

# SEVEN STEPS TO NAVIGATING THE CHANGE MAZE

There is one truth about change: It's going to happen. Technology, consumer demand, globalization, competition, and the economy—all of these factors contribute to the need for every business to move with the times in order to survive. Companies that want to grow, have to change to remain viable and continue growing. That's the very nature of growth—it brings about and demands change.

The million-dollar question remains: How do you deal with change? How do you make it a painless, a seamless part of what you do everyday, and how do you reinforce the positive things it can bring your business and your people? The book "*Who Moved My Cheese?*" follows four characters - Hem and Haw, two little 'thinking people' and Sniff and Scurry, two non-thinking, but intuitive mice. The four live their lives in a maze and are one day forced to go in search of "new cheese". And that's where the fun begins.

In many cases people are reluctant to give up their old cheese in order to find new, fresher cheese - and when their supply of old cheese is gone, find themselves unsure of which way to go forward in search of the new cheese they need to survive. So first seek to understand what are the barriers to change, and then seek to help your people overcome them. We can't recommend strongly enough that you go out and buy (and then read) a copy of *Who Moved My Cheese*. It will take you a couple of hours, no more. When you're ready to introduce the change process into your business, get a copy for each of your team members to help them better understand their own barriers to change and how they can work to overcome them.

## THE 7 STEPS TO NAVIGATING THE CHANGE MAZE:

### 1. Accept That Change happens

Change in management, change in suppliers, change in hiring policy, change in communication, change in product or change in business strategy. Think about how many times you've already experienced change in your working life. Sometimes it's welcome, sometimes it isn't.

### 2. Anticipate change

Anticipating change is the beginning to managing change strategically. Fear typically keeps us in the dark when it comes to change.

### 3. Monitor change

The next step to navigating the course toward change is to constantly monitor your business.

### 4. Adapt to change quickly

Too often we wait too long and change drives our businesses instead of us driving change.

### 5. Change

At the end of the day we just have to buckle up and change or get left in the dust.

### 6. Enjoy change

But why just do it when we could enjoy doing it? Change does not leave you with no power or control unless you let it.

### 7. Be ready to change quickly and enjoy it again and again

As we stated at the beginning of this article, change is inevitable.

Growth--whether it is personal, business or even biological—inspires change. So if you intend on having a growing business, you have to be prepared for it. If you have accepted that change happens, anticipated the change, monitored it, adapted to previous changes well and enjoyed the adventure, you are well on your way to handling the next change and the next and the next.