

Embracing Change

by Andy Besser

Have you ever been asked to do something you've never done before? Were you ever in a situation when something new was introduced and you felt the old way was just as good? Experiencing these feelings causes us to feel uncertain, uncomfortable, and for some, afraid of how this new situation will affect your routine. Don't despair, because you aren't alone. Many people have great difficulty accepting new things into their lives that change the way things are presently done.

Most commonly, new ideas, procedures, or programs are instituted in the workplace. Not knowing what to expect, not knowing how this will affect your routine, can often lead to resistance and apprehension. Embracing change, whether in the workplace or at home, may have a devastating effect on people who dislike change. As Rosabeth Moss Kanter, a professor at Harvard University, stated, "Change is always a threat when it is done to you, but it is an opportunity when it is done by you." Your perspective on the word "change" can bring fear, and you may build a wall: anything to avoid changing.

From my experience, I learned to step back for a moment, take a good look at the change that I will soon become involved with, and think of all the possibilities.

- The possibility of personal growth
- The possibility of learning a new skill
- The possibility of making more money
- The possibility of becoming a leader
- The possibility of job security
- The possibility for a better life

I could go on and on... *I'd like you to just take a moment and think of the last time you were asked to change something in your life that made you feel uncomfortable. Once you have that opportunity in mind, think of some of the possibilities you can or have taken advantage of to improve yourself.*

Stepping outside your "comfort zone" is how you will grow the most. Stepping outside your comfort zone removes you from others so you don't end up "just like everybody else." You learn, you grow, you succeed more frequently because of your ability to take control of your life, take control of how change will affect you.

Allowing change to take control of your feelings may lead to feelings of regret. Regret because you had an idea about how to *use* change instead of how *it* affected you. Live your life to the fullest, **have no regrets!** Change is only a threat if you allow it to control you; take advantage of change, and turn it into an opportunity.

I have developed the Success Life Cycle, which illustrates how taking advantage of change may help to build your self-confidence. Learning is a key element in your success in accepting change. And, by the way, there is **no failure!** I personally dislike this word to the point of never using it; if you've learned something from a mistake, you were successful—you didn't fail. Consider how Thomas Edison experimented time and time again to invent the light bulb. He said, "I didn't fail each time it didn't work: I learned that experiment didn't work." He didn't fail, he kept changing his process until he found the right combination. One caveat, the only way you can fail is by not learning the lesson. Just as someone who does the same thing over and over, expecting a different result.

You can choose to take advantage of change, or *you* can choose to feel like a victim. The choice is *yours*. No one can make *you* feel one way or another: *you* make the choice to feel angry or hurt.

Change is all around us—every day, everywhere—and you are smack dab in the middle, whether you want to acknowledge it or not. One of the first steps is becoming aware not only of your surroundings but, more important, of how YOU react to changes. Keep an open mind, release judgment, and accept all the possibilities right there within your grasp.

Change is good!