



Managing Change

How often have you heard the statement, the only thing constant is change. No kidding, right? Anyone living on the planet earth can attest to that statement.

For most of us, the pace of change seems to have picked up dramatically over the past few years, thanks in part to the increased availability and use of technology, as well as the global economy in which we now live and work. Layer on all of the merger and acquisition activity and the ongoing waves of layoffs, and you have a recipe for constant change.

Do you remember the story of the frog and the pan of hot water? If you put a frog in a pan of boiling water, it will leap out instantly. However, if you put a frog in a pan of cold water and gradually turn up the heat, the frog will typically remain in the pan of water because it has an opportunity to adjust to the increase in water temperature.

Unfortunately for most people, when we experience change it often feels like being thrown into a pan of boiling water. So what can you do to avoid becoming frog soup? I find the best way to manage change is to practice a little change every day, particularly when you have the ability to control the change.

What does this mean? Take a new route to work. Visit a museum during your lunch hour. Buy something new for your office. Pick up a pair of new sunglasses. Volunteer for a new project at work. If you usually drink coffee, try tea. Get a new hairdo. Take an art class. Join toastmasters. Listen to a new radio station. Take Spanish lessons. Visit the zoo.

The list could go on and on and is only limited by your creativity and imagination. The point? Managing change on a small scale when you are in the driver's seat, helps you to develop the resilience to manage change on a larger scale.

So the next time you find yourself in the midst of change, relax and focus on the possibilities. After all, you've been practicing, right? And you never know, it could be fun and you might even like what change comes your way. Otherwise, you might just find yourself eating frog soup.

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