

## ARTICLE FOR FINANCIAL BUSINESS ADVISOR

### HANDLING CHANGE

Change is not a destination, it is a journey.

For many business owners getting their staff or themselves to handle change and perhaps do things in a different or new way represents a massive challenge.

If you consider that people make change, people fear change and people resist change then when we want to implement change our systems or processes or methods of doing business then we must first consider the people who are going to be involved in the change.

If you just implement a new computer system and then say we will provide you with training after this is up and running is a total waste of time, it ignores that the people will have fears about the new computer system and will certainly resist it and your system will take longer to implement it because you did not involve the people.

If you are implementing a change you need to first sit down and discuss with your team what the current problems are, what the solutions are, then tell them why you have made a decision to do select a particular solution and how you are going to implement it, get them involved in planning what needs to be done, and where ever possible get them involved in the implementation and even discussions with your suppliers as to the likely effects, changes, benefits and advantages of the coming change.

Even if there is going to be a reduction in the number of people employed or perhaps some significant change in the way things are done, people still prefer to be communicated with, and involved in the change rather than ignored.

Remember those very staff members that you have, have friends and business associates as well as future purchasing power in buying your products and services.

Look after them even in periods of change and they will still remain your customer.

So handling change means handling the peoples resistance and fears by good communication, by participation and by involvement.

While you are handling the change and implementation you might also like to provide outlets for tension relief, this could be a team meeting, it could be a

socialization, it could be a sound proof room where people can go off and scream and yell and get rid of their frustrations when things go wrong.

During the stages of change try recognized people who have adapted to the change, give them some recognition, be it an award, a fun award, or just recognition in a meeting that this person has already adapted to the change and is seeing the benefits of that and encourages the rest of your team to participate.

At the completion of the change make sure that you have a de-briefing meeting where you discuss that change, the issues people learnt and how the next time you need to change something could be done better, but also give recognition to the fact that the team and you achieve the change.

If we always live in the past, or do things the way they are in the present, we will never learn the future, is a quotation from John F Kennedy and it is a very true way of actually looking at how we run our businesses today.

Business is about constant development, change, and acceptance that there will be new ways of doing there will be new people, and there will be experiences market conditions, government interference and the many other opportunities that get put in front of the business owner today.

What changes have you got planned and how well have you involved your people and the people who will be in the middle of the activity.

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