

"Making It Happen....."

If you care to Google "managing change" you'll get about 231 million results. Life is too short to read all that but it's a key skill that managers need to be good at. Leading change is where a manager's and a leader's job intersect. Certainly managing compliance is a managers 'day to day' but looking at your feet all the time is not a good idea, now more than ever standing still is going backwards. So my top 10 rules for managing change (sorry couldn't get to 231 million!) have been distilled from lots of projects and roles over a career spent thinking about and effecting change. Not a complete list of course and in no particular order :-



1. ***Recognise Resistance As A Healthy Response*** - it's the default setting for all of us. People who are thinking always think about obstacles it's natural and can really be used to your advantage - there is no believer like a convert!
2. ***Have A Clear Vision*** - if the goals are not clear you can bet that people will not all be heading where you think they should. It's no good shouting 'follow me' if people don't know where you are going.... usually they won't!
3. ***Sell The Benefits*** - you need to show people why it's good for them, not just good for The Company, the company is an abstract and people don't fight for abstracts they fight for themselves their friends and their family. Aligning the Company's interests with your teams interest will make for an easy sell. That doesn't just mean more pay it can mean sustainability, an easier life, more peer respect, beating the competition etc etc
4. ***Communicate*** - could have this one twice it's so important, keep the team informed, let them know the milestones, share success and setbacks and use them to drive the project on
5. ***Don't Compromise On Important Things But Let People Determine The Route To Getting There.*** 'Ownership' consultants and lovers off the management buzzword call it but it's about people striving to show that they are capable and wanting to impress. I'm more inclined to make my solution work than adopt one of yours I have some doubts about.
6. ***Be Persistent*** - obvious right? you'd have thought so but many worthy projects fail because people allow problems to lead to a gradual slide down to "lets not bother it's too hard." and the abandonment of the change you sought. Must

be coupled with 'Realistic' though! If you want the team to develop a faster than light drive you might want to have a fairly long project timeline.

7. ***Train, Educate, Encourage, Coach*** - an atmosphere where team members can hold their hand up and say "*this is hard for me*" leads to learning and development. A culture that sets goals and chastises failure..... well we all know the kid who's parents were like that. low self esteem, tendency to give up, never challenges anything.
8. ***Have Good PR*** - tell the world by all means if that's your thing but tell the team and the rest of the business, it's important to them, they need to know.
9. ***Praise where Praise is Due*** - celebrate success, it's underrated as a motivator and I'm kind of guilty of it myself, if everything goes to plan... well that was the plan right! but there is great morale to be had from a hug when we score (a goal...football analogy)
10. ***Measure and review*** - look back to see how far you have come out of the swamp. This also helps you to make sure you are still on track and heading the right way. Toyota have a word for making sure you aim a change correctly, they call it heading "True North". Looking back shows your track towards the ultimate goal (and yes I know the geographical arguments about True North Magnetic North and Grid North.... it's just another analogy !)

So there you have it but because this is the Window Industry and you always 'get one free' and for the Spinal Tap fans out there who always expect the dial to go to 11 I'll throw another one in, ultimately the most important one:-

It's all about the people !! Choose them carefully for their behavioural traits, you can train competency but not how someone is 'wired up' or their intellectual capacity. Develop the ones that are worth your time, make sure they want to stay on the journey with you and 'Shoot The Terrorists', people who won't engage and who actively look to prove what *they knew all along* 'this will never work'. Those people need to find another job where they will be happy and productive, and because this is 2012 and we live in a politically correct society, I'm not advocating literally shooting them unless they are literally terrorists -it's frowned on by the authorities.

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