

MANAGING UNCERTAINTY IN TODAY'S LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: PREPARING FOR AND EMBRACING CHANGE

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RAMPED UP CHANGE

The legal market has undergone fundamental and permanent changes since the global economic meltdown of 2008. New market drivers including the following are shaping the legal profession and forcing change:

- The influx of millennials into the workplace;
- The use of artificial intelligence;
- Legal process outsourcers and alternative providers;
- Possible non-lawyer ownership; and
- The great resignation.

RAMPED UP CHANGE

**Such dramatic shifts can be disorienting,
yet the benefits of effective change management
can't be overstated.**



YOUR TWO REAL CHOICES



**Don't resist
change,
embrace it!**

GET OVER YOUR FEARS OF CHANGE OR YOU WILL BE GOTTEN OVER

**If you don't like change,
*you are going to like
irrelevance even less!***



SKILL SET REQUIRED TO EMBRACE CHANGE

To embrace change requires lawyers / firms to understand two things because....

**CHANGE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE
A FOUR LETTER WORD**

The two things are:

1. A mindset that will help deal with change; and
2. Understand how others process change.

TWO PREDOMINANT MINDSETS

There are two mindsets that lawyers (firms) can possess when dealing with change:

1. Fixed mindset; and
2. Growth mindset.



FIXED MINDSET

A fixed mindset is the belief that one's success is based more on inherent intelligence than on effort. For the most part the Canadian legal system largely rests on guidance from previous case law which results in an ingrained belief that the effective use of precedents is the definition of success.

Fixed mindset fosters a fear of failure, and in turn, reluctance to go outside of one's comfort zone.

GROWTH MINDSET

Growth mindset – the belief that personality traits are malleable, as opposed to a fixed mindset, which holds that personality traits don't change.

With a growth mindset taking risks and even failing are simply part of the journey.



GROWTH MINDSET

A Harvard Business Review article indicated
"People with growth mindsets see outcomes not as evidence of who they are but as evidence of what they could improve upon in the future and what challenges they could overcome."



THE DRIVING REASON TO CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

Too many lawyers operate under the motto:

"If it isn't broken, don't fix it."

Just because a business model worked in the past does not mean it will continue to fare well.



UNDERSTANDING HOW OTHERS PROCESS CHANGE

The approach used by most lawyers / law firms for dealing with change fall into one of the three following categories:

1. Conservers
2. Originators
3. Pragmatists

UNDERSTANDING HOW OTHERS PROCESS CHANGE

Possibly the most important aspect of dealing with change is understanding how others prefer to process / deal with “change”.

We all know the futility and often exaggerated agitation when we try to communicate verbally with a non-verbal person and vice versa.

So why would we think it any less stressful and debilitating to what we are attempting to accomplish when we are not “aware” of how the folks we are trying to change prefer to deal with change!

CHANGE STYLE PREFERENCE

CONSERVERS		
Accept the structure		
Prefer change that is Incremental		
Evolutionary		

CHANGE STYLE PREFERENCE

CONSERVERS		ORIGINATORS
Accept the structure		Challenge the structure
Prefer change that is Incremental		Prefer change that is Expansive
Evolutionary		Revolutionary

CHANGE STYLE PREFERENCE

CONSERVERS	PRAGMATISTS	ORIGINATORS
Accept the structure	Explore the structure	Challenge the structure
Prefer change that is Incremental	Prefer change that is Functional	Prefer change that is Expansive
Evolutionary	Situational	Revolutionary

TOTAL OPTIMIST

There are no current, or for that fact, future challenges that can not be successfully resolved by lawyers and their firms!



SUGGESTIONS FOR DEALING WITH CHANGES

1. The real challenge that might be outside of some lawyers and their firms' grasp is changing from a fixed mindset to the growth mindset required to deal effectively with these challenges.
2. Never has "keep it simple stupid" ever had greater application. The best solutions need not require rocket scientists to solve / interpret but rather simplicity will carry the day.
3. Prioritizing will be another key to success in dealing with the challenges. It is clearly much more impactful to do a couple things well rather than tackling a large agenda and not executing any of them well.



