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*Changes!*

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**T r a i n i n g   L e a d e r ' s   G u i d e**

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### *Introduction*

What is the most common experience shared by humanity, regardless of age, sex or nationality? What is a major cause of stress in modern society? What can turn our personal and/or professional world upside down with the flip of a coin? It's change.

From birth to death, change is our constant companion. From the changes we initiate to the changes that occur without a moment's notice, change is as perennial as the grass and can often leave us feeling lost and out of control.

The American Media video *Changes!* deals with the complexities and frustrations of change and how change affects our lives. The process of change has definite, identifiable stages which this video addresses. From the initial *Phases of Change* to the *ACT Principle*, *Changes!* informs and instructs the viewer on how to cope with change. Assimilating the principles of the video can help the viewer cope with change on a personal and professional level, whether the change is as major as changing careers, or as minor as having unexpected company for dinner.

*Changes!* focuses on the experience of the main character and how after having his position and department eliminated, he must come to terms with the changes. He learns the *Phases of Change* — denial, bargaining and negotiating, and anger. Then through the *ACT Principle* — accept, communicate, tackle — he is able to turn a potentially disastrous situation into a personal and professional triumph by accepting the changes and becoming part of the new order.

Woven around a common theme with worldwide appeal, *Changes!* is a highly entertaining and informative video. The participants of your session should be able to cope more effectively with change, whether large or small, after having viewed this timely and dynamic video.

## *Planning Your Training Session*

The most effective training session begins with a well-prepared session leader. Your familiarity with the video, the *Phases of Change* and the dynamics of the *ACT Principle* are essential ingredients in making each training session relevant, enjoyable and meaningful for both you and the participants. Here are a few suggestions on how to prepare yourself to use *Changes!*

1. **Preview the video twice, before the training session.**  
Become familiar with the *Phases of Change* and the *ACT Principle*. It may be helpful to refer to the question and exercises near the end of this manual while viewing this video.
2. **Develop specific goals and objectives for your session.**  
What do you want to accomplish and why? How can you tailor these specific goals to meet the needs of the individual? Department? Company? Have any situations arisen lately to which the information in the video would directly apply?
3. **Lead by example by relating difficult situations which you had to confront change in the workplace and on a personal level.**  
Sharing your own vulnerability and learning experiences can go a long way in creating a positive, involved training atmosphere.
4. **Finally, review the *Training Leader's Guide* carefully and be prepared with the required materials.**

### **CHANGE — LARGE AND SMALL**

Remember to stress to your participants that the principles demonstrated in the video and reinforced throughout the *Training Leader's Guide* will work for **ALL CHANGES**, no matter what size, large or small.

Understandably, very minor changes evoke lesser feelings of denial, bargaining and negotiating, and anger. However, the *ACT Principle*  
— Accept, Communicate, Tackle —  
is a useful action plan, no matter what the degree of change.

## *Training Session Checklist*

To ensure a professional session, gather the things you'll need and set up ahead of time. Prior to the session, take a few moments to review the following list.

### **LOCATION**

- Room is ready
- Sufficient comfortable seating
- Good view of the screen
- Sufficient acoustics
- Enough space to break into small groups
- Satisfactory ventilation

### **EQUIPMENT**

- Video player with right format for tape: VHS, BETA, or 3/4 inch
- TV terminal
- Video and TV correctly connected and working
- Transparency projector and screen, if desired

### **MATERIALS**

- Training Leader's Guide*
- Videotape
- Paper and pencils
- Seminar outline
- Photocopies of any necessary materials
- Writing surfaces and writing materials needed for blackboards, flip charts, transparencies, etc.

## *Possible Session Formats*

The structure of the training session should be tailored to your specific needs and time available. The session outlines listed below offer a variety of different training formats and training session lengths. However, they can easily be modified to suit your own specific training requirements.

### *Outline A: (2 hours)*

1. Introduce the tape.
2. Show the tape.
3. Review main points of the tape.
4. Discuss the *Phases of Change* and answer the questions.
5. Discuss the *ACT Principle* and answer the questions.
6. Close the session.

### *Outline B: (half day)*

1. Introduce the tape.
2. Show the tape.
3. Stop the tape after the airport scene. Have the participants think of a change that has recently happened in their lives. It doesn't necessarily have to be something big. It can be a small change — any change at all.
4. Show the remainder of the tape.
5. Discuss the *Phases of Change* and answer the questions.
6. Do **Exercise #1**.
7. Discuss the *ACT Principle* and answer the questions.
8. Do **Exercise #2**.
9. Close session.

## *The Phases of Change*

Feelings figure very strongly during the initial stages of change. Feelings of denial, bargaining and negotiating, and anger are normal emotions felt by all those experiencing change.

### **DENIAL**

One of the constants of our world is that things change. And when things change, especially unexpectedly, our first very normal reaction is to deny it; denial is a coping mechanism. We approach the change with the attitude that if we ignore the situation and wait long enough, the problem will go away and things will get back to normal.

### **BARGAINING AND NEGOTIATING**

But the situation — the change — doesn't go away. We still firmly believe that everything worked better the way it was before — before the change. We do our best to reinstate the status quo. We try to bargain for that reinstatement by promising to work faster, harder; if only we can have the old system back. Our negotiations become a campaign for the return of the “good old days” where we're sure lies the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

### **ANGER**

However, despite our best efforts, reality sets in and we realize that those changes are here to stay. Hit with the fact that things are not going to stay the same, that what we've worked so hard to maintain is gone, we experience anger. Anger can come in many forms and be directed not only at those responsible for the change, but also at those closest to us and even ourselves. There's no logic to our anger. We're just angry — angry at the world for making us do something we don't want to do.

## *Discussion Questions and Possible Responses Concerning the Phases of Change*

**Q.** What are the Phases of Change?

A. Denial, bargaining and negotiating, anger.

**Q.** How would someone characterize the “denial” phase?

A. When an unexpected change occurs, the first response for most people is to pretend that the change isn't going to really happen. Understandably, most of us believe that our way of doing things is the best way. Given time, we think that others will see that things are working just fine the way they are. If we're patient long enough, all will eventually return to the status quo.

**Q.** What happens during the “bargaining and negotiating” stage?

A. When it becomes obvious that changes will occur, people often try to maneuver their way back to the way things were. Promises of trying harder, of doing better, accompany a strong desire to get back to the old ways: ways we'll make work even better than before.

**Q.** What happens during the “anger” stage?

A. Faced by the inevitable, people often strike out in anger. Here, anger is really an expression of the fear they feel about having to change.

**Q.** Why is change so frightening?

A. Change can make a person feel vulnerable, out of control, and anxious about the future. Facing the unknown can be very scary.

## *Discussion Questions and Possible Responses Concerning the Phases of Change (cont.)*

**Q.** Why do people generally resist change?

A. People tend to be creatures of habit and comforts. Any change can disrupt our neatly structured world and make us feel insecure and out of control.

**Q.** What are some of the normal emotions experienced by someone going through unwanted or unexpected change?

A. Denial, resistance, bargaining, anger, resentment, depression, blaming someone else for the situation, feeling that someone is “out to get me,” discomfort, panic, fear of looking foolish, stupid, or as though we won’t be able to make the necessary changes needed, fear of the unknown, and fear of not knowing what lies ahead.

**Q.** It’s been said that people often fear success as much or more that they fear failure. Why is this?

A. Success can cause more change and take us outside our comfort zone. Success can be difficult to handle in that it requires us to stretch our limits and expose ourselves to yet another set of new situations, thus continuing the change process.

**Q.** How does understanding the *Phases of Change* help in dealing with unwanted change?

A. By identifying, naming and understanding these phases so common to the human experience, we understand that feelings of denial, bargaining, negotiating and anger are normal and must be dealt with before the individual can move on through the change process.

## *Exercise #1 — Past Experience*

Ask each participant to write down an example of an unexpected change.

Beginning with the Trainer, have each person describe the situation and describe the set of emotions experienced during this change.

Try to identify the denial, bargaining and negotiating, and anger stages. Did they ever overlap at any point?

Discuss the results.

## *The ACT Principle*

Handling change is an ongoing process. It's a matter of mastering your environment, whether personal or professional, and bringing order out of chaos and distress. Making order out of change is the ability to see beyond the immediate moments, past the seen and unseen barriers and problems to the goal.

### **ACCEPT**

The cold, hard truth is that change is an ongoing process and it's here to stay. But if change is a continuing process, then this is not the first time change has occurred. Look to the past. Think of a time when you were successful. What happened? How did you grow and meet the demands of your changing environment? If you did it before, can't you do it again? It all starts with the first step — acceptance.

### **COMMUNICATE**

Don't be afraid to share your feelings. Talk to your friends or business associates. Chances are they've been through similar situations and have felt the same way. What did they do? Go on a fact-gathering mission. What were some of their high points? What were some of their lows? Take time to gather your information; don't short-change this step. Talking things through will help allay your fears. And, in the process, you will have amassed a powerful personal library of information and skills.

### **TACKLE**

Managing change successfully starts with new goals and a well-designed plan. You know where you are and you know where you want to be; now decide how you're going to get there. Clarify goals and expectations. Involve others and ask for constructive feedback. Start with small, deliberate steps and reward yourself often. Publicize successes. Keep focused on the desired outcome.

## *Questions and Possible Responses Concerning the ACT Principle*

**Q.** Why is there change?

**A.** It's an ongoing process. Like the changing seasons, tides and moons, change is a part of the natural order of things.

**Q.** Why must people change?

**A.** In the natural order of things, there is change; change in the environment, in economics, in politics, and in human society. Survival as a person and as a community depends on our ability to change and adapt to all the demands from all the different environments.

**Q.** How can anyone access their ability to change?

**A.** Anyone can access their ability to change by looking to their past experiences. By examining the past, we can see where we've failed or succeeded in changing, why, how we made a success of our efforts and what we learned through each experience.

**Q.** What are the three basic attitudes that prevail among people in response to changing situations?

- A.**
1. "I'm not sure I know how or what to change; besides, I like things just the way they are. Why upset the apple cart?"
  2. "Change is so frustrating. But I have a job to do, so I'm going to push right through the change and get the job done now."
  3. "I like change. It's part of the natural order of things. In fact, I'd get bored if I weren't trying to do new things."

**Q.** What's wrong with these three approaches to change?

**A.** Each is too polarized to be effective. Maintaining the status quo, pushing through change, and changing just for the sake of changing are like parts of the whole; each can be ineffective without temperance from the others.

## *Questions and Possible Responses Concerning the ACT Principle (cont.)*

**Q.** How would you combine these three approaches into a better attitude model for change?

A. "I know there's a need to change and I know it's not going to happen overnight. Making a change requires the completion of many small steps successfully and keeping my eye on the goal."

**Q.** After accepting that there is a need to make a change, what is the first step?

A. The first step is to establish the goal; know where you are going.

**Q.** Why is it so important to have a goal?

A. In order to do anything successfully, you have to know where you are going and why you feel it's so important that you get there.

**Q.** After establishing the goal, what is your next step?

A. The next step after establishing a goal is to design an action plan.

**Q.** How detailed should this plan be?

A. The plan should be detailed enough to guide you toward your goal.

**Q.** How should this plan be structured?

A. The plan should be broken down into small enough stages to be manageable and not overwhelming. It's been proven that plans with smaller goals built along the path have a better chance of succeeding.

**Q.** When planning a change, why is it important to clarify any expectations regarding the goal?

A. Expectations should be realistic, specific and concrete. Vague and unrealistic expectations about what will happen when the desired goal is attained can make it too difficult to reach your goal.

## *Questions and Possible Responses Concerning the ACT Principle (cont.)*

**Q.** When involving others in the change, why is it important to clarify the plan?

A. People need to know where they are expected to go and how, specifically, they're going to get there.

**Q.** Why is it important that people feel involved in any plan demanding change?

A. No one likes to change strictly on the basis that they have no choice. Becoming involved in the change helps in the assimilation of goals. These goals then become a part of those expected to change.

**Q.** Why is it important that individuals involved in a change become “owners of the goal?”

A. Making a goal your own, becoming its “owner” involves you directly in the change process and gives you a personal stake in what happens.

**Q.** One step suggested when making a change is to go public with it. What would be the reason for this?

A. Just admitting to others that you plan a change increases the probability of your reaching your goal. It gives you an increased sense of commitment.

**Q.** Why is it important to enlist the support of others when making a change?

A. Building your own advisory board — individuals whose judgement you trust — can give you invaluable constructive feedback, advise and just general measurements of your success.

**Q.** Why is it important to measure your success?

A. You need concrete evidence that you are succeeding at all stages of the changes you've started. Your plan should be designed so that you know how you are going to measure your success. Be specific all along the way and know each step you've conquered. Then reward yourself vigorously with each measurable accomplishment.

*Questions and Possible Responses  
Concerning the ACT Principle (cont.)*

- Q.** Rewarding yourself when you reach a measurable goal is vital to the success of your overall plan. Why is this?
- A.** Striving to change toward a planned goal can be a long, difficult process. Waiting to reward yourself until you reach that goal will almost certainly doom all your change efforts to fail. Instead, reward yourself often: for designing your change plan, revealing your plan to others, and for reaching your several steps along the way. Enjoy the process as well as the outcome.

## *Exercise #2*

Given the same change situation described in **Exercise #1**, have each participant first explain what happened as a result of that change.

When they have assimilated the *ACT Principle*, have them clarify how they would handle the same situation if it were to happen today.

If they would still handle the situation the same way, have them explain why.

Discuss the results.

## *Conclusion*

For some people, change is exciting, invigorating, a real adventure. However, for many of us it can be painful and anxiety producing. Yet the truth of the matter is that change is constant — our perennial companion. No one can avoid it. Everyday we experience the numerous changes that shape the very essence of our society.

The key to our success in dealing with these changes is in our willingness to accept the idea that when we experience change, it's normal to want to deny what's going on; to try bargaining and negotiating things back to the way they were; to feel angry when the change inevitably continues. Of course, our own personalities and the severity of the change will dictate to what degree we feel these feelings, these *Phases of Change*. It's important to understand that these feelings are part of us and must be dealt with before we can progress.

The *ACT Principle* helps us redefine our goals and enables us to form an action plan to effectively deal with the changes occurring in our lives. The difficulty of the change doesn't matter. The *ACT Principle* is still effective, whether we're moving from Boston to Los Angeles or having to juggle our schedule to fit in a last-minute appointment.

In the past 100 years, we've seen the coming of the light bulb, the telephone, the automobile, television, humans on the Moon, central air and microwave ovens. In the next 100 years we may see people living in a self-sufficient space station, or in a colony on the Moon or Mars. Nothing is more constant than change.

If we are to grow personally, if we are to survive in a society, in a universe that is in a constant state of change, we need to see change for what it is — the natural order of things. We need to recognize this process and master techniques to become part of it.