

Change is inevitable, necessary, and even desirable. In *Leadership and the New Science*, Margaret J. Wheatley says, "Equilibrium is neither the goal nor the fate of living systems, simply because as open systems they are partners with their environment. To stay viable, open systems maintain a state of non-equilibrium so they can change and grow. They participate in an active exchange with their world, using what is there for their renewal. Every organism in nature, including us, behaves in this way".

Change is a constant. It's said that the only one who likes change is a baby with a wet diaper. However, change is a constant in our lives. Just like nature, organizations undergo constant change. Resisting, or failing to anticipate, change will lead to catastrophic events. When Smith Corona went out of business they still made the world's best typewriters, but computers made them obsolete.

It isn't enough to have excellent products and services, and it isn't even enough to have innovative products and services. They have to be in the right place at the right time and with the right price. The Swiss enjoyed 80% of the world's watch business when watches were made from springs, gears, and bearings. However, the digital quartz watch changed all that. The Swiss watch industry lost 60,000 jobs, literally overnight, when Seiko and Texas Instruments introduced the digital quartz watch to the market. Guess who invented that watch? The Swiss of course! They put it in a trade show as a novelty, failing to recognize their own invention as the new paradigm. With all change there are winners and losers. Some resist change because it threatens the existing paradigm from which they benefit. Others embrace change as an opportunity to grow and prosper. In business, the longer one resists change, the bigger the risk of being caught in a paradigm shift where everyone goes back to zero.

Learning to embrace change will open doors of opportunities, help eliminate stress and mental clutter even in the midst of chaos and uncertainty. When you no longer allow change to hold you captive, but set you free, you capture a fresh exciting attitude for creating a larger vision of the future about your life and business.

Jack Welch CEO of General Electric -- acclaimed as the best manager in America -- believes that change is continual and should be embraced for its opportunity. After Welch's rise to Chairman in 1981, he took a fat and happy company that was posting record financial results and set a new course for expansive growth. Jack created his own Winds of Change to bring about an even stronger and more profitable GE. Results: Total assets of \$20 Billion in 1991 had a whopping growth to \$304 Billion in 1997.

Rigid routines and comfort zones stifle growth and encourage you to resist change. Here are three ideas to help you soar in the "Winds of Fortune."

1. Embrace change and the challenge that goes along with it. Develop the confidence in yourself to survive whatever comes your way. Try new and unexplored ways of marketing to grow your business.

2. Increase your flexibility. Take a serious inventory of your rigid routines and thinking patterns. Then make some deliberate changes in the way you think and operate. Having difficulty in forcing the changes? Look in the mirror; remind yourself that the price of being inflexible results in stifled growth, and being left behind.

3. Stop being content with the same predictable activities every day. Most new ventures, marketing ideas and activities carry an unfamiliar ring and a fear of failure, but these negative emotions are usually short lived.

The real remorse comes when your business fails because you froze in your comfort zone.