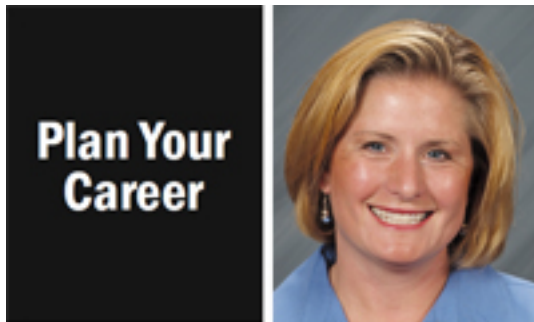


Cope with or capitalize on change in the workplace

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A few years ago, on an ordinary Tuesday, a few planes flew off course and suddenly life in America changed forever. Change happens. Not every change is cataclysmic, but it is often unexpected and it always requires people to respond. When change happens at work, your response can make or break your career. What are your options?

Option #1: Sit there and take it. Most people wouldn't let a mosquito buzz in their ear for an extended length of time. Yet, in work situations, minor irritations can fester into major bugbites. Say your company initiates a new policy that creates more work for you for no obvious reason. You can choose to go along with it... buzz... buzz...

Option #2: Stand up. You like your boss but you dislike the policy. Consider that most changes in the workplace are not random. A policy change requires the time, energy and resources of at least a few leaders. Invoke the curiosity card; talk to your boss to gain a good understanding of what's behind the change.

Does the new policy save the company money, generate more business or solve a corporate problem? Before those planes hit those towers, removing your shoes in an airport would have been considered seriously strange behavior. Knowing why a change occurred can make it much easier to go along with it.

Option #3: Capitalize on the change. When Manager Bonnie allowed her best people to post for promotions to other departments, she was left with the challenge of hiring and rebuilding an entire department. She kept an upbeat attitude and everyone noticed. The executive team appreciated her training and mentorship abilities; her peers appreciated that great employees were available for their positions; and her staff knows she is their advocate. She gains loyalty, support and resources in return for her enthusiasm during a time of much change.

When change happens, and it always does, ask yourself: Will I cope? Or will I capitalize? It's not easy to see the opportunity in every transition, but when you seek it out, it's there.

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