Prepare for Change by Taking a Systematic Approach

Mention the word change and most directors cringe. That is because they know how difficult it is to convince staff on a new way of doing things. But all changes are not created equal. Use these guidelines to figure out the best approach for making new adjustments.

Consider the scope. Will this program involve everyone on staff or is a minor change affecting only a handful of employees? Take time to review the changes and to contemplate critical issues such as the number of employees involved, the difficulty of the adjustment, and the timeline for making the changes.

Consider the environment. Some organizations can shift courses quickly, while others take a slower more methodical approach. Think about your program and whether there are systems in place that will make it easier---or more difficult--- for you to implement the proposed changes. How can you take advantage of your organization's positive attributes or offset its negative characteristics?

Consider the risk. How high are the stakes? Go into this change process with a full understanding of what is at risk for your program, your staff, and your community. Be honest with your staff about how the proposed changes could impact their work lives.

Consider the personalities. Change affects different people in different ways, requiring directors to adjust their approach accordingly. Look at your staff and try to identify people who may become change champions, those who need gentle prodding, and those that may become obstacles. Devise different strategies for dealing with a variety of possible reactions.

Consider the tactics. Now that you have examined the change itself, the nature of your program, and the personalities involved, you are ready to come up with a plan for moving forward and to identify ways to counter possible resistance.

-Adapted from "Keys to Success: Six Keys to Prepare for Change" on the OI Partners Web site.

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew."   Abraham Lincoln

Inside this issue:

Leadership Commission Members

- *Toni Cacace-Beshears, VA*
- *Judy Carnahan-Webb, TX*
- *Susan Carrigan, OK*
- *Sandra Hutson, Member-at-Large*

Take This Approach to Connect With Younger Workers

Want to build a stronger connection with the younger employees on your staff? Be sure to cover these bases:

Focus on outcomes — Employees under 30 are often more concerned about completing projects than watching clocks.

Broaden job descriptions — Younger employees often resist being pigeonholed. Come up with fluid job descriptions that provide greater opportunity.

Promote continuing development — As career transients, younger workers are often more concerned about developing skills than climbing ladders.

Utilize emerging technologies — Having grown up with technology, these workers often appreciate organizations that use it to full advantage.

Provide flexible options — From pay structures to work hours, Generation Y often appreciates flexibility and the freedom to carve their own niche.

-*Adapted from "Gen Y: Y shd i work 4 u?" by Craig Donaldson, in Human Resources Magazine, Jan., 2006.*

> *We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own.*
> *Ben Sweetland*

Learn How Workplace Friendships Can Impact Performance

Motivational mangers spend a lot of time trying to build camaraderie among their employees. Why? Because a friendly workplace is a well motivated workplace---most of the time. Here is how friendships may improve employee motivation:

> *Friendships can improve employee motivation.*

Friends can alleviate stress. We all need to let off a little steam now and then. It is important that workers have colleagues they trust who will allow them to vent or who will laugh at their jokes.

Friends can offer insight. Employees are less apt to feel embarrassed when running their ideas by their friends. Workplace friends will have a better understanding than non-work friends about what will fly in the organization.

Friends share the joy when good things happen. Workplace friends can become each other's biggest cheerleaders, motivating one another to press on.

-*Adapted from "Friends At Work: Good, Bad, and Ugly." On CareerBuilder.com*

Sample Motion Form

Person Submitting Motion: _____   Seconded by: _____

Motion: "I move that _____

_____

_____

Disposition of Motion:
- ___ Dropped for lack of second
- ___ Tabled
- ___ Passed
- ___ Failed
- ___ To be added to policy manual

- ___ Withdrawn
- ___ Amended as indicated
- ___ Referred to _____ committee
- ___ Voted by acclamation
- ___ Action required (Responsible person _____)

Leaders and Managers

This semester I'm teaching an undergraduate course in leadership. My first assignment for the students is to write their leadership biography. What a learning experience for all of us! Of course, according to them, they are all great leaders! They are always excited to describe how they single-handedly managed the local pizza hub or how they managed 30 people at the community pool last summer. My favorite comment is, "Because I was such a great leader I was promoted to head waitress and asked to come back next summer to be a manager!"

For these students, this was their first formal class in leadership and at that point in the semester I had not yet explained the difference between leadership and management. Since then I have explained the difference between the two terms -- **leaders create change; managers carry out change**.

The one thing that all of these "managers" have in common is their ability to "model the way." Each of them was promoted to higher positions because they were not afraid to model the correct behavior for others to follow. Indeed they were great managers!

My questions to you are, "Are you a leader or a manager? Are you creating change or are you carrying out change for your organization?" Either role is good and makes contributions; just be sure you know whether your role is to lead, to manage, or both.

- By Oris Griffin, Ph.D., James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

Technology Leaders

Even though my 20-year-old students were raised with computers, they often discover in my classes that there is still a lot for them to learn. Although some of them wonder what I can possibly teach them, others are openly uncomfortable with technology and the idea of learning new software. It is in working with these less-confident students that I find myself in the role of technology leader rather than technology teacher.

A leader is one who is able to be enthusiastic, optimistic, and confident despite uncertain outcomes. As a technology leader, exhibiting these qualities is especially important when working with a brand new technology or when the learner lacks confidence. Learning a new technology involves venturing outside of one's comfort zone which is sometimes risky for adults because their self-concept may be tied to their success in learning. To help students develop efficacy with technology, **leaders need to be patient** while providing support during skill development. Leading is a lot like coaxing young children to climb a steep set of stairs. It is blazing the trail, staying close enough to lend a hand, and helping them realize there is nothing to fear.

As a leader, my role is to empower my students. I do this by exhibiting behaviors that I hope my students will adopt themselves. When students practice the behaviors they see me using, they begin to see themselves in a new light and their confidence increases. Increased confidence is linked to motivation, and motivation is linked to achievement. As we practice leadership we must be sure to keep the goal in mind. If my goal is to develop technologically capable students, then I need to use behaviors that will enable my students to realize their potential with technology. Then, they can become technology leaders themselves.

-By Diane Wilcox, Ph.D., James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

Southern Early Childhood Association

The Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) is a regional organization committed to promoting quality care and education for young children and their families. SECA is committed to providing leadership and support to individuals and groups by:

Enhancing the quality of young children's lives through early childhood care and education.

Supporting families in their roles of caring for their children.

Fostering the professional growth and status of individuals working with young children and their families.

Increasing public understanding and support for policies and programs which ensure developmentally based services to young children and their families.

Focusing on Southern issues concerning children and their families.

Annual Report and Budget Request Form

If you're looking for a set of questions to include on annual reports from your organization's committees, try the following items. Information gathered through such questions may also give input useful when planning next year's budget.

What were the highlights or primary activities of your committee during the past year?

What expenses were associated with your primary activities (e.g. printing, mailing, refreshments, space rental, etc.)?

What activities would your committee like to repeat?

What new activities would your committee like to plan/add?

What new/additional expenses do you expect/need to carry out your proposed plan?

What other committees or board members do you need support from in order to accomplish your proposed plan?

What new activities/projects would you suggest the (name of your organization here) board undertake (not necessarily your committee)? We welcome any ideas.

What other comments, suggestions, or needs do you have at this time?

- Adapted from 2004 VAECE Policy Manual

Good planning usually promotes positive growth.