
The Mathis Group's Messenger

Vol. 5 No. 9

September, 2007

Changing Without Cringing

Change is never easy. No one likes going through change—whether it’s personally or professionally. It is often a result of something that is out of our control. Change is the moving of a person, organization or event from one position to another. In a company, it is most often caused by personal vision, world markets, diverse cultures, technology, and competition. While most people would like to run from change, there are those few who embrace and thrive from it.

How do we become the kind of person who doesn’t run in the face of change? There are five skills you can develop to help you not to be afraid of change.



1. Be persistent in moving forward. Take baby steps. Don’t be discouraged by the big picture. Keep moving in the right direction and, eventually, you’ll reach the end goal.
2. Lead; don’t just talk about it. Take charge of the changes needing to be made. Point out the direction the organization should go. If no one is willing to take the initiative to get things started, nothing will ever get done.
3. Rally others to a cause. Get others excited about the changes. Changes aren’t always bad. They can mean that there is growth within the organization. Keep everything positive, and it will keep everyone energized and motivated.
4. Enlist, equip and empower. In order to empower people with the same vision, you must not be the only thinker or problem solver. Make employees think about how to solve the problems at hand.
5. Stay results focused. There will be hesitancy from at least one person within your organization over change. Don’t let one “Negative Ned” stand in the way of progress

and success. Keep your eye on the accomplishment of the tasks ahead of you.

People react to change in different ways. Some may respond with irritation and hostility. They will be very vocal about their disagreement with the requested changes. Others will organize opposition. These are the people that group together to complain. They may even go as far as to organize a strike or walkout. Several will be apathetic to the changes. They know that change is coming and they just don’t care. There will also be the few who are accepting of new changes. They are willing to go along with whatever is needed to be done without complaining.



You must be cautious about when and how you implement changes. For example, it is best to gradually introduce a change if numerous previous changes were implemented with bad results, there is little trust between supervisors and frontline employees, there is little support for this type of change, or there is no real implementation plan. These instances require special consideration as to the timing of the changes. On the other hand, there are times when it is necessary to create change fast. If the situation is urgent, high trust is demonstrated between supervisors and front-

(continued on page 2 *Changing Without Cringing*)

*Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it
into small jobs.
Henry Ford (1863-1947)
Founder of Ford Motor Company*

The Mathis Group's Messenger

We're excited to announce the launch of our new project management website www.pmiexpert.com. This website will be dedicated to the project management courses and information we offer. Please take a look at the innovated new courses and products that we're developing especially with project managers in mind. While the website is still under construction, there are many links for you to follow that will give you greater insight as to the depth of our project management knowledge.

(continued from page 1 *Changing Without Cringing*)

line employees or speed is needed to prevent sabotage, do not hesitate to make the changes as quickly as possible.

There are four barriers that must be overcome when initiating change.

It will take longer than expected

Creating change takes time. For many, bringing about change is hard and an uphill battle. If you are to impact an organization with change, you must be willing to endure the obstacles. Many will forget the reason for changes being proposed. Others will purposely drag their feet about changing. One reason why it always takes more time to implement than expected is no one can think of all the problems before they will surface. An attempt must be made to anticipate the problems ahead of time, but don't forget there will always be a few that gets through us. Due to this, you must ask if you are willing to pay the price and take the needed time to bring about change.

Expecting the progress to be quick

It is easy to think that changes can be brought about at an extremely fast pace. This will sometimes make one set his or her sites too high. There are some changes which will take months and even years.



Skeptical Critics

When changes are being brought about, one will always find critics. People who have a critical spirit will not become convinced of changes too quickly. They will often sabotage the situation time after time behind your back.

People who procrastinate

When bringing new changes, there will be those who say that the changes are great, but they will continue to put things off and will not implement any of them. You can fight this by giving the employee steps or bite-size pieces which are clearly able to be carried out and are easily measured.

In summary, here is a checklist for successful change.

- Preparation prior to the change
- Power to change
- Timing of change
- Equipping all staff for change
- Upper management support of change
- Communication plan
- Role models are followed
- Vision and mission are followed
- Praise and recognition

Next month we will look at how to handle changes in a project.



Check out our exciting
courses at
www.themathisgroup.com!!

- Successfully Handling Change*
- Empower or Perish*

Contact The Mathis Group today to receive our catalog of complete course listings or to discuss your customized onsite seminar.

The Mathis Group, Inc.
Dr. Keith Mathis
106 Lakeview Woods
Eureka, MO 63025
1-800-224-3731
636/938-5292 voice/fax
keith@themathisgroup.com
www.themathisgroup.com
www.pmiexpert.com
GSA Contractor- GS10F0383M
Project Management Institute R.E.P.