

THE CHANGE CHALLENGE.....A Newsletter About Leadership

January 1, 2014

Issue: 64



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This Month's Articles

[2014 - An Uncomfortable Year](#)

[You Are Always Under a
Microscope](#)

[I Think I Can](#)

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[Buying & Selling a Company](#)

**Looking to have your
organization embrace**

Happy New Year and welcome to the January edition of *The Change Challenge*. The 2014 business environment will challenge your current way of doing business. This month's feature article "**2014 - An Uncomfortable Year**" suggests that you are likely to be pushed beyond your comfort zone in order to succeed in 2014.

The *Leading Change* article titled "**You Are Always under a Microscope**" warns that you impact your people's performance and satisfaction even when you may not be fully aware of your actions. The *Personal Change* article titled "**I Think I Can**" claims your beliefs will determine if you fail or succeed in 2014. Success should be easy then, since you control your beliefs. *Or do you?*

As always, your feedback and recommendations to improve this newsletter will be appreciated via return email or through *The Change Blog* at www.dickstieglitz.com.

Dick Stieglitz

Feature Article
2014 - AN UNCOMFORTABLE YEAR

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and success, but where he stands in times of challenge and controversy." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Happy New Year. At least I hope 2014 will be happy for you and your organization. What is your strategy to make it so? As 2014 begins, are you dealing with new challenges or advanced versions of the same ones you faced last January? Do tight budgets, intense competition, and new technologies still worry you, or have you adjusted your business model to embrace those realities? 2014's challenges are likely to push you and your organization well beyond the comfort zone. You will feel pressured to change your services, products and business practices in order to survive.

Status Quo. *Status quo* may have been a reasonable strategy in years past, but it is a death spiral today. Companies that try to maintain *status quo* - Barnes & Noble and RIM/Blackberry, for example - quickly fall behind the ones who create change. *Status-quo* organizations react to changing markets and financial priorities by working harder under their old business model. On the other hand, growing companies include change in their business plan. No matter which you choose, the world around you will continue to change in 2014.

Comfort Zone vs. Learning Zone. Everyone has a comfort zone - you, your people, and your customers. The zone expands over time as you face changes and embrace the lessons they deliver. The zone is comfortable because you know what to do - you've been there before. Minimal learning occurs in the comfort zone because *status quo* is the standard. When you change, you leave the comfort zone and enter the learning zone, a heightened state of awareness. Effective leaders use the learning zone to grow their organizations. Tip: Do two things this week that you've never done before and ask each of your people to do at least one thing that stretches their comfort zone.

Change Fuels Dysfunctional Behaviors. Rampant change often stretches coping mechanisms and increases inflexibility. Many people react to change by defensively clinging to outdated beliefs or mindlessly repeating old routines. This is especially true in Washington where politicians typically are wedded to old programs and avoid the debates and actions required to respond to technology-driven social change. Of course, in business that behavior is fatal because survival depends on causing or responding to market changes at least as fast as competitors. But the harder people resist change, the more they cling to views that prevent new actions. This dangerous behavior mandates that leaders become more engaged with their people, not less, in times of change.

Leadership Begins at the Edge of the Comfort Zone. Psychologists say that humans are more motivated to avoid pain than to seek pleasure. Therefore, to achieve success you must conquer the natural resistance to the part of change that is painful. The barriers to change are like electric fences that confine animals: to get where you want to go, you may have leap through the barrier and endure pain. Successful leaders don't waste precious time trying to avoid the pain of change. Rather, they make change a habit in their organization and their personal routine. Make your people a bit uncomfortable with the results you ask them to achieve in 2014.

Embrace Doubts. When you lead a change, people will expect you to be the expert even if you are not. At the start, the goal may lie beyond your people's comfort zone and their enthusiasm may be diluted by doubts and fears. Your people expect you to understand their feelings, to tap into their highest potential, and to help them become a winning team. Encourage them to embrace their feelings and to understand that the team's objective

change in 2014

HOW TO THRIVE - NOT JUST SURVIVE -
IN THE GLOBAL RELATIONSHIP ECONOMY

TAMING THE DRAGONS OF CHANGE IN BUSINESS



10 TIPS FOR ANTICIPATING, EMBRACING,
AND USING CHANGE TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

RICHARD G. STIEGLITZ, PhD

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new technologies,
acquisitions, and intense
competition have produced
a world of constant change.

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ALAN S. BERSON
RICHARD G. STIEGLITZ

is bigger than any one person can accomplish. Your job as the leader is to get people to align and perform together at an optimal level.

Rapid Change Provides Opportunity. One sure-fire strategy for success is to drive new ideas and positive change in your organization and your industry - invent the future. Interestingly, rapid change has a silver lining: new ideas can be tested at a cost and speed that were unimaginable in the Industrial Age. Days after introducing a new service or product on the Internet you will know if customers like it. The effects of process and technology changes on productivity can be measured almost as quickly. Innovations that once took months and millions of dollars to implement can be launched in hours for a few dollars. That makes innovation, the heart of change, inexpensive and efficient.

Take Action. The only strategy that can succeed in an environment of increasingly unpredictable change is one that causes or adapts easily to market shifts. In today's changing world, you don't need more information to succeed, you need more action. Don't wait for the perfect time or perfect plan. Now is the time to respond to the changes you are seeing. Take a small action and follow it with another. The new action may not work well at first, but don't waste time looking for the ideal solution because by the time you find it the world will have changed again. Push your people into the uncomfortable learning zone and mentor them to success.

Leading Change YOU ARE ALWAYS UNDER A MICROSCOPE

"The supreme quality of leadership is integrity. Without it, no lasting success is possible." - Dwight D. Eisenhower

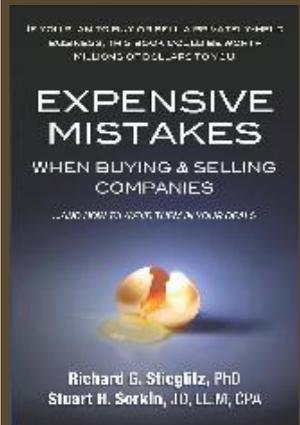
As a successful executive, you already know how to prepare for and make a good impression at high-visibility events like customer presentations and strategic meetings. But do you realize that you are always under a microscope? You affect your people's performance and satisfaction in moments when you may not even be conscious of your actions. As important as it is to orchestrate big events, it is little moments - an acknowledging glance, a small compliment, or an encouraging word - that largely determine how your people feel about their jobs and their ability to succeed.

The most impactful conversations occur in impromptu incidents that are uncomfortable. You won't know they are coming and usually can't prepare for them. For example, moments when you must address someone who failed to finish a task on time, missed a vital detail, or treated someone inappropriately. The individual is likely to become emotional no matter how you address their behavior, so be careful to handle their response in a way that builds trust and respect yet gets the message across. Don't sidestep an issue, instead make it into a learning experience. Remember: everyone is watching what you do - or do not do - in uncomfortable moments that set the boundaries. Your people will only be willing to take action in uncomfortable situations if you model constructive behaviors in such situations.

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Whether you are newly-promoted, a veteran of the C-suite, or somewhere in between, your most powerful tool is the ability to touch people's hearts and minds through effective conversations. Rich with real-world examples and useful ideas, *Leadership Conversations* is a must-read for high-achieving managers looking to reach the next level and leaders striving to develop others.

Buying or selling a business can be a lucrative but risky transaction



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A popular maxim says average people learn from their mistakes, stupid people repeat their mistakes, and brilliant people learn from the mistakes of others. This book is designed to move you toward the brilliant category among business owners who buy and sell privately-held companies.

QUICKLINKS

[Dick Stieglitz's Website](#)

It takes years to build a professional reputation, but one thoughtless moment can unravel it all - like making a bad decision, rebuking a subordinate with an offhanded remark, or losing your temper. Yet most of the time, people will not confront you about such behaviors. Don't let that delude you into thinking that your actions will be forgotten or forgiven - they will not. Acknowledge that you made a mistake and make an effort to fix it. Most relationships can be restored with a sincere apology promptly delivered. Some people want to know the corrective actions you will take, while others are satisfied with an apology. To determine which is best, know and study your people just as they know and study you.

Personal Change
I THINK I CAN

"It always seems impossible...until it's done." - Nelson Mandela

When I was 39 I was a Director - a position just below Vice President - with a large aerospace firm and lead a staff of 130 people. That summer I participated in a Director's meeting at company headquarters and was the youngest one present. I left feeling that it would be a long time before I could become a Vice President. But my job was comfortable and I was paid well including stock bonuses and a company car.

I described my experience at headquarters to a mentor and he asked something that I had never considered: *"Could you run your own company?"* I hesitated before responding *"I think I can,"* which lead me to think about the resources and relationships I would need to be successful. Within a year I quit the aerospace firm and started my company. Had I answered *"I don't think so"* the possibility would probably have died right there.

You also may want to change something about your career path. *"I think I can, therefore I can"* may be the beginning of a lengthy journey, but *"I think I can't"* puts you on a dead-end road. Why would you try if you knew (really, it is believed) that you couldn't succeed? Believing in the possibility of success is an essential prerequisite for success.

The more life experiences I accumulate, the more I understand that beliefs are everything. They are more vital to success than skills, education, resources, or even relationships. They are more important than past successes and failures or what other people say or do. Your beliefs will determine if you fail or succeed in 2014. Success should be easy then, since you have full control over your beliefs. *Or do you?* Each day you have a choice to retain or adjust your current beliefs. *Choose wisely.*

Colleagues and Friends,

If your people are uncomfortable with the challenges and goals set for 2014, contact me to discuss ways to channel those feelings into growth experiences. If you found this e-letter to be useful, please forward it to a friend. If not, let me know why at dick@DragonsofChange.com.

Until February,

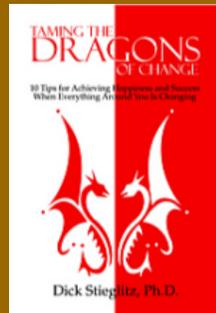
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