



The Positive Power of Change

By Chanon Collins

Final article of series examining re-engineering change

Have you taken a look at the current trend of topics in business literature? The raging topic of today is change. If everyone is writing about it, does this give it merit? This mélange of writing alone does not warrant respect, but it does deserve examination. The prospect of change is a powerful one and the power lies in the business owner's hands to determine if it will be effective or destructive.

There are many self-labeled experts touting the power of change in today's marketplace. While the theories they express are valid, they are useless unless an organization embraces them as its own. Tom Peters, author of **The Pursuit of WOW!**, believes that it takes a brief moment to implement change, but "a lifetime of passionate pursuit to maintain it."

Tom Peters' thoughts on change might be extreme to some, but he does make an interesting point. Think of the many instances in your organization in which you have witnessed the negative power of planning. Most everyone is familiar with those individuals who are driven by the need to have a meeting to plan a meeting. Or those who must plan to plan. Please do not think that I am dismissing the need for organization. Quite the contrary – planning is essential, but it is also worthless if action is not taken.

Once organizations decide to change, a great obstacle has been removed. The mere fact that the power of change has been recognized is part of the battle. The true picture of the organization's future is beginning to be sketched. The final product now depends on the organization's ability to maintain its passion. Tom Conellan, author of **Inside the Magic Kingdom**, credits the strength of Disney's attraction to the fact that not only does all the cast members "talk the talk," they also "walk the talk." Planning and implementing elements of change are essential, but the enthusiasm for change but must be ever-present.

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There are many success stories of organizations that have decided to change and changed with that thought. Herb Kelleher, founder of Southwest Airlines, took the most extreme thoughts for organizational change and made them a reality for his company. It is his passion and stamina that has propelled Southwest Airlines into the successful company it is today. There seems to be a common thread among the great entrepreneurs of creating successes. When Albert Einstein was questioned about his work habits, he replied, “How do I work? I grope.”

Searching for answers is time-consuming, exhausting, and ultimately rewarding. The mere fact that one is searching speaks volumes for change. John Kotter, author of **Leading Change**, recognizes that “the rate of change is not going to slow down anytime soon. If anything, competition in most industries will probably speed up even more in the next few decades.” Recognizing the power of change and pursuing a new future are inseparable. Theory without practice falls to mere words on a page.

The power of theory and practice are poignantly identified by the immortal bard, William Shakespeare – “There are more things in heaven and on earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” Take his advice and let your actions of change speak more loudly than your words.

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