

Managing Change

“Change is inevitable —except from a vending machine.” Funny, but true. In the fast paced work world we all find ourselves in these days, many of us struggle to keep up with our to-do lists, let alone the hectic pace of change. But, as the saying goes, change *is* inevitable. Often, it is also necessary and productive. But how leaders handle the process of change, and how they support the reactions to change is important. Whether you want people to lead through innovative change, buy into your changes, or simply adapt effectively, you’ll want to put some serious thought to your processes around change and innovation.



Change - A Leader's Challenge

By David Colman

“I’m a strong advocate for change, but I wish it would just slow down for a few months so I could get caught up”. If I’ve heard this said to me once by business leaders, I’ve heard it a thousand times. The reality of it, of course, is that change is not going to slow down and, if anything, it’s going to increase in intensity.

We’ve all heard the phrase “Change is constant”. If only it was. True, change is ever present and in that context could be considered constant. But its frequency is exponential, not constant. And therein lies the rub. As leaders, if we knew when and how change was going to impact us, we could at least manage it better. As it stands, so many leaders are often only reacting to change.

But as leaders of change, what are we managing? Quite often it is the reactions of our workforce towards imposed change. These reactions can often include tardiness, absenteeism, doing the minimum, and, in severe cases, sabotage of both a subtle and not so subtle nature.

Firstly, there is the obvious economic fear related to change. Change often means that

jobs are lost, responsibilities are often increased or diminished, and processes are automated. The question of “where will I get lunch money from?” becomes very real for many people when companies cut back.

The second reason for fear of change is just as significant. Failure by leaders to fully involve employees in the change process causes the negative reactions that I mentioned earlier. I genuinely believe, given the same information and parameters that you have as a leader, many employees will make as good a decision as you, if not better. So what can we do as leaders to deal with the impact of change on our employees? Here are five tips:

- Rather than just react to change, work proactively with your employees to be innovative in your approach to everything your organization does
- Explain fully to everyone what changes are needed and why
- Seek the employees’ ideas and their concerns
- Answer their questions thoroughly – be open and honest
- Monitor the changes closely and keep everyone informed at all times

Your role as a leader of change is clear. Together with your employees, you must lead and support change and innovation. You must own your leadership. These five tips will go a long way to help you achieve that goal.

If your company’s managers need help to better support their staff through organizational change, look to TriOpus Group. Our “Managing Change That Counts” program will help them:

- Understand the impact of change
- Know why/how people resist change
- Learn the psychological phases people go through when experiencing change
- Appreciate the role of planning in managing change
- Develop processes to manage change in the short and long terms
- Build trust by creating a workplace that encourages innovation
- Become fully supportive by creating a safe learning environment
- Encourage creativity in problem solving
- Understand the importance of monitoring and follow up
- Create a plan to manage change back in the workplace



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“ When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. VICTOR FRANKL

This a monthly publication intended for clients and associates of TriOpus Group. We welcome any comments, suggestions or questions you may have. Please contact us at 1-800-864-2721 or email Tamara Kerr, Partner at tamara@triofusgroup.com