



*“Now In Our 38<sup>th</sup> Year”*

From *the desk of David Simpson*

May 2022

**“If you can’t change the person, change the person.”**

-Sir Stephen W. Hansen (May 7, 1959 - ) New Zealand Rugby Coach

In the 15 years Steve Hansen spent with the New Zealand National Rugby Team (nicknamed the “All Blacks” because their uniform is entirely black) before he retired in 2019, of the 209 games played, the team won 180 contests, lost 25, and had four draws. He won two World Cups, 11 Tri-Nations Rugby Championships, 16 Bledisloe Cups and was awarded World Rugby Coach of the Year 4 times.

According to the research, the biggest reasons for people resisting change are (in no particular order): loss of control, too much uncertainty; revolution versus evolution; a lack of familiarity; loss of face; anxiety around becoming obsolete; adding more work; not dealing with the ripple effect; ghosts of the past; a perceived threat becomes a real one – like a layoff. However, we all know change is a constant that is woven into the fabric of business.

So here are a few of the big “do’s and don’ts” when making substantial changes in your business or organization. A) It takes lots of time. Change cannot be rushed. B) Do not initiate it if you have too many managers and not enough leaders. Change goes nowhere without internal champions. C) You need to make sure the status quo looks more dangerous than the unknown that is coming with change. D) The urgency needs to be pumped up or you will not get the results you are hoping for. Urgency is high enough when 75% of the leadership and management team agree that change is needed. A strong coalition of leaders is essential to successful change. E) The message and vision must be strong, simple and sensible. A useful rule of thumb is to be able to communicate your vision in less than five minutes and get a reaction that shows understanding and interest. F) The change must be communicated constantly with dozens of repetitions. The vision needs to show up in training modules, newsletters, monthly and quarterly management meetings, daily dialogues, town halls etc. And most important of all, the senior team needs to “walk the talk,” without exception. G) Senior leaders need to remove all obstacles in the way of the new vision. Many times the biggest blocker is a senior individual who does not believe in the new vision and undermines the entire change effort. H) It is important to have short-term wins in the entire process. I) And never declare victory too soon.

Change sticks when it becomes “the way we do things around here.”

Perform better!