

Reading Assignment - Managing Transitions, Part Two - The Solution, Chapter Five...

Launching a New Beginning

In the last Chapter the author discussed the notion that the Transition/Neutral Zone provided an opportunity to try new things. The existing conditions encouraged creativity and the freedom provided by new temporary systems.

In effect, a new beginning that encourages the opportunity to start some things fresh. Before a fresh start can begin, however, there must be an accounting of the level of commitment available to give a fresh start a chance of success. The top leadership team must "gel" into a level of unity that allows a clear and visible "model/picture" to the organization - in the circle of commitment there must be a vast majority of leaders as champions that are sufficiently **IN**.

- 1. Table 1 - Ambivalence Toward Beginnings.** Four potential barriers are common. New beginnings: activate old anxieties, a new way represents a gamble that may fail, the risk might make lack of competencies visible, and some comfortable routines will be destroyed.
- 2. Table 2 - Clarify and Communicate the Purpose.** It must be clear from the new beginning WHY the departure from the old ways is necessary and WHY a fresh start is a must.
- 3. Table 3 - After a Purpose a Picture.** The journey of Moses and his people out of Egypt and into the wilderness for generations was to get Egyptian culture out of the people. Organizational habits die hard and it takes time and a clear understanding of what lies ahead. The purpose must be known and translated into as many "stories" as it takes to be clear to everyone on the journey.
- 4. Table 4 - Now Create a [Transition] Plan.** Everyone needs to know HOW to get from the old conditions to the new ways of doing things (new conditions). The planning and implementation must account for new attitudes, new behaviors, and a new identity.
- 5. Table 5 - Finally, a Part to Play.** Continuing with the old/current roles without a new role that fits the new conditions, will result in - no change. New roles must give people: new insight into real problems, a fresh alignment of the structure (superior to subordinate all the way down), leveraging first hand knowledge, the new knowledge is more than just new facts - it will be a new lens through which to view the facts, and everyone in a new role develops "ownership" in results.
- 6. Table 6 - Reinforcing the New Beginning [with New Rules].** There may be other rules, but most important will be consistency, quick successes, symbols for the new identity, and celebrations for achievements linked to the new way of doing business.

Summary based on the book, Managing Transitions by William Bridges, Da Capo Press, 1991, 2003