

Our Vision is "To teach, inspire, and assist people to experience enjoyment, fulfillment, and personal growth in their work while contributing to the success of themselves and their employers."

The Koval Eagle

Making People and Profits Soar!

Issue 6
December 2008



I'd like to start by wishing all of you a very peaceful and joyous holiday season! I hope you have a most wonderful Merry Christmas, Happy Hannukkah, and Happy and Prosperous New Year!

I know I always look forward to this time of year, spending time with family and friends, the excitement of the holidays, bringing perspective to the year we are in, and looking forward to the year to come.

The Koval Eagle, our quarterly newsletter, intends to educate, inspire, amuse - and keep you informed about how Koval Associates can help you to cultivate a happy, motivated, high-performing workforce. In this issue we'd also like to announce the launch of our new website - www.susankoval.com - which highlights our programs about women in non-traditional careers - a vital component of today's workforce.

The Feature Article reviews a book called "Future Think: How to Think Clearly in a Time of Change," and describes one of the thinking techniques taught by the authors. I thought this was a very relevant topic as we end 2008 and enter 2009 in a world that seems to be changing by the minute - or at least with the ringing of each stock market bell!

Continuing with our theme of change, the next article on "The Key to Helping Employees Deal With Change," provides some tips for helping you to make changes within your organization as smoothly as possible.

Also in keeping with our theme of change, the Highlighted Programs section describes my keynote presentation about the 21st Century Woman and how she is transforming the workplace. I am available to speak to your organization on this topic - tailored to the needs of your audience, whether they are students, business people, non-profits, civic



Announcing the Launch of www.susankoval.com !

Are You Interested in Brnging a Program About Women in Non-Traditional Careers to Your Organization?

If so, please check out our Highlighted Programs block, and our new website, for descriptions of programs that Susan can bring to your organization.

These programs can be tailored to fit the needs of your audience - ranging from students to seniors, in school, business, or community settings.

Please contact Susan for more information or to arrange a presentation.

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organizations, etc.

And don't forget to check out the Humor at Work section! The focus is on football - in honor of the Giants upcoming Super Bowl victory!

Happy reading!

Sue Koval

In This Issue

Feature Article: Future Think

The Key to Helping Employees Embrace Change

Highlighted Programs: The 21st Century Woman

Humor ... at Work

Announcing the launch of www.susankoval.com !

Feature Article: Future Think

As we wrap up 2008 and prepare to enter 2009, lots of things are on our minds - from presents under the Christmas tree and holiday meals with family and friends, to making our New Year's resolutions - and the challenge of keeping them!

One thing about the future that is the same for all of us, though, is that we live in a changing world, and in order to make the most of these changes we need to learn to understand them and how best to respond to them. The book "Future Think: How to Think Clearly in a Time of Change," by Edie Wiener and Arnold Brown, is an excellent user guide to this process.

Wiener and Brown are futurists who not only predict the trends and events of the future, but teach people techniques for thinking about change and how to respond to it effectively. Their goal is to help the reader control the impact of change, rather than be victimized by it.

The book is broken into four main parts. A brief description and highlight of each part follows.

Part I is about the personal biases that we each have, that may prevent us from seeing change or understanding it. These biases are a natural consequence of the experience and knowledge we gain as we go through life. How do we shed ourselves of this baggage? The authors describe four thinking techniques: *Looking Through Alien Eyes*, *Trend/Countertrend*, *Substituting the Spiral for the Pendulum*, and *The Extremes Inform the Middle*. The authors provide multiple examples for each of these techniques.

Looking Through Alien Eyes refers to seeing something with the perspective of someone who is totally unfamiliar with what they are observing. For examples, aliens may think that cars rule the world and that humans are their slaves - as the cars spend all day socializing in a club - the parking lot - while the humans spend all day at their jobs to support their cars!

Wiener and Brown provide an example of the able/challenged using this technique. They state that to an alien, most of the world is made up of physically challenged people, rather than physically able people - when you consider all those who have asthma or are obese, have chronic pain or a broken limb, are pregnant, are elderly, are arthritic, have diminishing eyesight, etc. When looking with alien eyes, physically able people are the exception, rather than the norm.

When products are designed with alien eyes, they would be designed with the physically challenged in mind - such as large bathroom stalls for wheelchairs. However, the larger stalls are also preferred by physically able people - especially those with luggage at the airport!

The purpose of the alien eyes thinking technique is to help you shift your perspective. Try to think about an issue (such as the changes in our economy due to the plunging stock market and credit crisis), as someone with no preconceived notions or knowledge about the issue would. How would that impact your thoughts and actions?

How would thinking with alien eyes impact the way you think about your business or the decisions you make about it?

In each of the next three newsletters, we will explore the final three sections of the book, in order to learn how to think and adapt most effectively to the changing world we live in: Part II - overcoming organizational biases, Part III - understanding the big picture, and Part IV - using metaphors to free your mind.

Until then - practice looking at the world with alien eyes!

The Key To Helping Employees Embrace Change

Embracing change. This action does not come easily or naturally to most people, in fact, the natural tendency of most people is to resist change. Often this can be attributed to F.E.A.R. - False Expectations Appearing Real. And this fear of change can make it very difficult for employers who are making changes to their business, when these changes impact their employees.

For example, the employer may change the technology - such as rolling out a new software program. The employer may streamline or change the way the work flows by implementing new standard operating procedures or a new organizational structure. As a third example, he or she may bring new employees on, or let existing employees go. Any of these changes can result in employee apprehension, poor performance, or even sabotage if not handled correctly.

What is the key to helping your employees embrace change rather than resisting it? In one word - communication, communication, communication! (OK, one word stated three times!)

I find that lack of communication is the major stumbling block when it comes to implementing changes in an organization. People are fearful of what they don't understand, and hence their natural reaction is to resist. Once you help them understand why the change is being made, the steps involved in making the change, and their role in the change, you move them from "resist" to "accept" to "embrace."

So how do you communicate this knowledge to your employees? As the employer or business owner, you have insights and understanding that your team does not have. Meet with them to explain the big picture, and explain how this change fits into the strategy and goals of the company. Let them ask questions, and be as open as you can in answering the questions. You may even gain insights from their questions that you hadn't thought of, which can help you in implementing the change!

Also, make sure to provide training, whether it is provided by an outside vendor, or by you or another member of your staff. Provide any tools or documentation that your employees will need to put the change into action. Often, employers assume that their team members will automatically be able to run a new program or implement a new process, and then they get angry or frustrated when the employee makes a mistake. This can result in a fearful or angry employee. Understand that your employees WILL make mistakes. Provide constructive feedback and let them know they have someone they can go to if they have questions (that person may be you, or it may be someone else).

Finally, communicate with your team on a regular basis about the change being made - keep them in the loop, whether via meetings, email, newsletter, etc. Encourage their feedback, as the most effective communication occurs when it goes in both directions. And be open-minded about the feedback you receive - you may make another change based on that feedback!

Change is good and vital for the health of an organization - and communication is the key to helping employees understand and embrace change.

Highlighted Programs: The 21st Century Woman

The 21st Century Woman: Transforming the Workplace, Transforming the World

In this enlightening and compelling program, Susan takes her audience from the workplaces of yesterday to those of today, showing how women's roles have changed, and how those changing roles have transformed society and the workplace. Susan's engaging presentation tells the stories of women who have overcome the challenges and embraced the opportunities available in non-traditional occupations. She also explores how women differ from men, how these differences impact their leadership style, and how women are changing the world as they lead companies and governments.

Humor ... at Work

The Super Bowl will be here before we know it - so some football humor this time!

Animal Super Bowl

During the Super Bowl, there was another football game being held between the big animals and the little animals. The big animals were crushing the little animals and at half-time, the little animals coach made a passionate speech to rally the little animals.

At the start of the second half the big animals had the ball. The first play, the elephant got stopped for no gain. The second play, the rhino was stopped for no gain. On third down, the hippo was thrown for a 5 yard loss.

The defense huddled around the coach and he asked excitedly, "Who stopped the elephant?"

"I did," said the centipede.

"Who stopped the rhino?"

"Uh, that was me too," said the centipede.

"And how about the hippo? Who hit him for a 5 yard loss?"

"Well, that was me as well," said the centipede.

"So where were you during the first half?" demanded the coach.

"Well," said the centipede, "I was having my ankles taped."

And as a Giants fan I can't resist this one:

The first grade teacher in Dallas explains to her class that she is a Cowboys fan. She asks her students to raise their hands if they are Cowboys fans too.

Every hand raised except for one. A little girl has not gone along with the crowd. The teacher asks her why she has decided to be different.

"Because I'm not a Cowboys fan," she said.

"Then," asks the teacher, "what are you?"

"I'm a proud Philadelphia Eagles Fan," the girl said.

The teacher asks the girl, "Why are you an Eagles Fan?"

"Well, my Dad and Mom are Eagles fans, so I'm a Eagles fan, too," she responded.

"That's no reason," the teacher yelled loudly, "What if your mom was a moron, and your dad was an idiot? What would you be then?"

The little girl smiled and said, "Then I'd be a Cowboys fan like you."

Thanks to basicjokes.com and the Sporting News for the humor!

Koval Associates offers a wide range of programs and services - including internet-based assessment tools, management development training, team training workshops and keynote speeches - to help you develop superior people and increased profits.

**Susan Koval
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Helping You Attract, Train and Retain Top Performers!

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