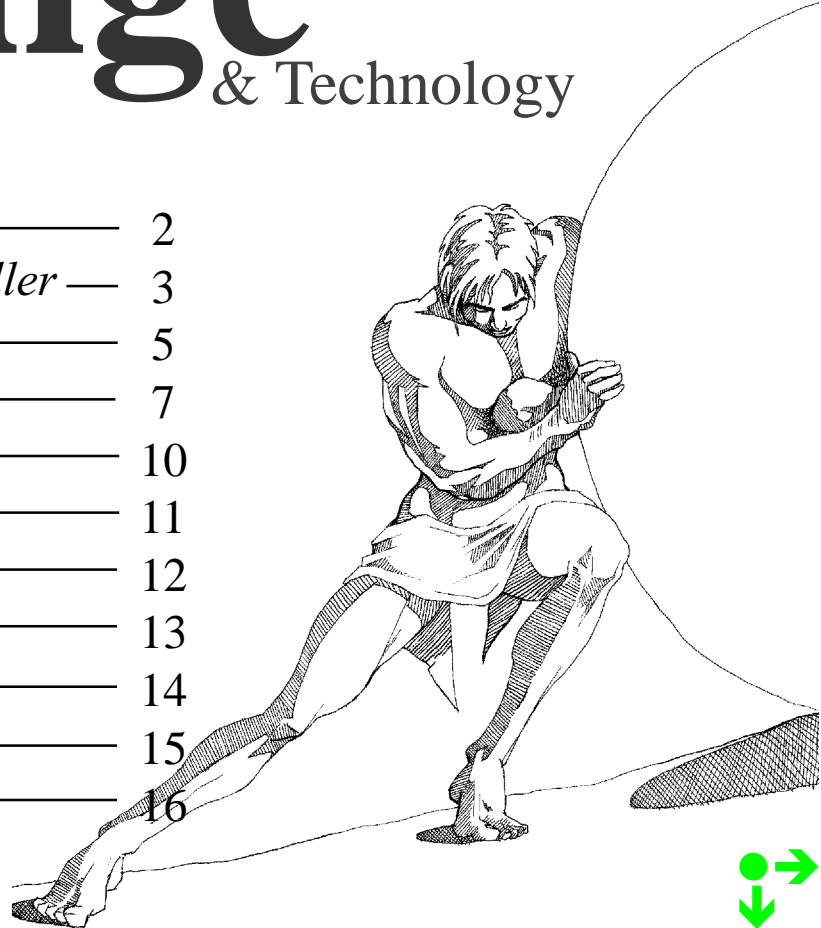


Managing Change

& Technology

July 2000
Vol. 1 No. 5

Greetings! - <i>Peter de Jager</i> _____	2
Are you a Good Manager? - <i>Mary Miller</i> —	3
A Technology Plan - <i>Bob Peterson</i> _____	5
Change! Who needs it? - <i>Jim Frazier</i> _____	7
Contest Winner! _____	10
World's Shortest Course... - <i>PdJ</i> _____	11
Just a Thought - <i>Rob Scarlett</i> _____	12
Seeding Growth - <i>PdJ</i> _____	13
More Limericks _____	14
Random Thoughts on Change _____	15
Masthead & Subscription Info _____	16





Greetings!

That this publication is focused on the ‘Management of Technological Change’ made last month’s fiasco all the more ironic. I’ve been ‘concerned’ from the start that the file size of MC&T is a bit of a nuisance, but the ability to do some half decent layout work, making it easier and more enjoyable to read, is important and necessary.

Never-the-less. I’ve been looking for alternative distribution methods. That nobody suggested I snail mail it out... means we’ve made some progress in accepting technological change.

I finally gave in and made MC&T available for downloading from the Internet. “This should work!” I thought. Little did I know the problems I’d unleash:

Illogical rules. “My company won’t allow me to download files, but you can e-mail them to me.” Dilbert is alive and well!

Technical problems of all stripes. Firewalls and passwords, filters and browser versions, readers and access levels, transmission and ISP problems. I give up. I surrender. Murphy wins!

We’re back to e-mail distribution of the file. If you’d prefer (assuming you’re able) to download the file from the site? Then it’ll be posted when it’s available. Nope, I don’t have the resources to maintain two lists... one for distribution and the other for notification only. Sorry.

Update on the Change discussion list? It’s a go, sort of, details to follow in a week or so, stay tuned.

That’s it. Hope you’re having a good summer. Remember feedback is always welcome, sometimes even acted upon!
Yours truly
Peter de Jager, July 2000

*To err is human,
to really screw up
requires a computer.
Anon*



Are you a Good Manager?

By Mary E. Miller

Peter's discussion of soft skills in the June issue of MC&T, got me to thinking about basic project management skills in general. My theory is that a project team led by a good 'people' manager will be better at inflicting change while minimizing the inevitable pain and chaos.



R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Aretha Franklin did say it best! This is maybe THE most important aspect of good 'people' management. Blatantly ignoring past successes or discounting all the work, knowledge and effort that went into the old status quo is guaranteed to make people more resistant to the new status quo. That's a surefire way to show you don't value or respect them.

First, one of the biggest mistakes you can make is paying lip service to a change project. You must truly believe in what you say and do; otherwise, your staff and affected users will see right through you and have little motivation to give 100% to ensure a successful implementation.

Another part of showing respect is being accessible to your staff and not discouraging risk taking or making your staff feel reluctant to express an opposing point of view or put forth a new, radical idea for addressing an old problem. Which response do you think will keep your staff interested in suggesting new, creative solutions: 'You must be joking.' OR 'I hadn't considered that option. Let's talk about it.'

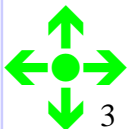
You also have to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the goal and that you know how to reach that goal. If you don't know where you're going, how will you get there and why should anyone follow?!

MOTIVATE: Praise your staff for progress and coming up with new ideas. Show your willingness to be adventurous and try something new. Inject a sense of humor and fun into the inevitable boring, menial, yet vital, tasks that have to be done. Exhibit a "we're in this

Now, let's talk about some of the specific behaviors that contribute to a successfully managed project team and, therefore, a successful implementation.

Doing little things well, is a step towards doing big things well.

Anon



together” attitude. Back up your words with action. Lead by example. It’s a lot easier to put in 10 hours of overtime if the boss is working beside you!

EMPOWER: This concept goes hand-in-hand with motivation.

Authorize your staff to make decisions (within boundaries), re-prioritize tasks, present other options, etc., rather than expecting them to just ‘do as they are told’ creates a sense of ownership, which almost guarantees smoother, better implementations. Everyone is more fiercely protective of, and loyal to, something they own! Weren’t you more willing to accept a new process when you had a hand in the finished product than when you were forced to sit back and let others make unilateral decisions that directly affected you?

TRUST: How can you show your staff that you trust them? Delegate! But don’t look over their shoulders every step of the way. Seek out their opinions and ideas and really listen to and consider what they are saying. Give them credit when credit is due.

TEACH: Demonstrate an understanding of the

“big picture” and then share that information. Provide constructive criticism, set realistic goals, praise progress, suggest new ways of doing things, share suggestions of others who’ve “been there done that”. Provide opportunities to attend training classes, seminars or user conferences when possible and appropriate.

Respect, motivate, empower, trust, teach - that’s a tall order! How many of those behaviors do you demonstrate?

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Things do not happen, they are made to happen.

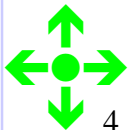
JFK



Peter de Jager
Speaker/Consultant on
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Change Workshops
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A Technology Plan

By Bob Peterson

How does an organization put technology in place and then maintain it? The first step is the creation of a realistic but aggressive technology plan.

It must contain several elements and address key issues relating to technology in the business. Those key issues will ultimately include virtually all processes and business functions. However, lest that prospect seem overwhelming, the plan should present some kind of prioritization of the organization's relevant needs and actions.

A thumbnail view of a technology plan would look something like this:

An assessment of what technology is now in place in your organization. Identify all technology, including automation, information processing, and administration.

A description of the most probable uses of technology in the business. Do not accept only

the most obvious; imagination is the most powerful tool in this exercise. Tie the technology plan to your business strategy.

A determination of what resources will be needed to make the best use of technology. Include all kinds of resources - financial, human, technical, and any others that can be identified

An objective estimate of the expected benefits of implementing the technology plan. Plain old cost-benefit analysis is appropriate here.

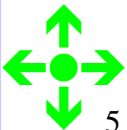
A timeline describing the implementation path for the technology plan. This needs to be realistic. But beware: a timeline that is too long can render the plan obsolete.

An identification of the organization's technology leader. This individual must have the support of the organization's top leadership. Without their commitment the plan does not work.

Wisdom is knowing what to do next,

Skill is knowing how to do it,

Virtue is doing it.
David S. Jordan





Once a technology plan has been developed, the organization's leadership can set

about assigning responsibilities for implementing it. That implementation can be structured just as any action planning is done in other operational areas of the business.

The big difference is that technology will affect everybody in every department and every function. Because of that, technological change must be visible to everyone with a stake in the organization, including both internal and external clients.

More than the visibility required by a technology plan, those who lead technological change must be particularly attentive to the needs of their internal and external clients.

Because technology changes so rapidly, the needs of those clients will change rapidly. Inattentiveness to any client for more than a very short time can result in loss of contact, lack of understanding of the client's issues, and failure of the credibility of the technology leaders.

It is difficult to justify a substantial organization of any kind without a technology plan. In the best case, such an organization will be just getting by. In the worst case, it will be plummeting toward its death.

We all know that "just getting by" is no longer acceptable as a business strategy. Technology is such a critical resource that it can never be overlooked when considering what will most influence the success or failure of your business. Your technology plan will help define a comprehensive business strategy.

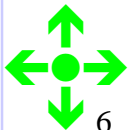
© 2000 Practical Management Concepts, Bob Peterson can be reached via e-mail at rcpete@huntel.com

Limerick:

If ever you think you can do it,
Though last time you know that you blew it,
Know there's still more to learn
Before your next turn,
Or else, sure as hell, you will rue it.

Submitted by: Durbach Norstein

*Never
mistake
motion for
action.
Ernest
Hemingway*





Change! Who needs it?

By Jim Frazier

One of the most common buzzwords in the cubicle warrens these days is “change.” You must embrace change. If you’re a stick in the mud, you are branded as “resistant to change.”

Frankly I’m fed up with this almost non-sectarian religious worship of “change.” This article has very little to do specifically with technology, but the topic probably affects every IT worker and CEO who reads this. I’ll also give you this warning. There is a high cynicism factor in this article. Beware...curmudgeon approaching.

Just to set the record straight, I’m actually an “embracer of change.” Anyone who knows me will acknowledge that a great deal of change has happened in my life in the last couple of years, and most of it has occurred because I wanted it to. I’ve embarked on a new career, started a new business, learned new technologies, considered

dying my beard, experimented with a variety of marketing activities, gone to the dentist, and pushed the outside of my personal envelope on many occasions.

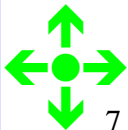
As Kate (my beloved better half) said recently, I have looked for new cheese (this is an obscure reference to one of many books on change).

The problem is all these “enlightened” managers who believe that change is good. **WRONG!** Change is NOT inherently good. Stop believing that. Change is, without question, inevitable. But it is not good or bad. It just is. Change is not the issue. It is what conditions you are changing and what alternatives you are offering that should be the real topic of discussion.

It seems that whenever a corporation decides to reorganize, re-engineer, merge, acquire, de-construct or re-construct, management tries to sell it to their staff under the mantra that

The problems that we have created cannot be solved at the level of thinking that created them.”

Albert Einstein



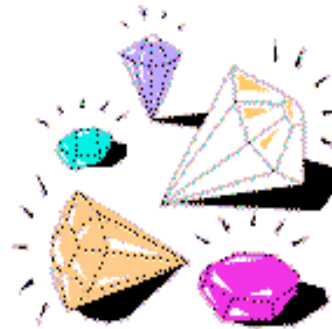
“..change is good. You must accept the change. Otherwise, you must be re-educated or re-engineered.”

Is it just possible that the pet change of the person who happens to be in charge this week, might not be such a great idea? I’ve seen complete dolts who, through entrepreneurial zeal, build a great company. Then they come up with some lame-brained idea that they’re absolutely in love with. And when they meet resistance to this glorious idea because it truly is unbelievably stupid, they accuse the nay-sayers of being “resistant to change.” In the business world, this is almost as bad as calling someone a racist, bigot, sexist or some other un-defendable accusation that will stick to them for the rest of their career.

Picture a middle manager who is filling out Bob’s annual review. He has a choice. He can say “Bob thinks my idea sucks and he’s being uncooperative.” That, of course, raises the issue that the middle manager’s idea really does bite the big one. From the manager’s perspective, he puts ALL of the problem on poor Bob by saying that “Bob resists change.” Talking about change and how we must embrace change takes the focus off the real problem and puts it on the change itself, which is

irrelevant. This takes the heat and responsibility off the manager and puts it on the workers. All the manager has to do is foster change - he or she doesn’t have to really worry about solving the problem.

We’ve all seen fine companies that have brought in new managers who are committed to changing things. And they start experimenting. They’ll change something, just to keep the board and the stock analysts happy. If it doesn’t work, they’ll change something else. As long as they’re changing things, and keeping some plates spinning, they look like they’re accomplishing something. Their biggest enemy is the lone, faint voice that says, “Excuse me, are we actually solving a problem here?” Their mission, aside from fostering change, is to squelch that change-resistant voice.

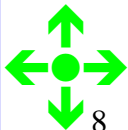


The class of cubicle dwellers that is supposedly most resistant to change is the group known as the “old-timers.” They seem to greet EVERY new idea with “we’ve done that before, it didn’t work.” All the change-oriented newbie managers write off that attitude as change-resistant. And the old-timers are soon ignored and re-engineered out of existence. The newbies then go on to try all of those new and

The great thing in this world is not so much where we are,

but in what direction we are moving.

Oliver W. Holmes

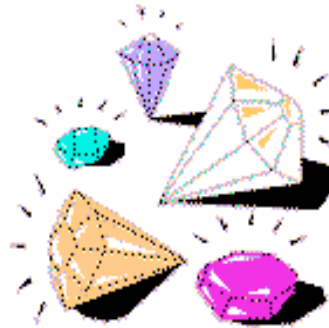


fresh ideas. After a couple of years of stagnating profits and sagging morale, they then find that these new ideas didn't work after all. But of course, by that time, those newbies are now "old-timers" and a new bunch of newbies have been brought in to "make things happen." And the cycle repeats itself.

We've all heard the old saying that those who fail to study history are bound to repeat it. It might behoove those who want to foster change to see if maybe they're just stirring up dust but not actually accomplishing anything. The old-timers know the history, even if it is a little hazy. Use their knowledge of what's already been tried and why it failed before re-inventing the square wheel.

Change is not a bad thing, nor is it a good thing. It certainly is the only way to solve a problem. But it can also be a sure-fire rocket-sled to hell if it DOESN'T solve the problem. So let's not focus on change. Let's focus on a new concept: SOLVING THE PROBLEM. Change can solve that problem. But it has to be the right change. Anything else either is a waste of time, or a disaster.

Obviously, when you decide on whatever change you believe is necessary, you'll undoubtedly have to convince people to accept that change. That problem is covered by a whole genre of books and seminars. But remember that resistance isn't just blind. Others may know something you don't. Maybe it won't work. Maybe it's been tried before. Maybe your zeal is misplaced. Just wishing something so, no matter what all the motivational books say, won't make it happen. You just might be dead wrong.



So foster change. Embrace change. Teach change. But remember that you had better be aware that the change you're preaching may be bad. So LISTEN when people resist. Don't simply write off their resistance as being sticks in the

mud. Maybe you're wrong. Maybe you should listen to the change THEY'RE proposing. Of course, that's assuming that YOU embrace change.

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*Too often
the strong,
silent man,
is silent
because he
does not
know what
to say.*

*Winston
Churchill*



Limerick Winner!



Greetings!

These contests are always fun except for the task of choosing. Here's my choice for the winner. Submitted by Mark G. Warner, Director of IS at Questar Regulated Services Corp

*There once was a chap said to mutter,
as he sat 'hind his desk all a clutter
If this w-w-world would stop ch-ch-changin'
and my l-l-life re-ar-ar-rangin'
I'd catch up with my v-v-voice and not st-st-stutter!*

Other entries:

There once was a man with one goal:
to transition activities per role.
Though he tried as he might
to restructure just right
the process consumed him quite whole.

Submitted by: Liz Morgan

There once was company "A"
Who bought out company "B"
They created "C"
As quick as can be
And now it's being bought by "D"

Submitted by: Linda Rowand

An old CIO cross the border
Made all of his changes by "order"
"Change mainframe to SAP
Do it quick, in a snap"
Now asks "Fries with that order"?

Submitted by: Mike Cervine

Change can be viewed as absurd
And often it seems it's unheard
But ignoring the sign
Won't be benign
So get moving and don't be deterred

Submitted by: Steve Lind

*Advice on
Speaking?*

*Be Sincere,
Be Brief,
Be Seated.
Franklin D.
Roosevelt*

p.s. you'll find additional entries scattered throughout this issue... enjoy! and thanks for playing!





The World's Shortest Course on the Difficulty of Clear Communications

By Peter de Jager

Mary had a little lamb --- Who?

Mary *had* a little lamb --- She what?

Mary had *a* little lamb --- How many?

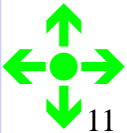
Mary had a *little* lamb --- What size?

Mary had a little *lamb* --- She had a what?

Where *you* place your emphasis determines what *the* listener thinks *you* feel is important.

When you communicate change... where is your *emphasis*?

*The worse
the news,
the more
effort
should go
into
communi-
cating it.
Andrew
Grove*





Just a Thought

By Rob Scarlett

Dear Peter,

In response to your invitation to comment on “management” and the definition of the “soft skills” of management, I offer the following opinion:

(1) “Management” is the process of “changing systems involving people” and “changing processes involving people” ... presumably with a particular goal or direction in mind. Without people connected by a “system” (organization) and involved in a “process”, there is no need or opportunity for “management”.

Arguably, the term “change management” is redundant. If no change is required, or if no change is occurring, who needs a manager?

By contrast, “administration” is the process of supporting, monitoring, and reporting on the these changing systems and processes.

(2) “Soft Skills” (of management) are the “leadership, facilitation, direction, motivation and coaching” skills that managers use as they

engage in the process of changing systems and processes involving people. The “Hard Skills” (of management) are the manager’s ability to comprehend specific job-related subject matter and use specific tool and metrics designed for use with the particular subject matter.

Anyway, I hope this spontaneous opinion provides useful input for your own thought process regarding the nature of management.

Regards, Rob Scarlett

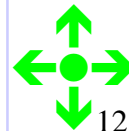
As we move through our lives
And the changes we take
And the changes we see
And the changes we make,
We add to the chaos
And add to the calm.

Though maybe it’s better
Or maybe it’s bad,
One things for sure
It’s not what we had.

Sent in by: Arthur Lubenfeld

*There is
genius in
reducing the
complicated
to the simple.*

C. W. Ceran





Seeding Growth

By Peter de Jager

One of the challenges facing every manager is ‘growing’ their staff. How do you do that? Here’s a technique I stumbled on several years ago.

I was the manager of a tight knit team comprised of six people. We all had our areas of expertise and worked well together. Trouble was, do anything long enough and boredom, or at least the contempt of familiarity, creeps in. What to do?

One of my staff, got a great job offer elsewhere in the company and after the goodbye lunch, departed. Leaving a team with a gaping hole. Time to replace him. Noting all the activities he was responsible for, to determine what skills the team required, I drafted the ‘Want Ad’ and sent it out to the headhunters.

Three months later, due to a scarcity of good people, I’d still not filled the position. My team however, no longer had a gaping hole, it had somehow healed itself. How?

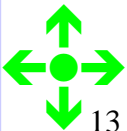
My team members reshuffled their responsibilities, not just to take on the responsibilities of the team member who’d left, but also between each other to free up time and seek out areas they were interested in.

Our philosophy in the team was that we had a pool of things to do and it didn’t really matter who did them. Losing a team member was a hidden opportunity, it meant we could look at the entire situation and do what needed to be done, ignoring things of lesser importance.

The chaos brought about by a missing member was a wonderful opportunity to rethink our activities.

When I noticed this, the search for a new member as defined by the skills of the person who’d moved on made no sense. The question was then asked, what assignments are we unable to accept because of a lack of skills? This defined what we needed in a new person, and who we eventually hired.

I like the way you state the obvious with a real sense of discovery.
Gore Vidal





The resulting strategy out of this observation is that I now seldom hire new people immediately. I

wait a few months to see how the team changes and then hire to move us forward rather than to maintain the old Status Quo.

There is one downside, usually perpetrated by your manager. The argument goes as follows: You've gotten along without replacing the old employee now for three months. You obviously don't need them, so I'm reducing your headcount.

Solution to this thought process? Make sure your manager understands what you're up to and get their commitment up front to allow you to manage for growth instead of for Status Quo.

Peter de Jager is a Speaker/Consultant on issues relating to Change & Technology. Contact him at pdejager@year2000.com



Some more Limericks

There once was a change to be done
Which everyone thought was no fun
But the Change Inflictor
Now known as the victor
Cheered us on anyway 'til we won!

Submitted by: Mary Miller

For someone resistant to change,
Newness to them seems quite strange,
They go by the old school,
Keep playing the old fool,
Cause their habits will not rearrange.

Submitted by: Larry Scheneman

We were told there were changes in store
The managers' meetings were held galore
In March we were "told"
Information was "too bold"

So in September we revolved out the door.

Submitted by: Patrica Griffit

*Enthusiasm
is a kind of
Faith that
has been
set on fire.*

*George M.
Adams*





A Random Thought & Response

Peter,
Thanks for keeping on keeping on! As I read your last E mail and the contest, some jumbled thoughts came to my mind! (strange-as-it-may-be)

As we grow older many say “change’ is not all that “cool,” but if we didn’t change, this ole world would be dull, crazy, even cruel.

I remember an evening with the “Lone Ranger,” and such, now I can “bootup”, E mail my kids, and Hi HO Peter, with any luck. We have to be careful though... change has not seemed to help our schools, the three R’s are no longer in vogue, get a AK47 and act like a fool.

I’m all for change, but change that will benefit all mankind, not just our little circle of friends. Let’s be creative and find ways to help those less fortunate than we, many who just live around to bend.

Peter, corny, but my real sentiments
Keep up the good work! DW

Thanks for the input. Strangely enough it’s in synch with some of my own mutating opinions on change. For close to two decades now, I’ve made my living either inflicting change on, or making it easier for others to inflict change on organizations.

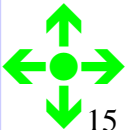
I know the term ‘inflict’ irritates some people, even I have a problem with it sometimes, but I continue to use it because it focuses my mind on how people usually perceive change

I doubt if anyone would seriously claim all change is good, or all bad. It’s also exceedingly difficult to conclude objectively that the good outweighs the bad. Especially since good and bad are often relative to the observer.

Hopefully the readers of MC&T are always keeping your last thought in mind. All Change should be implemented with the larger picture in mind. Far from being ‘corny’, it’s perhaps the only motivation for becoming better at managing this thing called ‘Change’.

Yours Truly,
Peter de Jager

*Strong lives
are moti-
vated by
dynamic
purposes.
Kenneth
Hildebrand*



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