

EXECUTIVE NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 9

The Official Publication of the Ohio Society of Association Executives

September 1996

What? More Change?

Change can be terrifying or empowering. It depends on a person's approach and every person has a unique way of approaching change. At this year's Annual OSAE Conference, we focused on the future of technological changes. Patti Hathaway, CSP, presented an energizing program on "Walking the Plank of Change Without Jumping Ship," which focused on the human side of change.

The program helped conference attendees identify the way they manage change and provided them with practical coping skills so they can manage change more positively in their organizations. The overall goal of the program was to increase attendees' productivity and energy by gaining mastery and personal power in the midst of change.

We asked Patti to make some additional comments about managing change in today's workplace.

This rapidly changing workplace demands a new level of adaptability on the part of its workers. Old ways of doing things do not work in this changing marketplace. Those organizations that try to stand still, often are overcome by their competition. Standing still is often equated with death in this ever expanding marketplace.

Price Pritchett and Ron Pound in their book *The Stress of Organizational Change*, outline some of the basic mistakes that employees make when trying to survive organizational change. Those mistakes include:

Basic Mistake #1: Expect Somebody Else to Reduce Your Stress. It is critical in times of organizational change and the personal stress that results to put yourself in charge of managing the pressure. Unfortunately, we look for a magic cure to manage our stress. Much of managing stress is learning how to raise our resistance to stress. The basic ways we raise our resistance to stress, include: eating right, exercise, relaxation techniques, and having a positive attitude. No magic bullets here.

Basic Mistake #2: Act Like A Victim. It's important to not yield to the temptation to indulge in self-pity. Acting like a victim threatens your future. You are much better off if you appear resilient and remain productive. One of my favorite Alexander Graham Bell quotes is this, "When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

Basic Mistake #3: Try to Control the Uncontrollable. Ask yourself if the struggle makes sense. Are you really in a position to control the situation, or will you just wear out trying? Isn't strange how some people continue to change jobs, mates, and friends—but never think of changing themselves?

Basic Mistake #4: Fail to Abandon the Expendable. Our jobs seem to get more complicated every year. We are expected to carry a heavier workload and pick up speed at the same time. Since organizations are under so much pressure from the outside world, we can't look forward to a letup. In order to survive, it may become necessary to reengineer your job. Look for ways to eliminate unnecessary steps, get rid of busywork, and unload activities that don't contribute enough to your organization's current goals.

Basic Mistake #5: Be Afraid of the Future. It is so easy to be worried about tomorrow and what's coming next and how you might be affected. Carrying around these concerns wears us down. This is the time for serious mind control. To survive, and thrive, we must stop worrying about what bad things might happen and instead get busy trying to create the kind of future you want. The best insurance policy for tomorrow is to make the most productive use of today.

— Patti Hathaway, CSP and author helps many organizations achieve their goals by providing customized, substantive, interactive, and energizing keynotes, workshops and seminars on change. Call Patti at 614/523-3633 for information on her speaking services or to receive her complimentary newsletter.