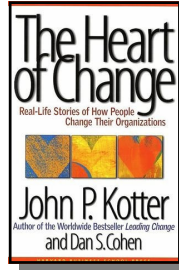




Book Corner ~ *The Heart of Change* by John P. Kotter and Dan S. Cohen



John Kotter has written another book on change—this one with a little different twist. *The Heart of Change* helps us see that emotions and feelings are key elements to pay attention to in a change effort. The core of a change is always about changing the behavior of people. Kotter and his coauthor, Dan S. Cohen, demonstrate with wonderful stories how speaking to people’s feelings can create a more successful change effort.

The book is laid out based on the 8 stages of change.

The stages are:

- 1) Increase Urgency
- 2) Build the Guiding Team
- 3) Get the Vision Right
- 4) Communicate for Buy-In
- 5) Empower Action
- 6) Create Short-term Wins
- 7) Don’t Let Up
- 8) Make Change Stick

While most of us are familiar with these topics, Kotter illustrates how emotions and feelings play a key role in the success of that stage. People need to see the problem or solution to a problem in a way that enables a helpful change in behavior. Dramatic, vivid visualizations catch people’s attention, reducing emotions that undermine change and increasing emotions that facilitate change. Different feelings transform behavior. Kotter and Cohen call this the See, Feel, Change model. If you are involved in major change initiatives, this book is a must-read for you!



How Can I Be Fair?

Question: I have several direct reports. It seems as though to be fair I ought to treat each of them exactly the same. However, they don’t seem to need, want, or even deserve the same things. How am I to be fair with them?

Collaborations response:

Your question implies that you are defining *fair* to mean *equal*. Equal, for example might mean that when someone asks for a few hours off to attend to personal business, I must give each other person who asks the same amount of time. Or, equal could mean that people must have the same reasons for getting to take personal time off.

...emotions and feelings are key elements to pay attention to in a change effort.

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How Can I Be Fair?

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Another example could be “paying everyone who is a level 4 the exact amount.” However, in most cases that not only isn’t practical, it also usually doesn’t make sense based on experience, time in the job, etc.

So let’s constrain our examples and discussion to those areas where you as manager or supervisor do have some discretionary authority. Those are typically the areas where a manager or supervisor feels “under the microscope” of *fairness*.

Our short answer is that yes, everyone must be treated fairly, but that does NOT mean that they must be treated the same (or equally.)

Before we go too far with this discussion let’s be clear about what we are, and are not, talking about. The dictionary defines “fair” as “adj. 1. not exhibiting any bias; and therefore reasonable or impartial; 2. according to the rules; adv 3. in accordance with the rules or what is expected; 4. in a direct or straight way.”

These definitions give a very good sense of what we mean by “treating people fairly,” which is treating people reasonably and impartially, within the rules, in accordance with what is expected and in a direct way. We certainly do NOT mean being partial, playing favorites, or acting in some circuitous manner. And we are always advocates for treating people with respect and dignity!

Our first comment on dealing with people “fairly” is to clearly differentiate between *have to* and *want to*. A health problem and its associated doctor’s appointment are in the realm of *have to*. However, a doctor’s appointment which can be scheduled some other time is probably a *want to*. The latter is more a matter of convenience.

A couple of hours off to attend a child’s soccer game or pick up a preschooler is a *want to*. (We don’t intend to be mean or unfeeling, but in those cases other arrangements often can be made.)



Our first effort is to encourage everyone to be clearer and more precise with exactly what is being discussed. People have different aspirations, different abilities, different responsibilities, different wants, different needs, and perform at different levels. They ought to be treated differently. We consider these balancing factors that are taken into account when making decisions about what someone will “receive” or “get to do.”

We encourage you to tie your discussions and decisions directly to performance in those areas where you have discretionary authority. Your decisions in discretionary areas in fact constitute “rewards.”

If a person is a very high performer, we will treat her differently than someone who is marginal. With both of them, we will be discussing their performance differently, looking for ways to impact their motivation differently, working with them on their aspirations differently, setting goals differently, delegating differently, etc.

In all cases we will be clear that our discussions, the way we work with them, the way we make decisions about them and their requests, and the ways they are rewarded are all tied to their performance or lack of it. None of this will be a surprise if we are doing a good job with performance objectives and appraisal.

(We have written extensively on performance counseling and appraisal in previous issues of *Collaborations*. These past issues are available in .pdf formats on both Susan’s and Dave’s web sites.)

In every case, if we keep all these balancing factors in mind, we can and will be scrupulously “fair,” (refer once more to the definitions of “fair” above.) We will treat everyone with dignity and respect. However, we will not be striving to make everything “equal,” nor will everything be equal.



ON THE WEB ~ Visit www.susangerke.com and www.davecarey.com

Both websites carry all past issues of *Collaborations*. With *Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0* you can view or download and print the issues.

Managing Conflict

One of my favorite tools when teaching workshops about conflict is the Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument. It's an easy to administer self-report instrument that measures "conflict-handling modes." I find that when people see there are five different ways to handle conflict, they begin to see that they have a choice about how they respond.

People's behavior in responding to conflict can be measured along two dimensions: 1) assertiveness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy her own concerns, and 2) cooperativeness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns. These two dimensions can be used to define the five conflict-handling modes. The five are:

Competing is assertive and uncooperative

an individual pursues his own concerns at the expense of the other person

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative

an individual neglects his own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative

an individual doesn't pursue his own concerns or that of the other person.

Collaborating is assertive and cooperative

an individual works to satisfy the concerns of both persons.

Compromising is mildly assertive and cooperative

each person gives up some of their concerns in order to get some concerns met.

The instrument is easy to use and now also has a companion booklet you can use with it. *The Introduction to Conflict Management* by Kenneth W. Thomas provides in-depth information on each of the five conflict-handling modes. Each is clarified with examples, costs, benefits, suggestions on when to use the mode, and behavior skills for using the mode.

Managing conflict is a much more complex subject than just how people tend to respond, but response style is an important piece and raises people's awareness of how their choice of behavior can impact the conflict at hand.

“What Has Susan Been Doing Lately?”

A key focus of Susan's business over the past several months has been the topic of remote work. She has developed her expertise over several years and just published a book on the topic. Here's Dave's review of it.

The Quick Guide to Interaction Styles and Working Remotely: Strategies for Leading and Working in Virtual Teams: a by Susan Gerke and Linda Berens is a straight forward, no-nonsense guide to thinking about one's own, or another's, preferential Interaction Style. The book's strength is in connecting Interaction Style to leadership, management, or membership in teams or groups which are not physically co-located.

Three aspects of this work are of particularly high value and great interest. The first is that the authors have strategically embedded throughout the booklet brief exercises and thought provoking

Book cover

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“What Has Susan Been Doing Lately?”

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questions, along with the space to respond to them. Thus the reader is encouraged to actively apply the information presented to their own personal situation.

Second is the application of the information presented to teams and work groups that are not geographically co-located. The demand for leaders, managers and team members to work effectively while being separated by buildings, time zones, and often countries or continents continues to grow as the twenty-first century progresses. The authors have a wealth of experience in these “virtual” arenas and share those experiences throughout the book.

The third aspect is the wide variety of very practical suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of “virtual teams.” These tips cover a wide range of topics from trust building, performance appraisal and feedback, to effective uses of e-mail, instant messaging, voice mail, etc. If more effective team leadership is your objective this will be a very worthwhile book.

Susan delivers workshops (as short as 2 hours and as long as 2 days) on this topic. She also consults on the topic and delivers keynote speeches.

Retail price for the booklet is \$8.95. You can order it at a 20% discount from www.16types.com or at full price from www.amazon.com.

We'd Like to Hear From You

If you'd like to contribute to Collaborations or if you have a question or topic for us, we'd love to hear from you. Send an e-mail to sgerke@sbcglobal.net with your ideas or questions. We can't include everything, but will respond based on topics of most interest.