

“Change is the only Constant”
By Robert Sicora, Sicora Consulting, Inc.

We hear this saying all of the time, and we are truly experiencing the effects of it all of the time. How do you adjust and adapt to change? How do those you work with react to a change that is created from internal forces? External? Does your team(s) have the necessary tools in place to make any change situation into an opportunity?

If your team or organization is experiencing significant change, and you would like to position it for success, let Sicora Consulting help you position yourself in the best way possible through proven techniques and methodologies that have been used by large and small organizations in any industry.

Enjoy the ‘Seven Truths about Change to Lead by and to Live by’
By Rosabeth Moss Kanter – Harvard Business Review, August 23, 2010

I call these the Change Agent Bumper Stickers. Here are seven universal sayings that can comfort and guide anyone engaged in the effort of setting a new direction, orchestrating innovation, establishing a culture, or changing behavior.

"Change is a threat when done to me, but an opportunity when done by me." I coined this truth in my book *The Change Masters*, which compared innovation-friendly and innovation-stifling corporate cultures, and then saw it in operation in personal relationships, too. Resistance is always greatest when change is inflicted on people without their involvement, making the change effort feel oppressive or constraining. If it is possible to tie change to things people already want, and give them a chance to act on their own goals and aspirations, then it is met with more enthusiasm and commitment. In fact, they then seek innovation on their own.

"A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step." Big goals can seem overwhelming. The magnitude of the problem, the difficulty of the solutions, the length of the time horizon, and the number of action items can make change feel so complex that people feel paralyzed, and nothing happens. This **saying from China's Chairman Mao** is a reminder to get moving. Do something, get started, take the first steps however small they seem, and the journey is underway.

"If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there." A clear destination is necessary to guide the journey of change. Many change efforts falter because of confusion over exactly where everyone is expected to arrive. In the children's book, *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice, who is confused anyway, asks the **Cheshire cat** which road she should take. The magical cat responds with this helpful reminder to pin down your goal first. Zoom in on the destination on your mental map, and then zoom out to pick the best path.

"Change is a campaign, not a decision." How many people make vows to improve their diet and exercise, then feel so good about the decision that they reward themselves with ice cream and sit down to read a book? CEOs and senior executives make pronouncements about change all the time, and then launch programs that get ignored. To change behavior requires a campaign, with constant communication, tools and materials, milestones, reminders, and rewards.

"When you come to a fork in the road, take it." Baseball legend **Yogi Berra** was known for oddball sayings that contain gems. There is an aspect of change that involves trial and error. Fear of mistakes can sometimes leave paths unexplored. It's important to seize unexpected opportunities. Some sidelines are dead ends, but others might prove to be faster routes to the goals.

"Everything can look like a failure in the middle." I've observed this so often that I call it Kanter's Law. There are numerous roadblocks, obstacles, and surprises on the journey to change, and each one tempts us to give up. Give up prematurely, and the change effort is automatically a failure. Find a way around the obstacles, perhaps by making some tweaks in the plan, and keep going. Persistence and perseverance are essential to successful innovation and change.

"Be the change you seek to make in the world." Leaders must embody the values and principles they want other people to adopt. This famous Gandhi quote reminds us all — executives with associates, political leaders with followers, or parents with children — that one of the most important tasks is personal: to be a role model, exemplifying the best of what the change is all about.