

Changea good thing! By: Rita B. Allen

Autumn is a great example of the positive effects of change and significant impact transformation can bring. It tells a compelling story and paints a vivid picture through nature. Change represents progress yet more often than not, it is met with some resistance. Many times it comes from concern or fear of the unknown impact the change may bring to oneself and/or others. While we cannot control or predict what changes will be presented to us, one thing is for sure...***the only constant today is change!***



We all play a role in making change happen — leadership sets the tone and everyone contributes. While it can be uncomfortable and trying at times, change allows us to grow and venture into new territories that may be foreign at first but quite rewarding in the end. When I switched over to an iPhone from a BlackBerry last year, it took me a long time to get used to a touch screen as I whined and moaned about it the whole time. Fast forward to a year later, now I also have an iPad and am using several applications that are allowing me to be more efficient and productive in my work.

Living in a global and multi-cultural economy as we do, there has been tremendous change in how we work as well as how we learn. Most organizations have employees, clients and other stakeholders throughout the world who are working, communicating and collaborating daily to achieve results. In higher education, the traditional models of learning have been enhanced with virtual learning. When I first started as a Lecturer at Northeastern University eight years ago, all the teaching was in a classroom. Over the years, a hybrid model was introduced and ultimately a completely virtual model. While I was resistant to these changes, I tried embracing them and have learned to appreciate the model much more than I ever imagined. As a matter of fact, most of the courses I have been teaching the past year have been virtual which has enabled me to work with a diverse mix of students from all over the world at any one time and the opportunity to engage every single student in a lively dialogue which would not happen in a live classroom! Being flexible and agile is important in order to grow and succeed.

Change is good...change is necessary...change is progress! It's like Ben Franklin said, "*Life is ten percent what you make it and ninety percent how you take it.*" There are many proven practices for how leaders and managers can manage change effectively. What can each individual do to play a role in managing change? I have learned to **ACT** to effectively deal with change and have coached individuals and teams to do so.

ACT now to effectively deal with Change

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Acept and **A**cknowledge the need for change

Communicate with all parties involved in a pro-active manner to **C**larify and **C**omprehend the process required for the change to be implemented

Thrive in the progress change brings — **T**hrow yourself into the change, keep an open mind, **T**ry new things, **T**est different approaches, **T**hink about impact on all, **T**each others your learnings, **T**ell all