



# Changes in Latitudes

## Changes in Attitudes

“...I don’t mind change. I just don’t want to be there when it happens...” Does this sound like you? Change, along with death, taxes, and spam is inevitable—and equally unwelcome.

Psychologists tell us that change is our greatest source of stress. Popular stress tests ask responders about the amount of change, both good and bad, in their lives. Recent studies reveal that our *response* to change and our ability to remain *flexible* is more important to health, happiness, and a sense of well being than the actual number or the severity of challenging events.

Change is necessary, inevitable, and universal, but can it be enjoyable? Because all change comes with some stress, people tend to resist. Some organizations and people are able to become change agents; others remain change resistant. The challenge is to take control and solve problems in a way that advances the organization, supports others, and positively adds to our own quality of life.

### ***A. Barriers to Change...things that keep us stuck.***

#### ***1. Fear and Loss***

ALL change means some kind of loss. We would rather have a negative certainty than risk the unknown (better the devil you know). With change the outcome is uncertain so we tend to visualize our own endings—also known as worry.

*When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.*

Helen Keller 1880-1968

#### ***2. Perceptions and Paradigms...reality ain’t what it used to be.***

Our view of the world depends on the shoes we are wearing.

*We are all captives of the pictures in our heads—our belief that the world we experience is the world that really exists.*

Walter Lippman

#### ***3. The Right vs. The Wrong Way***

To many people, change implies failure—failure of what they are now thinking or doing. Imposed change with little input or communication can create resentment and make change more difficult.

*In the choice between changing one’s mind and proving there is no need to do so, most people get busy on the proof.*

John Kenneth Galbraith

#### ***4. Habit***

The familiarity and predictability of habits are comforting. They can also keep us stuck.

*Habit is either the best of servants or the worst of masters.* Nathaniel Emmons

## ***5. Splitting the Ambivalence***

This occurs when two people who normally do not feel strongly about a particular matter take opposing sides and become more and more entrenched in their positions.

## ***B. Becoming a Change Agent***

### ***1. Develop a hardy personality: Challenge, control, commitment***

Studies of various executives at ATT during deregulation found that executives who had these three characteristics thrived during times of massive change.

### ***2. Change your physical and mental focus***

Whatever we look for we will find. Changing our physical and mental state can facilitate change and determine how we feel. Use **role models** and study what works for them.

### ***3. Reframing***

The situation doesn't change but your attitude, approach, and belief about the *meaning* of the event changes. ***Questions are the answer.*** The questions you ask can control your mental focus.

*There is no such thing as a problem without a gift for you in its hands.  
What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the master calls a butterfly.*

Richard Bach, author

### ***4. Learned optimism***

Optimism, which has been shown to increase everything from performance and problem solving to the functioning of the immune system, can be learned. It results from the way we *explain* events rather than the actual events themselves.

### ***5. Face Change with a sense of humor and play***

Playing with a problem rather than working on a problem may be just the way to come up with innovative, unique, and creative solutions to changes.

*The essence of creativity is not the possession of some special talent. It is much more the ability to play.*

John Cleese, Comedian & business consultant

*As a brain engineer, I have found that free, open, joyful play predictably precedes creative breakthroughs by creating the catalyst for that necessary mental change.*

Dr. Ann McGee-Cooper, author

[You Don't Have To Go Home From Work Exhausted!](#)

© ***Laughter Works*** ®

(269) 624-5251 or (269) 624-9044

www.LaughWays.com email:laughterworks@laughways.com