



Six Questions to Answer When Staring Down Change

Change is hard – we all know that. But with big change comes big opportunity! At Emerson Human Capital Consulting, we help our clients up their odds of success by answering these questions.

01

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

Start by asking yourself: Why is it essential that we do this? What do we have to gain? Why are we choosing this particular solution? Why is it worth the time, effort, expense and pain? If leaders aren't clear on the "why," no one will be.

02

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?

Now that you know why and how you're doing it, get together and distill that into a message. This will be the foundation of all your change efforts. You need four words that represent the problem, solution, approach and result you want. From there, write your story – a simple and easy-to-remember statement, supported by facts and examples, that you'll use every time you talk about the change. Your goal: every member of the team is an ambassador for the change, telling the same compelling story, customized for the audience they're talking to.

03

HOW WILL YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

Before you start, agree what success looks like and how you will measure it. Decide on metrics and checkpoints; use them to evaluate and report on your progress, and course correct when necessary. And, as you move forward, share that observable progress with the team. Meeting expectations is a great way to make the change feel controlled and successful, which helps people get on board.

04

WHO WILL BE ON THE TEAM?

Here's how NOT to pick your team: look at an org chart to figure out who the business units can afford to "lose" for a few months. Is this change important or not? If it is, you have to invest your people's strengths, just like you're investing your money. Pick the best and brightest – the natural influencers – from each area affected by the change, and from all levels. They will eventually be the support network for the new way of doing business.

05

HOW SHOULD YOU POSITION THE CHANGE?

There isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to positioning – what works in your organization won't work in another. But there are principles to follow. First, make the change feel familiar in some way. Compare it to something they know – a successful change in your history, or something they all like and use. Second, build a sense of control. People love predictability (think: the weather forecast) because it gives them a (false) sense of control and sets expectations. So tell them what to expect and be specific about it. Then, as the project progresses, point out that the change is progressing as planned. Third, make it feel successful. Do this by engineering small wins as people interact with what's new – a system, a process, a product, etc. Positioning the change as familiar, controlled and successful is the key to adoption.

06

HOW WILL YOU CONFRONT THE HECKLERS?

Trick question. You don't confront them. Instead, focus on individuals who are likely to support the change (or at least be neutral), and can influence the success of your project. Don't fall into the trap of trying to win over every last person. The truth is, not everyone will be a fan. But, using just the right people, you can build credibility and momentum.

**READY.
SET.
CHANGE!**

Whether your business is implementing a new system or undergoing a merger, managing behavior change is critical. The stakes are high. Challenge your team to answer these questions so you have a solid shot at success.

About Us

Emerson Human Capital helps organizations capture the benefit of their transformation initiatives. We don't care what you're launching – a new technology, product, service, market strategy, operating model – we'll help you achieve the intended benefit sooner.

www.emersonhc.com

