

Change . . . "Change is inevitable, except from vending machines." *Source Unknown*
"You cannot step twice into the same river for other waters are continually flowing in." *Heraclitus (500 BC)*

April 2008 — an encouragement for business and personal life from the team at realization life coaching — Vol. 1 No. 4

The Leader Within

As a leader, if you really want to stir things up, go into a team meeting and say, "I'm going to make some changes around here . . . big changes!" Then, monitor the reactions. Actually, that's not good advice but I wanted to start you thinking about change.

It might not be that the proposed change is unwarranted or bad, but people are affected emotionally by the mere suggestion of change. Some might be OK with a little change. Some are thinking about changes that they have wanted to see (but are they the same changes that are on your mind?). Some might be wondering how the change will affect the hours at work or the number of days to retirement. Some might be enthusiastically on your side because change holds the promise of new, exciting things to do. Behind a reaction to change can be all sorts of motives, vested interests, fears or expectations.

Do you think that the leader within an organization has a responsibility to navigate his/her team through a change process?

If one indication of good leadership is that you have a followership then consider this scenario. You and your team are like people on a rescue mission. If, at the end of the mission, you have a high number of casualties and MIAs, how successful have you been? Turn around and see who is following!

For many leaders, the vision is clear, the objectives are known, the process makes sense. Now the challenge is to navigate those on your team through all the ups and downs of change and to keep the group intact, onboard and working together.

Change may be desirable. It may be necessary. But is that all that counts?

Bret Maukonen

(Bret has been certified in the model "Seasons of Change" and would be pleased to work with individuals who anticipate or are experiencing a transition in life.)

The Coach Within

Did you know that your body undergoes stress with every change in your environment? You experience stress whether it is due to a half degree of temperature change higher/lower in your room or the sight of your house engulfed in flames.

Some people avoid change because they perceive it as the latter kind—big, traumatic, overwhelming—something to be avoided at all costs! Other people, however, embrace, even promote, change. One thing that most people dislike is change that is outside their control. It can leave them feeling vulnerable, adrift, insecure.

Change can be about losing something. It can be about gaining something. Whether seen as negative or positive, change can be challenging to address. An example would be the person who is gratified to finally experience weight loss but is concerned about the added attention this might attract (plus the cost of a new wardrobe!). It could be the person who has earned a long-sought promotion and then faces his fears of inadequacy.

It used to be said that there are two certainties in life (death and taxes). I believe it is now necessary to add a third, and possibly a fourth to the list—change and stress. If change is such a prevalent aspect of life, is it not wise to learn how to intentionally respond to change in healthy ways?

Is there a key to handling change well? I think so. It is found in our attitude toward the change and toward its implications. Viktor Frankl said, "Everything can be taken from us but one thing, the last of the human freedoms, to choose one's attitude in any given circumstance." It seems that attitude determines how a person approaches and proceeds through change.

Coaching is very much about change—encouraging people to identify something they want to change and supporting them as they move in that direction. It is also about walking with people as they handle unexpected, disconcerting change.

Change is prevalent. Change is unavoidable (think about your next birthday). Change, in many cases, is absolutely essential—and sometimes automatic, on many levels. Change is! How does it affect you?

(My husband made changes to my article—I had to check my attitude!) :-)

Lynne Maukonen

To Ponder . . . Take a moment and list all the changes (small and large) which you are currently undergoing. List all of the changes that you are presently thinking about that lay ahead (job change? marriage? new house? retirement?). Isn't it surprising how many changes we face?! What is your strategy as you encounter change?