

MANAGING TODAY'S CHANGES: Part 1, Need an Attitude Adjustment?

Change.....dealing with it, managing it, being more aware of everything that's changing around us; then recognizing how we're reacting and responding to the changes in our work and life... I don't know about you, but that's a lot of work; and there are days I'm just flat-out tired, and tuckered out from all of the changes....

But, in all of my career coaching and training work over the years, I would venture to say that our ability to deal with and manage today's crazy work and life changes, **may be the single most important skill (and awareness) that determines our success in work and life.** So, I want to share a few thoughts about change. The subject comes up directly or indirectly in almost every coaching session, and class that I teach. Often, it's the elephant in the room. Of course, I wrestle with it, too.

When you think about it, **we're really programmed for change**, just look at our environment; consider the fact that the earth is spinning one rotation each day at about 1000 miles an hour, at the same time we know it's whirling around the sun nearly once every year, at around 67,000 miles an hour. So we're spinning and whirling, and I'm getting dizzy.....Then let's look at ourselves. I remember reading that the cells in our body literally reproduce new organs in weeks and months, without us even being aware. So, **we're wired for change**....but why do we so often struggle with it?

In my experience, it's related to the question, **"How do we view change?"** Our view often times determines our attitude, level of confidence, commitment; it's the psychology and driver behind our behaviors, decisions and our actions (both good and bad, i.e. the elephant in the room). Change (even the toughest ones) can be healthy, positive, and an **OPPORTUNITY** to grow, develop new skills, meet new people, build our faith and character. We can list the positive changes in our lives: graduation, marriage, promotion, birth of a new child. Yet we still read stories about abused and abandoned children.

We've all too often, particularly in recent months, witnessed the **DANGER/LOSS** side of change: loss of retirement investments, job loss, demotion, divorce, or a move. However, I've worked with clients who truly viewed their career set back or job loss as an opportunity to move on with their work and life, retool and find their passion. Not to say that they didn't have to deal with those emotions of denial, anger, fear and depression. However, their overriding attitude was one of viewing this change as an opportunity and a challenge. They were able to see the silver lining; and that's the challenge for each of us.

Let me summarize a few parting thoughts related to our ability to deal with change:

- So, we're programmed and wired for change; change is the one constant we can count on, without it we wouldn't survive today
- Change can be viewed as an OPPORTUNITY or DANGER; it's all about our perspective.....How do you view change? Do you focus on opportunities or losses? Our perspective is directly related to the stress in our lives....**Resist change, create stress - accept change and minimize stress**
- No two of us view change the same, and that's OK; we respond as a product of our upbringing, beliefs, experiences and what's happening in our work/life at the time
- We may not have control over the change event, or circumstances surrounding it, **BUT we control how we react and respond to the changes in our work and life.**

NEXT TIME: It's our challenge: how can we look at our adversity, fear and losses associated with change, and find the opportunities, that silver lining to embrace change?

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