

**Learning to Accept Change and Becoming
Successful Change Agents:**

**An Analysis of Organizational Change in the Camden County
4-H Youth Development Program**

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When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. ~Victor Frankl~

Once again, Victor Frankl's words hold a truthful ring, particularly for my current organization.

While change is an inevitable fact of life and is necessary to all organizations for survival and even growth, this paper will explore the dimension of how organizational members can come to terms and accept changes that are largely out of their control.

In *Leading Organizations through Change*, Stanley Deetz, writes, "An organization must remain flexible and adaptive to change. The wisest leaders expect to encounter failures on the road to success. Leaders with a strong vision for the organization are able to look at failures and mistakes as opportunities for unparalleled learning and organizational growth."

It is my hope that we can achieve this balance of dealing with change and viewing it as much as an opportunity to grow, as much as a loss or a reversal of fortune.

Organizational Overview

The Camden County 4-H Youth Development Program will serve as the profile organization, Dramatic change has occurred since 2006 (largely from external sources) but also in many other instances prior to that time. This paper will include an assessment of organizational factors, a review of the organizational change process, a review of John Kotter's eight steps of organizational change, and additional questions related to issues of continuous change experienced by the Camden County 4-H Program.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is a part of the Cooperative Extension system and was created in 1902. It is structured in a unique way so that a land-grant university in each state receives federal funding for staffing and also serves as the homebase of the program. Then there is also a local connection within the county government system which provides varying levels of support, including partial salary contributions, office space and general office supplies. In New

Jersey, for example, there are 21 counties. Twenty counties have Cooperative Extension programs. My county, Camden County, is located in southern New Jersey, across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, PA.

The county, a suburb of Philadelphia, is situated between Burlington and Gloucester Counties. Though it is one of the state's smaller counties based on land area, it has a large population of 513,000 residents (2010, U.S. Census) making it the most populated county in South Jersey and the eighth most populated county in New Jersey. Demographically speaking, the 37 municipalities of Camden County include a mixture of urban, suburban, and rural settings, as well as a broad and varying economic spectrum, from wealthy enclaves to one of the poorest cities in America.

The 4-H Youth Development Program uses a learn-by-doing approach to enable youth to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to become competent, caring and contributing citizens of the world. This is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of caring adults who serve as volunteers.

The goals of the 4-H Youth Development Program are to:

- Provide informal, educational programs for youth in grades K-13 (one year out of high school)
- Encourage responsibility, community awareness and character development in youth
- Strengthen skills for adults working with youth through publications and training
- Improve community partnerships and collaborations

Organizational Vision and Mission

Deetz reiterates that "leaders use vision statements to articulate the organization's goals. Visioning is essential to creating the norms, mission and rules of the organization. Thus, we can understand vision to be an organizational ideal." The following vision and mission statements were developed at the national level and are utilized on the local and state levels as well.

The 4-H Vision - A world in which youth and adults learn, grow and work together as catalysts for positive change.

The 4-H Mission - 4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.

A tagline often used to describe 4-H is:

“4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.”

Besides continuing to meet the organizational vision and mission throughout this period of change, we are reminded that “the urgency of change can create diminished motivation and even exit by key members if not matched by a compelling notion of what can be. Important qualities of visions are the focus of the next chapter.” (Deetz, 44)

I would say this is very true of our organizational members. Many have volunteered anywhere from five to 15 years, on average. They have remained committed to serving our youth with strong educational programs. However, they have expressed their weariness at the continuous cycle of change and, naturally, feel as if these changes have diminished our program overall.

What they have failed to grasp thus far is how these challenges and changes can lead to Deetz’s “next chapter.” Instead of bemoaning these changes, perhaps, they should be imagining “what can be.” A focus on the future is how we might better manage these changes.

Revitalization of the Traditional 4-H Club Program

There are various channels used to deliver youth programming in 4-H, including the traditional 4-H club model, afterschool programs, school enrichment and summer camp programs.

In the past, the 4-H Youth Development Program had largely been delivered through 4-H club programs focused on traditional topics, such as equine, small animals and sewing, with most of the members in these clubs residing in suburban/rural areas. While my position description focuses on the development of an urban 4-H youth program in Camden County to account for the needs of urban youth, I

simultaneously needed to revitalize the traditional 4-H club program since it is essential to building a strong foundation for the future.

Over the past decade, Camden County 4-H stakeholders endured staff turnover and inconsistency in program leadership, as well as concern for program funding. In just the last two years, a 5-acre piece of property that was county-owned and made available for our use for large events was sold to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This means that we have had to relocate our events, losing some sense of tradition and history. Then our county office in the central part of the county was closed and our main offices moved to the northern part of the county where very few of our members and volunteers reside. This was seen as yet another displacement.

Finally, on Feb. 17, 2011, a very sad occurrence took place. A part-time staff member, Gerry, still vibrant at 71, passed away unexpectedly after routine surgery. She had been with our program for almost five years and with the 4-H program for more than 30 years. In 2006, when the program was at its lowest, she breathed life into it when it was most needed. She was only supposed to continue working with our program for another six months after I took the fulltime position in 2007. Fortunately, I was able to create enough revenue, about \$15,000 per year, to retain her on staff. For a long time, she was the one person I trusted most. She was highly respected, an ardent supporter, and everyone's "rock." One can imagine how devastating it was to lose her. Although it has been 10 months, her loss is felt every day. All of the programs she managed have continued by a small group of dedicated volunteers, but it is simply not the same. We have all lost a bit of our previous spirit with this unexpected and unwanted change.

Leading Organizational Change

Coming into the organization as a new staff member in 2007, it became necessary to initiate and lead an organizational change process where organizational effectiveness factors were evaluated. Utilizing my educational skills in strategic communication and leadership, I worked to understand: the barriers to change in Camden County 4-H; the organizational skills, attitudes, and knowledge of 4-H members and volunteers; the degree of capacity building; and the presence of leadership. Therefore, my goals for rebuilding the traditional 4-H club program have included:

- Creating program stability by providing solid leadership to the 4-H Youth Development Program in Camden County

- Building trust with 4-H members, leaders, volunteers and parents
- Increasing educational opportunities for 4-H clubs, members, and leaders
- Continually assessing educational program offerings
- Leveraging program resources and seeking new revenue sources for program support
- Creating stronger relationships between the 4-H Youth Development Program and county government, community organizations, and educational institutions
- Further formalizing the structure of the Camden County 4-H Youth Development Program to strengthen its foundations

I. Assessing organizational factors

- Barriers to change and causes for change
- Organizational structures and processes
- Organizational competencies
- The degree of capacity building

Barriers to Change

The barriers to change for the Camden County 4-H Youth Development Program stem from both internal and external sources. Internally, some adult members of our organization are indeed some of the barriers to change that exist. Viewpoints and attitudes that are outdated and unrealistic are difficult to manage as well. It can be expected that an organization chock full of tradition and laden with significant moments are valued, however, changes occur day in and out and there must be room for acceptance of these changes. Not all change is inherently bad. In fact, if the 4-H Youth Development Program, in general, had not adapted to a changing demographic since its beginnings in 1902, we might have become a relic of the past.

However, this resistance to change is not entirely impossible to believe. Organizational leaders play a different role than stakeholders. Deetz notes that “employees (volunteers in this case), are

often surprised, do not understand the reasoning, did not participate in the choice, and see themselves as having much to lose.” (Deetz, 39)

This statement represents the essence of how our 4-H leaders have felt. Many decisions that have been passed down have come with some surprise. They certainly do not fully understand the reasoning, often did not participate in the choice, and have viewed every change as a huge loss. And “they are understandably cynical.” (Deetz, 40)

Externally, one of our main partners, the County of Camden, has made many decisions over the last 10-15 years that have been harmful or perceived as harmful to the continued growth and development of our program.

In recent interviews with 4-H volunteers, several barriers to change were noted. The first and most prominent was the “we’ve always done it this way” mentality. Of course, this can slow progress and/or the adaptation to change. It can keep individuals and groups from moving forward and seeing that not all change is negative.

Our 4-H volunteers are quick to compare the size and scope of our program with that of other counties, concerned that our program is not as big or strong as others. Our volunteers have also been resistant to involvement from the county because there has been such a lack of trust between the two groups, specifically the 4-H leaders and volunteers. Some of the broken promises that came from county officials deepened this lack of trust. At the time, about 2006, with so much organizational strife fighting within the organization was also taking place.

One volunteer even rated the following aspects of change (on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest):

Camden County 4-H Willingness to Change	3/10
Camden County 4-H Volunteer Readiness for Change	8/10

Interestingly, it was noted that while our volunteers have a perceived low willingness to change, they possess a high readiness for change. Some of their feelings stem from a desire to feel

as if the present situation has improved. If things are changing and it feels as if in a positive direction, then their ability to accept change naturally increases.

Causes for Change

Regarding the sale of the aforementioned properties (4-H fairgrounds and county office), volunteers mentioned how the economy has driven some of the county's decisions to sell property, thus displacing our program. The former 4-H fairgrounds, for example, were sold for \$2.2 million dollars. The county has communicated that they support transitioning our program to a new location and committing some funding towards that effort. Thus far, we have made little progress in working with county officials to get any substantial work started on the new site but discussions have begun. And with the state of the current economy, it is doubtful that there are any funds available to invest into a new location and the baseline facilities needed. However, we must maintain some degree of optimism that our needs will be met and our future is brighter than it currently looks.

Organizational Structures and Processes

County 4-H staff works with 4-H members and adult volunteers to accomplish common goals. Our program, while considered an informal educational program, is quite structured and operates according to many formal guidelines, from University guidelines to county policies. Adhering to such guidelines and policies is necessary but can constrict our ability to direct some of our own activities and decision making. For example, when communicating with our county officials there is a chain of command that must be followed. There also seems to be an unspoken rule in how often we seek information on the status of these change initiatives.

At times, when I would request an update or ask for information, I would get a response – “We will tell you when there is new information.” (as in don't call us, we'll call you) Months would pass and we would receive little or no information. It felt like an information void and that we were being strung along, which only added to the lack of trust between these two groups.

Organizational Competencies

Despite the intensity of changes over the last decade, our 4-H members and volunteers have never faltered when it comes to displaying their passion and commitment to positive youth development. The mission of our organization continues to be met. In fact, in 2007, our program had just 8 clubs. Now we have 16 clubs, reflecting a 100% growth in clubs. Membership has grown from 250 members to 330 members or about a 23% increase.

We have also been able to retain a consistent group of volunteers, despite this group having had to deal with changes that leaves them feeling discouraged and uncertain about the future. In fact, there has been an increase in volunteers from about 90 volunteers in 2007 to 130 volunteers in 2011.

Another competency is the willingness and skill of our volunteers to organize and conduct programming for our 4-H members. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization and their continued commitment is vital to the continuation of our program. As one volunteer said, "Our volunteers understand the value of the program and want to promote it." Because our volunteers want to see our members succeed, they are willing to contribute time to help guide youth. Each year, our 130 volunteers are providing roughly 15,000 hours of volunteer time to our program, which is equal to \$378,000 at the rate of \$25.20 per hour for New Jersey. (Independent Sector)

Degree of Capacity Building

It is my belief that our organizational members could increase their ability to build capacity for and within our organization. It seems that it is easy to get trapped in responding and reacting to change and therefore difficult to see a larger worldview. Therefore, this is an area that we have a huge opportunity to improve. While our organizational members understand the obstacles confronting the organization, we have not spent enough time creating measurable goals.

Four steps of organizational change

- Understanding the Current Situation

The current situation for the Camden County 4-H Youth Development Program still remains in a state of change. We are still seeking a new county facility where a multi-

purpose building and other buildings will be built. A 77-acre site has been identified but no progress has been made in readying the property for use. Our county officials have begun reaching out to a site engineer in order to start the process of evaluating the property and providing recommendations for getting the necessary approvals.

Additionally, some of our 4-H clubs are still seeking stable locations in which to hold their educational club meetings due to the previous building being closed. Some clubs found new meeting sites only to have them not be ideal and they are now, just a few months later, already needing a new meeting site. This instability contributes to their uncertainty.

- **Determining the Desired State and Developing an Action Plan for Change**

While our desired state is generally known, we currently do not have a clear action plan, other than wishing for a new location for our 4-H fairgrounds and have a place of our own to hold club meetings and other events. This lack of a formal plan should be remedied very soon. While we have specifics down on paper regarding our facilities wants and needs, we need work with county officials to create a specific timeline for these initiatives. Just recently the president of our association outlined our specific needs for an annual event that we hold in August. I was able to forward this information to others up the chain of command so they could see that we are already thinking about how we will manage our largest event all year doing everything in a portable manner. It would be beneficial to address this gap in the very near future.

- **Enlisting and Empowering Others to Join the Change Effort**

It is vital that our organization continue to enlist others to our cause, which is to be an active partner in creating our future. Thus far, our own organizational members have been enlisted to work towards accepting and dealing with this change.

However, we should work to improve the relationship with county officials and seek to work more closely with them to achieve a stronger working relationship. Additionally, we need to expand our circle of supporters, such as the local township (Winslow Twp., NJ) that we may one day move into if the proposed location becomes a reality.

- **Evaluating and Communicating the Change by Recognizing Small Wins Along the Way**

From the perspective of our volunteers, I don't believe they feel there are currently any small wins along the way...just yet ...to celebrate.

However, I would suggest that the fact that our resilience has become one of our redeeming qualities as an organization is a small win. No matter the change, no matter how often it has come, which in our case has been fast and furious in the last two years, our organizational members have persevered. Their dedication to maintaining the organizational vision and mission has not faltered. This speaks directly to our values and our beliefs.

Another Process – Eight Steps to Achieving a Major Transformation

John Kotter's emphasis is on improving an organization's ability to change. These eight steps are applicable to our organization in every way and can be applied as follows:

1) Establishing a Sense of Urgency

As each wave of change came upon us, there was always a sense of urgency felt by organizational members. However, because our relationship has been tenuous with our county government in the past, we were hesitant to create tension or overly express our dismay at the changes they were making that impacted our program.

According to Kotter, this is one of the most important stages but is one that organizations fail at. If we had to assess our own approach to this establishing a sense of urgency, one would agree that while organizational members were upset, we did not move swiftly to express our concerns publicly. In a way, we were guided by fear and anger but that did not produce any effective results.

Our organizational president did send a letter outlining key issues of concern to our local U.S. Congressman; however, this communication did little to nothing to generate any major action on his part. In fact, the letter circulated back to our county officials, down to my Extension department head and she is the one who responded to his letter.

And while this stage calls for organizational members to identify the crises and potential opportunities to grow, which we did, it was taken no further than to harangue the changes. This was not because we were not motivated to express our concerns publicly, but more so stepped back out of fear that our county officials would respond with less support (ie – funding for programs, events, etc.) Based on interactions with county officials there were valid reasons for why we stayed quiet and attempted to work with them, as opposed to against them.

2) Creating the Guiding Coalition

- Assemble a group with enough power to lead the change effort - our group was not necessarily chosen but rather was formulated based on who was present and actively involved in our volunteer organization (called the Camden County 4-H Association).

Deetz reiterates this step by writing, “a change team has to be developed that is sufficiently diverse, motivated and powerful to influence the variety of people to be effected in the change process.” I would suggest that our group was likely and continues to be too homogenous. Perhaps too many of our members have been through too much change. They have had difficulty in responding to the changes and do so with negativity most often. There is no fresh perspective or visioning for the future occurring yet, but this is something that must occur.

Along with that, Kotter notes that the “right group of people with the right characteristics and sufficient power to drive the change effort” is needed. I would suggest that our group does lack sufficient power to drive the change effort. We are sometimes considered a small interest group that serves the needs of few, in comparison to other organizations. And it is easy to see how our county government would view us as a group that has little bargaining power. In that case, there is an uneven balance of power between our organization and the county.

3) Developing a Change Vision

- Create a vision to help direct the change effort
- Develop strategies for achieving that vision

These two aspects of the change process have not occurred to date. Our overall vision remains the same – to serve youth in a positive manner – but no new vision has been developed thus far. In reviewing this step, it is easy to see how we have overlooked this opportunity to map our future. Kotter’s suggestion that the guiding team “develop bold strategies for making bold visions a reality” is something we must make applicable to our organization. Without a new vision, we lack direction and focus.

4) Communicating the Vision for Buy-in

- Use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies

This winter, when our organizational board changes hands and several new board members will begin their service, is an ideal time to develop this new vision and then communicate it accordingly. By promoting a positive image of our organization and what the future holds for us, we may be able to achieve greater buy-in from within. One of my favorite statements from Deetz supports this idea. He writes, “A vision without the voice of a prophet can neither inspire nor guide.” (45)

The voice of our organization is currently not being heard as loudly as it could be. As the only fulltime staff member, I am the one typically communicating information back and forth to organizational members/volunteers. I communicate with county officials and my own Extension colleagues. However, I do not view myself as someone who is always the appropriate voice of our organization. At times, our volunteers need to be present to voice their ideas and opinions, which link to our organizational values. Kotter states it best when he writes, “Using words, deeds, and new technologies to unclog communication channels and overcome confusion and distrust” is imperative. Once we create our new vision, we must clearly articulate our mission and goals, especially to county government and other stakeholders.

5) Empowering Broad-based Action

“People must embrace such changes for themselves, make them their own. They must be enabled to make the vision over as their own within the broad parameters for coordination. Trying things out that succeed provides encouragement for further change.” (p. 45)

At this stage, we have not made enough progress to feel as if even a small amount of success has followed us. For example, in fall 2010, more than one year ago, a county official presented an ideal option for the relocation of our fairgrounds. It was a beautiful 80-acre piece of property called Cedar Brook that faced a major highway for good visibility, was relatively flat, and was enough space for us to grow into. Our organizational members were very excited about this possibility. Our county liaison had us meet with architects to begin the process of determining our structural and facilities needs, when a few months later the project was put on hold.

Apparently, there was some issue with the county acquiring this property, because there were alleged political ties by the property owners and it appeared to be a conflict of interest for the county to purchase it. The project was shelved and to this day the property has not been purchased or ever will be by the county.

Instead, it was “back to the drawing board.” We were reverted back to looking at a different property (Pump Branch Road) that we had first looked at. Therefore, we lost months and months worth of time pursuing a property that would likely have never become a reality. Our county official, who also suddenly retired in Feb. 2011, was the one who took us off track for these many months and understandably our volunteers were quite upset.

We are currently back to looking at the Pump Branch property and waiting on county officials to begin the assessment of needs for preparing the property for use.

In reviewing this step, it has been difficult for us to remove obstacles that continue to be present and/or change systems that we have no control over, such as how quickly county officials attend to this project. This is probably one of the more frustrating aspects of managing the change process – so much of it feels beyond our control.

6) Generating Short-term Wins

Deetz reminds us that “cultural change is a slow process even when aggressively pursued.” (p. 46)

It is recommended to build in “small wins” along with way in order to motivate and re-energize organizational members.

Currently, these small wins come in the form of making incremental progress. For example, my colleague and I met with a county official in August to discuss the property, with plans to move forward. Each time I receive news from this county official about progress, I report back to organizational members. I try to approach it from a positive perspective that discussion is occurring or a small step is being achieved, which we should be thankful for.

Kotter mentions that “generating sufficient wins fast enough to diffuse cynicism, pessimism, and skepticism” will help build momentum and make successes more visible.

7) Never Letting Up

Resiliency is one of our organizational member’s strongest characteristics. If there is one thing that will not change, it is the devotion and dedication of volunteers. Even when some organizational members turn to negativity, their comments are coming from a place where deep down they are fearful that the program will be lost. One volunteer stated in a meeting just a few months ago, “Can’t you see that the county is trying to get rid of us?” This question was directed at me and followed by a look of “what is wrong with you? Why don’t you see this?” (Our program is somewhat protected by federal law, so it is complicated but our program cannot just disappear even if county government support decreases.)

Another aspect of this step includes developing people who can implement a vision. There is one volunteer in our organization who works in construction and is a huge asset to us in presenting factual information about our needs as well as possesses a strong knowledge about the facilities and infrastructure we will need at our new facility. I view him as a positive member of our team who approaches these changes and challenges with logic and professionalism, even if he is concerned or frustrated with the seemingly slow progress being made. He is someone we can rely

on to help implement a new vision and prepare for a different future. He is someone that can be viewed as a change agent.

This step addresses positive change and the how creating “wave after wave of change” will bring our new vision into reality. This is where change will be viewed as positive, as useful, and as welcome.

8) Incorporating Changes into the Culture

One day these changes will become embedded into the culture of our organization, attaching to our values and becoming a part of who we are. Although the distant future seems just that....very distant...one day we will have formulated a new path and a new era for our 4-H program will unfold. This will signify our success in maintaining our organizational values of the past, while opening a new chapter in our history.

One day, hopefully not too long from now, organizational members will feel more positively about these changes. However, not until the first nail goes into a building or a barn is raised will they fully acknowledge that the change may be viewed as good, even positive. These changes have made a mark on our hearts and souls. When the future starts looking brighter and the promises made to us by county officials is fulfilled, members will only then believe the changes were difficult but worth going through. As Deetz states, “People continue to need to be shown how the change really made the performance difference.”

We will also need our organizational leaders and members to continue to “champion the vision and cultural changes needed.” (Deetz, 47) As progress is made, our organization will surely move forward because a new culture has been nurtured.

However, Kotter warns that “a great deal of work can be blown away by the winds of tradition in a remarkably short period of time.” Our organization is steeped in tradition, so our challenge is to uphold the values and traditions that were built upon while building a new future that

encompasses fresh ideas and new perspectives. Doing it the same way, year after year, will not help our organization grow. Stagnation will only ensue.

Other Thoughts and Questions

In communicating with volunteers, I asked a variety of questions pertaining to how they felt about the changes our program has experienced. It is Kotter who emphasizes that “evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the most fundamental problem in all of the stages is changing the behavior of people.” This, by far, is the most difficult part of what we do in 4-H. Our programming emphasizes the promotion of lifeskills development and positive leadership, yet we cannot make anyone change their attitudes or beliefs because they are so deeply seeded.

Kotter discusses the Flow of Change in his book *The Heart of Change* and states, “The core behavior of people who are ignoring how the world is changing, who are frozen in terror by the problems they see, or who do little but bitterly complain.” In my mind, these are not the people to enlist in trying to accept the multitude of changes, since nothing will be viewed positively. They are not going to become the champions of the cause and will likely slow down the rate of change.

The organizations that succeed in managing organizational change and transform their culture do so by focusing on not just the nuts and bolts of the work but show people what the problems are and how to start resolving these problems. Enlisting and engaging organizational members to be part of this problem solving is another effectiveness factor.

Additionally, our volunteers were asked variety of questions, including:

Q: Is it possible for members of our organization to influence the dynamics of these changes?

A: Yes, to some degree. We cannot go back and change the things that have occurred, but we can be active partners in creating a future that helps us fulfill our mission.

Q: While change is unavoidable, does the answer lie in helping organizational members learn to accept these changes faster?

A: This question did not yield an answer that truly responds to the question. Some changes have not truly been accepted by our members. Although we have moved into a new office, almost none of our volunteers have visited stating that it is too far to drive. It feels as if literally coming into the new building would mean accepting the fact that the previous location, our home for decades, was indeed gone.

It was noted that volunteers have felt great fear towards these changes. Good communication has been utilized by county staff to relay information to key volunteers; however, not all volunteers may have received the same information or message. This could be improved.

Becoming a successful agent of change comes from accepting change gracefully. However, their fear is currently thwarting their ability to see any positive aspects of this change. Here we have an opportunity to literally create our future, as Peter Drucker would have us do. However, our members are still fearful because of a variety of factors.

- Fear of the unknown?
- Fear of not being in control?
- Fear of being outside of their comfort zone?

It is easy to see that how resistance to change stems from these fears.

Faith Baldwin has said, "Time is a dressmaker specializing in alterations." Perhaps, time is what we need in order to regain trust with those who have been perceived as only taking away from our organization and our members. While our members have acted and reacted to these changes as any other organization might, it has been challenging to motivate them or convince them that better times are ahead and that we will help create our own destiny.....one that will be stronger and better.

The 4-H Motto is "To Make the Best Better." While our organizational members have not truly responded to these changes and could not honestly be called "change agents" at this time, I have hope. I have hope, because they still believe in our mission and live by our organizational values and standards.

With time, and a show of progress, they will come to learn and adapt to these changes, and, perhaps Victor Frankl's words will be put into action. "When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves." And we will change ourselves to be more open to the future and the very idea that some of these changes will benefit our organization, demonstrate positive growth, and launch us into a new future...a new beginning.

I certainly hope we can challenge ourselves to change in a way that is positive and enables us to grow and prosper as an organization so that we are vibrant for another 100 years. John Kotter's words ring especially true as well. "Making Change Stick" emphasizes the need for people to continue to act in new ways, despite "the pull of tradition" and rooting behavior in a reshaped organizational culture. First, we must regain that sense of urgency to get moving and change what we fear most and then reformulate a new vision. No one can do it for us. We must step boldly into the future, knowing that the fear of the unknown does not have to hinder us.

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