



'Selling' Change: Invest Time to Save Time

I FIND IT ONE OF THE MORE PUZZLING aspects of human behavior that some people who will claim to dislike pain will repeatedly take actions that have historically proven to bring pain to bear upon themselves or their company.

A few years ago, a friend gave me a mug engraved with the quote, "if you keep doing the same things you have always done, you will always get what you have always got." To state it another way, 'if it hurts when you bang your head against the wall, stop banging your head against the wall'.

In an effort to minimize pain in my life I began to search and identify any 'patterns of pain' and one pattern I noticed was that every time I implemented change in my business I got resistance and this resistance ultimately manifested itself in some form of pain, sometimes severe pain. Can you believe it, employees or clients showing resistance to change? Haha. I truly used to feel that my employees were hard-wired with some unique 'rebelliousness gene' whose sole purpose was to make my life miserable (can

anyone relate)? It took some self-coaching but I gradually arrived at a healthier, more truthful, more effective mindset: it is a fact of life that human beings are threatened by change and my getting frustrated by what is human nature makes no more sense than getting angry at gravity or the sun and is, frankly, neither productive nor healthy.

Once I decided to quit banging my head against the wall of human nature I established a 'five step model' to help me better 'sell' the notion of change. This model has served me well in countless situations and is the same model I use today and teach to Kids First Department Leaders and Boot Campers. Admittedly, following this model takes time but the time you invest on the front end saves time and stress on the back end, in multiples.

5 Steps to 'Selling' a Potentially Unpopular Idea (i.e. Any Change)

(1) Clearly identify and openly articulate the problem....this alone will separate yourself from most leaders; (2) Identify all of the

alternatives you considered as a solution... this demonstrates thoroughness, a rare quality; (3) List the pros and cons of each solution including the disadvantages of the one you chose...this demonstrates the extremely rare and admirable quality of objectivity; (4) Announce your decision and why...do this clearly and without apology; (5) Ask for the support of your decision... gently yet confidently verbalizing your need for support sends a powerful message about you and your strength as a leader.

Roll this model around in your mind and you will begin to see that there are countless applications for this model from selling a new health care plan to your employees to selling a price hike to your clients (ahem... pricing decision time is approaching). ✖

Make it a great month! Jeff Metzger

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