



CHANGE MANAGEMENT. “ADVICE” FOR DENIERS

Imagine the following scene: an international company with its head office somewhere abroad got a new CEO. “Nothing new” you will say, but depending on your role in the organization (let’s say you are the CEO of the local subsidiary here in Slovenia) it may be a huge change coming up for you personally in the following days, weeks and months. And in case you do not agree with the new strategy and the new business plan your new boss was presenting to you and all the other managers, here are some “creative” ideas:

Make your colleagues in the head office busy.

The more you ask for different kinds of reports (which of course you need for the further development of your market) the less your colleagues in the head office will be able to deal with the large items of your ‘change project’. For instance, deliver a survey about the market penetration of your local market. This costs you one phone call to a local market research institution. After that, you send it to your head office and ask for comparable figures and developments from other countries, where your company is at present.

But be careful with this tactic, because you always have to be one step ahead, otherwise you’ll be under pressure.

Tell your boss why things can’t work as he considered it.

Especially with today’s circumstances, there is no chance to implement what he has in mind, but of course, how can he understand the local market?

Let’s assume that your corporate colour is green, but you don’t really like green; on the contrary, your favourite colour is yellow. So, how can you paint the walls in your local subsidiaries in a nice light yellow? Provide your boss with a proposal from a local architect that confirms your approach, and ask him how to deal with that discrepancy. But please, don’t provide him with a solution – in the end he is the boss and he is paid to make decisions.

Blame the consultants.

In difficult ‘change projects’ it’s usually the case that external consultants are being hired. But in that case, you have to prove that your skills and knowledge are much better. Maybe your consultants are using international methodologies and standards, but they can’t have this local and operational experience that you have. And those guys have never worked with all those details like you have, because they are “just consultants”.

For example: the consultants come up with a proposal to decrease the number of employees in your subsidiary. What does this mean? It implies that you and your staff weren’t 100% busy so far, doesn’t it!? So, I would suggest you send your boss examples about daily routine jobs (the more the better) and if you can send those examples via hard copy, it will really confirm your ability to work hard.



And finally, don't forget: you have to fight for every workplace, and this is what bosses like to see: that their managers are real fighters.

Say YES to everything that comes from your boss.

This is what your boss wants to hear when presenting his ideas in front of an audience. For instance, his presentation of the new strategy ended with the question "please give me honest your opinion".

But what does he really want to hear from you? Critics or remarks to his idea are not very welcome, because it may say that he didn't prepare his ideas well enough or that you are simply opposed to them, and in that case he would have to go back to his superiors, his Board of Directors or his shareholders, and inform them about certain changes in his thoughts. No, in secret he expects your confirmation of his idea. So, why not do him this favour?

Of course the same also goes in the case of your boss making jokes. Extroverted bosses always like to play important roles and present themselves in the spotlight, so please don't hesitate to laugh at his jokes, regardless of whether they are funny or not, because in doing that you will confirm your unlimited loyalty to him.

Engage yourself in the 'change project'.

This 'change project' foresees several sub-projects. Try to participate in as many sub-projects as possible, but avoid taking responsibility for expected results. In the end it's the team's success (or fault) that counts, and nobody can blame you for not contributing to such an important project.

In that respect you'll probably travel a lot, your calendar will be filled up immediately and the technocrats in the head office won't care about the business results of your subsidiary so much, because this 'change project' now has number 1 priority.

And if you can really afford it, try to become a member of a steering committee. It's the best position in such a project, but for that you will need a good lobby that pushes you forward.

Let's now hope that if you follow my "advice" your boss won't see you as a revolutionist. If he does, think about your mortgage and your kids, and therefore consider a more reasonable, reliable and cooperative approach!