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So, what happens if you are in charge?

By Paperitalo Staff

Over the years, one hears many conversations start with, "If I were in charge of this place..." So, what if you were in charge? What would you change? Why would you change it? How would you accomplish the changes? When would you change it?

Let us take them one at a time...

What would you change? Procedures? Communications? Methodologies? Policies?

More interesting than what, however, is why? I hope it would be to more efficiently spin the invoice printer, but there are many subtle actions required to spin your already well-oiled invoice printer. Perhaps it is some of the more subtle you feel necessary to change. You may decide that policies need to be implemented to (increase) (decrease) employee turnover, all to the objective of more efficient invoice printer spinning, of course. The wrong answer to why, certainly, is self-aggrandizement.

How you would accomplish the change is also a challenge. Would you be a "bull in the china shop" or one with velvet gloves? Your personal preference for style is not as important as is what the circumstances require. As a manager, one is often called on to be an actor, to not let their own emotions show, but to use the emotions appropriate to accomplishing the task.

When would you change things? You have to wait long enough to make sure you are going in the right direction, but not too long. It is a commonly accepted perception that once you have been in charge of something for a year, you own it. Time is limited.

But now for the really big question--what keeps you from changing things now? It may be that your current boss or current conditions are just excuses. In fact, if you have really good ideas that you can express succinctly to the powers that be you should be able to implement them right now. Further, if you are one of the really brave, you will go ahead and implement, begging forgiveness later.

It could be that for internal political reasons, you can't approach your boss with your good ideas- the environment is such that you will be shut down. In this case, you have an even harder question to answer: "Why am I staying around here?" Be honest with yourself. Many answers may be acceptable; you just need to determine what is real and what is myth. It is time to stop fooling yourself.

So, what happens if you are in charge? The answer is: you are in charge. Right now, right where you are. If the climate and culture are such that you cannot implement good ideas, then take charge of your own career and go where you can. If the climate will tolerate (does not have to foster) change, then make your moves in situ, starting today. You owe nothing less to your employer or yourself.

Of course, fooling yourself about safety is no joke. One needs be vigilant all the time. And one owes themselves the best safety attitude possible.

Be safe and we will talk next week. ##