

Transition vs Change

Has change become a way of life? It seems that the adage ‘the only thing constant is change’ is even more valid in today’s fast paced environment.

A Chinese proverb says ‘The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right names’. So what is change?

Change is an event that is situational and external to us, according to William Bridges, PhD. It occurs when something stops and something new begins.

This is very different to what you experience as a result of a change. That he calls Transition. *Transition is the experience of the gradual, psychological reorientation process that happens on the inside*. Transition, then is the response to change.

So if we call things by their right names, it is Transition that we resist. By understanding the difference between change and transition, can help a person, group or organization to better manage the change process. Each individual goes through the transition process differently and on a different schedule.

According to Bridges, transition has three distinct and identifiable phases. These are Endings, The Neutral Zone and New Beginnings.

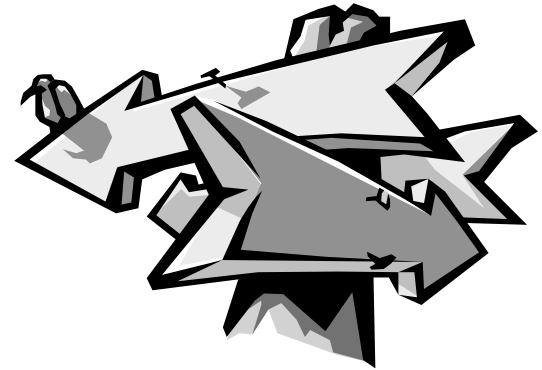
“What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make our end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from” T. S. Eliot. Endings are when there has been or will be a change. What was once solid or stable is now fluid and unstable. Starting down a new path is actually not a beginning, but an ending of the old.

This phase of transition is where it isn’t uncommon to feel that something is being lost. All the experience and expertise that has been gained from repeating a task, the comfort from making decisions a certain way. The ease of being able to predict outcomes based on how things have always been.

It is important to focus on what is ending and what is being lost. Only then can this phase be managed and forward progress be initiated.

The Neutral Zone is often confusing, maybe even chaotic. There is a strong sense of disorientation and uncertainty. There are risks associated with a new situation and it may feel like stepping off a cliff. There is often a ‘wait and see’ attitude associated with the Neutral Zone. Marilyn Ferguson said it well, “It’s not so much that we’re afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it’s that place in between that we fear... It’s like being between trapezes. It’s Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There’s nothing to hold on to.” How the environment is perceived will impact Neutral Zone responses. Different individuals will move at different rates of speed, based on how ‘in control’ they feel.

“Genuine beginnings begin within us, even when they are brought to our attention by external circumstances,” William Bridges. The New Beginning is when there is comfort with the new environment. Soon, the Ending is just a distant memory and the new becomes old.



Inscape Publishers have worked with Dr. Bridges to create an excellent Personal Learning Guide and Facilitator’s Sourcebook for Transitions.

AchieveMentors is proud to be a part of this process. We can provide your organization with the materials, present a one-day seminar, or work with an organization to help manage the human side of change, Transition. Get your questions answered by calling us at 877-331-4321

How's your Attitude? Need a change?

Join the AchieveMentors staff on an Adventure in Attitudes. We will depart from Miami on April 1 for a seven night Eastern Caribbean cruise. The three days at sea will be spent in a life changing, attitude development seminar. Fun and learning can be yours as you meet other professionals and interact in a positive, exotic environment on board an entirely non-smoking ship. Ports of call include San Juan, Tortola, and St. Thomas. The cruise includes learning materials, all ocean view cabins and great value. This will be an adventure you'll never forget.

For more information, including excellent flights to and from Miami, give us a call at 877-331-4321 or email us at leslie@achievementors.com

Productivity is directly impacted by stress. Stress can be related to home, work or both. Most people do not have a handle on where the major stresses are coming from, thus they are not equipped to handle it. Our Coping & Stress profile identifies stressful situations and environments and will help you and your staff understand how to reduce stress. Call for more information, or a sample profile.

AdviseMentor is the AchieveMentors, Inc. quarterly newsletter. To receive a free subscription, contact our office by phone at 877-331-4321, fax at 254-835-4993, or by emailing us at leslie@achievementors.com

AchieveMentors is a values based consulting company assisting clients who want to *move, go & lead*. *Move* ahead of the competition, *Go* where no one has gone before and *Lead* their organization toward excellence.



AchieveMentors[®], Inc.

P O Box 185, 200 North Oak Lane
Tolar, Texas 76476