

Exploring New Pathways

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"You must take action now that will move you towards your goals. Develop a sense of urgency in your life." - *H. Jackson Brown, Jr* **How do you generate a sense of urgency in yourself and in others?**

Establish a sense of urgency

A sense of urgency amongst employees involved in a transition helps harness the necessary cooperation to start moving toward the expected results. If there is no sense of urgency, it is likely that there will be no momentum created and therefore no transformation process. Individuals will typically require a sense of urgency to feel the motivation necessary to generate cooperation, and bring the transition to a successful outcome.

What topics generate a sense of urgency within your organization? How do you know if there is the right sense of urgency? How do you develop a sense of urgency within your employees?

Complacency is a sure recipe for disaster during a transition. It typically arises from employees receiving inaccurate information such as unclear indicators of the gravity of a situation, a management team that is not conveying the "real story", no clear measure of how a company is performing, focusing on the wrong performance figures or only focusing on individual departments instead of the entire corporation.

In his book, *Leading Change*, John Kotter states that creating a strong sense of urgency usually demands bold or even risky action, normally associated with good leadership. If top management consists only of cautious managers, there will never be the urgency required to lead a successful major transformation. He suggests the following to raise the urgency level:

1. Create a crisis by making a financial loss apparent, revealing the company's weaknesses relative to competition, or enabling the impact of errors to emerge, instead of correcting them.
2. Get rid of extravagant expenditures (ie. exclusive club memberships, first class traveling...)
3. Define the appropriate performance measures and make targets very high so that "business as usual" does not suffice to achieve these.
4. Create a tracking method that enables each unit to be accountable for the broader performance of the business.
5. Increase the dissemination of information about customer satisfaction, financial performance - always relative to competition.
6. Encourage employees to speak to dissatisfied customers, suppliers and/ or shareholders.
7. Highlight the "real" information during management meetings, by soliciting the intervention of external consultants.

8. Bring to the forefront the "real issues" by including them in company newspapers and management speeches.
9. Overcommunicate on future opportunities and their benefits, highlighting the company's currently inability to seize these opportunities.

My invitation is:

- Review the current sense of urgency around transitions within your organization
- Determine how you will create the necessary sense of urgency to achieve a successful transition
- Consider how you will maintain that sense of urgency in place
- Notice if your actions are "bold and risky" enough to achieve the necessary results for the transition

Note: Concepts presented in this newsletter were inspired by John Kotter's book, *Leading Change*.

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The concept behind this newsletter is an invitation for you to explore new ways of thinking, new perspectives, and new behaviors, so as to increase your personal effectiveness. The themes we have selected are commonly addressed topics in coaching. We have chosen them carefully and are eager to share them with you, in the hopes you will find them both thought-provoking and valuable.

Warmly,

Céline Brillet

Top 8 reasons to partner up with a coach

1. You want to make yourself a priority.
2. You feel stuck.
3. You want to build on your strengths.
4. You want to reach your goals more effortlessly.
5. You need a neutral sounding board to bounce ideas off.
6. You are facing a stretch challenge.
7. You have an important decision to make.
8. You are ready to move to the next level.

intoaction helps Executives achieve their desired results through individual and team coaching, as well as through workshops devoted to developing leadership skills, managing change successfully, and enhancing team effectiveness. <http://www.intoaction.eu/>



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Founder of intoaction
Leadership Coach

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