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Change Dynamics

by James "Jay" Hawreluk, *Management Consultant*

We are constantly hearing about change. Change in the political environment, change in the economic environment, change in our personal lives and change in the business environment. Change has become part of everyone's life. You rarely see a person with a briefcase sized cell phone anymore and mimeograph machines have long been relegated to the storage room. Change is something that we all accept and conform with.

However, the question that still confounds us is: "Why is change so hard to effectively and efficiently implement in the work environment?" We know all people accept change, but most of the time getting change to stick in an organization is only possible over months of pain and agony. Many senior executives will admit that asking their employees to go to the dentist for a root canal without any form of pain killer is easier than obtaining buy-in from their employees when changing processes or procedures.

Why?

The answer lies with how people are innately hardwired and how that hardwiring affects how they accept change and how readily they buy-in to that change.

How people are hardwired to respond when faced with change can be objectively measured. Advisa specializes in measuring how people are hardwired and their subsequent reactions to change. As a Senior Management Consultant, I partner with my clientele to help them use that measureable data to achieve better results.

"Why is change so hard to effectively and efficiently implement in the work environment?"

My experience in working with multitudes of companies has led me to the conclusion that people respond to change based upon their hardwiring in four different ways:

- 1) Idea Acceptance
- 2) Thought Processing
- 3) Speed of Change
- 4) Amount of Information

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Stress, the Confusion Created...

by Penny Pruett, *Office Manager*

When I was in college, I had a button that said, "STRESS - the confusion created when one's mind overrides the body's basic desire to smack someone"...or something to that effect. In terms of PI, it was saying that going against your nature can create stress. The more you have to work against your drives, the more stress can accumulate. Additionally, in my experience with PI, I've seen an interesting parallel (or a vicious circle, depending on your perspective)...stress overrides your ability to control your PI drives – the more stress you are under the more likely "true colors" will appear.

The more you have to work against your drives, the more stress can accumulate.

Let's start with going against your drives creating stress. As a high C, I prefer to do one thing at a time, usually first in/first out. That doesn't mean that I can't multi-task, it's just not my preferred M.O. Also, contrary to what I used to think about myself, I do not work best under pressure. For short periods of time, I can do several things at once, and I can even meet rushed deadlines. However, if my regular workday involves multi-tasking and pressured deadlines (as it did with my previous employer), my stress level increases. During that phase of my career, I could actually feel my blood pressure rise and a feeling like my body was going to explode. Sometimes I could even work myself into a full-blown migraine. I would sometimes find myself staring at my desk wondering what to work on first – only to find myself 10 minutes later still staring at my desk because I wasn't sure what to do first. WOW! My heart still palpitates just thinking about it.

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By understanding how people are hardwired every organization can accomplish change.



Idea Acceptance

There are basically two types of ways people will accept the ideas that create change in an organization. Some individuals prefer to hear all of the options available, evaluate them and then decide upon the best course of action. Others need to have their thumbprint on ideas to take ownership in them before they can embrace the design of change.

The two perspectives on idea acceptance is a direct function of how the person is hardwired. The interesting fact is that those who do want to hear all the options can be passively resistant to the change agenda if they believe that the agenda is being forced upon them without all options adequately evaluated. Those who need to put their thumbprint on an agenda will be actively aggressive in fighting the change if they do not believe they have a vested interest in how the agenda was created.

Solution: Create the agenda for change with several options with a specific timetable that the ideal option must be decided upon. Once the best course of action is decided, allow enough wiggle room in the agenda to allow others to take ownership (thumbprint) on the area for which they have personal responsibility.

Thought Processing

People process or synthesize thought either internally or externally. Internal thought processors do best when they have time to internalize ideas and concepts while external thought processors do best when they can verbally “kick issues around.”

Internal thought processors will not readily buy into change if they have not had the time to totally absorb the change program. If an internal thinker has not had the necessary time to absorb and think through a new change agenda, they will be resistant to that change. Conversely, external or verbal thinkers need time to openly discuss the issue to create their level of buy in. If a new program is being introduced and the verbal thinkers have not had time to discuss the plan openly, resistance will occur as the verbal thinker will feel that they are not being recognized as an important cog in the change machine.

Solution: Publish the program for change (with the various options) in advance of the meeting so internal thinkers can synthesize this information and come prepared with their best input. Should the agenda change due to new items introduced at the meeting, provide the internal thinkers some time to properly digest this information prior to

deciding on a course of action. Verbal thinkers will adjust to new information as it is introduced during a meeting – just as long as they can verbalize the new data.

Speed of Change

By our innate nature, some of us embrace “turn on a dime” change and thus, enjoy environments that are constantly changing. These are the people who want to juggle many things at the same time and to some degree enjoy the pressure of a changing work place. Others want change introduced in phases so they can completely understand all of the steps involved in the change. These individuals are more likely to process their work in a particular sequentially driven order as they enjoy having a plan and following every step of that plan.

Jugglers like the idea of change as it introduces an element of unpredictability into their workplace. They do not need to know all of the steps involved in the plan – just the basics of what the plan involves and how fast the change can be implemented. Those who are more sequentially wired, like knowing the plan, all steps of the plan and being able to follow that plan as it is laid out. The predictability of their environment is what they thrive upon. When change is introduced quickly without time for them to digest and follow the plan, push back will occur and they will do things in the manner they are most accustomed to and fight the new way or the change being introduced.

Solution: Change can be implemented within an organization that takes both factors mentioned above into consideration. Once the ideal plan of action has been developed, it should be introduced in stages. These phases allow those who want time to adjust and follow the plan to prepare for the change. The “phased-in change” approach will actually create faster change within the organization (satisfying those who want it now) by reducing the amount of push back created by those who want to follow the plan and in order by reducing the amount of pressure they feel during the change process.

Amount of information needed to accept change

The last factor to consider in change is how much information a person desires to become comfortable with the new way of doing work within the organization. Some people just want the critical highlights of information. They are comfortable with the executive summary outlining the important points of information – just the basics. Others want a good degree of proven information and data as to “why” the change is

Stress, the Confusion Created...

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Additionally, as a high A, lowest B, I can be somewhat direct – OK, very direct. Early in my career I would face the occasional counseling from my manager(s) regarding, for lack of a better term, tact. I was often saying things to co-workers that, although the truth, were not worded in a warm and fuzzy way. Over the years, through experience, I have learned how to temper my opinions with a little more sugar so they “go down” a little easier (or even to just not voice them). It goes against my nature, but I know I have to do it (this is easier as a highest D since it is the right thing to do).

As stress increases, I exponentially lose my ability to “soften” my directness. I have noticed this at ADVISA on payroll days. Payroll is the one day of the month where I am always spinning plates and facing a deadline. My ideal payroll day would be a day with me shut in a room all by myself with no phones to answer and no one to interrupt me with questions. I could go through my payroll checklist from start to finish virtually stress-free. However, ideal is not often realistic – phone calls have to be answered and various questions have to be

addressed. And, each interruption adds a little more stress. I’m sure that any of my co-workers can tell you that it is plain on my face when I have reached the limit of interruptions. If I had a blinking light on my head it would say, “What now?” I often find myself not giving the polite, “Can I help you?” when someone interrupts me and instead say a simple “Yes?” or, worse, simply stare at them until they talk. Lucky for me everyone knows my profile and doesn’t take it personally (and it also helps that the stress reaction usually occurs on a day that I am cutting their paycheck).

The point of all this is to explain that when you work against your drives you create stress. And stress makes it harder to try to work against your drives (again – a vicious circle). When you try to work against your drives too much (or too many drives at once), something has got to give and natural tendencies will win out. You can never completely eliminate stress from your work, but the more your work fits your profile, the easier it is to minimize the stress.



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Upcoming Open Training Sessions

Three-day Predictive Index® Management Seminar

This session prepares managers and Human Resources Professionals to use the Predictive Index® System in hiring and managing within your organization.

Carmel, IN July 29-31, 2008

•Presented by Phil Pirkle

Dearborn, MI July 29-31, 2008

•Presented by Jay Hawreluk

Carmel, IN Sept 16-18, 2008

•Presented by Phil Pirkle



The cost for these open sessions is \$1,785 per attending person. If you have 5 or more attendees, we will be happy to schedule a private session for your organization.



If you have someone you would like to sign up for one of these sessions, please call or email your consultant or Penny Pruett at 317-574-1550 or ppruett@advisausa.com.

ADVISA Welcomes Two New Team Members

We are thrilled to introduce our new Training & Development Manager, Phil Pirkle. Phil is a graduate of the University of Evansville with a B.S. in Human Resources Management and Development. He has over thirty years of experience in human resources and employee performance improvement. Phil served as corporate director of training and development and as a director of human resources for a major international mining company. He has lived and worked on foreign assignments in Indonesia, Peru, and other locations for the last twelve years and brings expertise in the development of employee performance solutions through training and other methods. Phil will be responsible for the delivery, improvement and continued development of ADVISA training offerings that meet our clients'

needs. You can reach Phil at ppirkle@advisausa.com or 317-574-1550 x 206.

We are also excited to introduce Chris Flora, part time Hiring Partner/Admin Professional. Chris brings a B.S. in management information systems from Ball State University as well as professional experience in global clinical data management, team leadership and independent consulting/direct sales. Chris has successfully managed both systems and people and she especially enjoys recruiting. In her role with us she will perform recruiting, applicant screening and administrative activities that support our daily operations and enhance our client service. You can reach Chris at cflora@advisausa.com or 317-574-1550 x 218.

If addressee is no longer with your organization, please **DO NOT THROW AWAY**. Please contact Penny Pruett at (317) 574-1550 or ppruett@advisausa.com, or stamp "Return to Sender" and send back. Thank you.

Happy Anniversary

Advisa is honored to have clients that use our services year in and year out. The following clients have or will celebrate milestone anniversaries during the third quarter of 2008:

15
YEARS
10
YEARS
5
YEARS

Lumbermens, August
Choice One Bank, July
Centra Credit Union, August
TRW Automotive, July
Bruce & Sons, July
Nielson & Company, August
Master Industries, September

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being introduced, "why" it is necessary and who the subject matter experts are to support the reasoning on why the change is needed and should be implemented.

Solution: Provide the outline for the new program as an executive summary. Under each of the critical points outline the reason why the change makes sense for the organization. Outline the pros and cons to show that all aspects of the new program have been evaluated. This simple format will provide all the necessary information they desire to effectively buy into the change the organization seeks.

All people will accept change. By providing to all within your organization the needs they have to accept and buy into the change – based upon their unique hardwiring – will allow for change to be introduced, accepted and implemented in the shortest time period possible.

By understanding how people are hardwired every organization can accomplish change ... without all of the usual accompanying headaches!

“Stress is simply the adaptation of our bodies and minds to change; and change, as we noted, is about the only constant left in the workplace.”

- Peter G. Hanson, M.D.

