allowing these negative thoughts to occur can cause unnecessary chaos.

**Contemplate, reflect and even meditate on how to best implement change.** Let your mind, mentally *and emotionally* connect with the change and all the long-term

benefits. Allow your subconscious mind to work on the details of how to best implement the change by eliminating the fear factor, the “we always did it this way” mantra and the *emotional* buy-in of your workforce. Keep a tablet nearby so you can jot down all thoughts that pop into your mind. Even those that seems like the most insignificant or silly ideas may turn out to be the linchpin to a highly successful transformation.

**Reinforce, reinforce and reinforce.** Provide constant encouragement and *emotional support* by reinforcing the importance of the change everyone is living through. It is the positive reinforcement mentally and emotionally that maintains engagement, welcomes the change and removes objections and rejection. It also provides that much-needed concept of your transformative vision living in the hearts of those in your workforce, which provides long-term sustainability.

The difference between ordinary and extraordinary leadership is sometimes invisible but when it comes to transformative change, a chasm of difference shows up quickly in the process and end result. The secret is that the extraordinary leader takes into consideration the impact of the change on everyone, mentally and emotionally – the result, an engaged, connected and focused workforce.

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