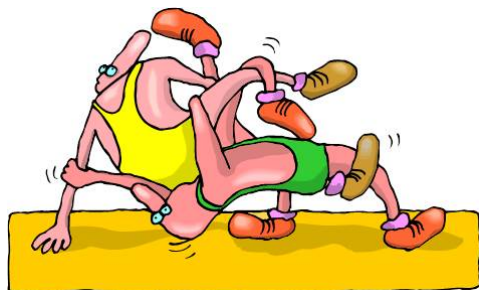


Wrestling to Achieve Compliance



OR



Dancing Together
Creating
Real
Change

Lean coaching

Breaking away from the pull of the status quo requires dedicated effort from coaches using motivational interviewing

BY LARRY ANDERSON, TONY CHAMBLIN AND RON OSLIN

Every lean journey includes dealing with associates who just don't get it or are not on board. At a Top 5 financial institution, coaches are adapting clinical methods to help leaders and associates overcome their addiction to the status quo.

Statistics indicate that 70 percent of transformations fail. Although the general emphasis is on lean transformations, the bank coach's observation is that these results likely apply to any transformation (new MRP system, new leadership, new compensation or performance system). General observation of these circumstances points to lack of associate engagement as a common cause of these failures.

In our lean forums, we discuss leadership, processes, people and performance (AME/CME Winnipeg 2015 value streams or AME Jacksonville 2014 Share/Learn/Grow) with value streams for engaged people, systematic daily improvement, innovation, extended enterprise, sustainability and achieving business results.

Practitioner presentations in each of these value streams indicate that success depends heavily on leadership recognition and development of engaged associates, fulfillment, inspiration and culture. Few of the presentations, however, appear to recognize the impact of associate personal choice on the transformation. Thus, the systems, techniques and tools developed to address engagement only scratch the transformation surface.

Existing transformation models, from the bank coach's perspective, develop results that look like a compliance

culture versus a transformed culture. Our conclusion is that transformation models that result in a compliance culture, while it may appear to achieve improvement, is not sustainable and is basically anathema to lean principles.

The coaches' analysis indicated that without inclusion of techniques to allow associates to transform themselves to create behaviors consistent with the transformation, the business results were reduced to ones consistent with compliance. Although the portion of the associate population that is ready to change is shown individual respect by current transformation methods, the majority of associates may in fact be shown great disrespect if change agents do not include additional methods to allow people to change. The bank coaches had to ask themselves if the current transformation methods did in fact violate the fundamental lean tenet of respect for the individual.

Lean coaching at the bank historically encompasses all of the traditional activities: introducing and training tools, coaching and working to convince leaders and associates to adopt lean change. During the bank's 10-year lean journey, the subject of sustainability has been a constant concern. Operations have improved only to return to prior practices, some operations have resisted change altogether, and leadership reassignments have changed organization direction.

In essence, the bank has exhibited the common characteristics of an organization attempting to realize a lean transformation. Having seen this characteristic many times, our team of coaches began investigating the root cause of conditions that seem to repeat themselves, regardless of the organization name.

Addiction to the status quo

What we discovered is that 100 percent of the leader and associate population have deep rooted habits or brain patterns that exhibit characteristics that are similar to people with addictions. We discovered an addiction to the status quo.

Addiction is a state defined by compulsive engagement in rewarding stimuli, despite consequences. The term has little or no pejorative meaning attached to it. The Oxford English Dictionary included examples of addiction "to civil affairs" and "to useful reading." The two properties that characterize all addictive stimuli are that they are positively reinforcing. In other words, they increase the likelihood that a person will seek repeated exposure to them. Likewise they are intrinsically rewarding or they activate the brain's reward pathways and are therefore perceived as being something positive or desirable. Lean coaches, thus, may be addicted to lean transformation.

The condition "addiction to the status quo" occurs when individuals are trying to maintain status quo due to reinforcing

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stimuli that is consistent with their beliefs and/or assumptions, and the individual receives an intrinsic reward.

All lean coaches have probably mused over the reluctance to change, the fear of change, the fact that people resist change or just don't like change. We've discovered that these characterizations oversimplify the facts. The medical profession still does not know the answer to the question: "Why do people change?" but there is evidence that describes the characteristics of change. We know real behavior change occurs when three conditions exist:

- The new behavior is congruent with the individual's beliefs and assumptions.
- The emotional cost to change is lower than the emotional cost to maintain status quo.
- The individual's intrinsic reward for the new behavior is greater than the reward for the old behavior.

The lean coaches at the bank have spent thousands of hours observing people's behavior associated with change. The conclusions from the observations are well recognized by any parent and all medical professionals. An individual's change in action is associated with one of two categories:

- They are performing the new actions in compliance to external stimuli. If the stimuli are removed, they will revert to their old actions. We refer to this type of behavior as compliant behavior. Individuals exhibiting compliant behavior will perform the actions because they must to survive.
- They are performing in a manner characterized as the individual volunteering to change their actions because their beliefs and/or assumptions have changed and they

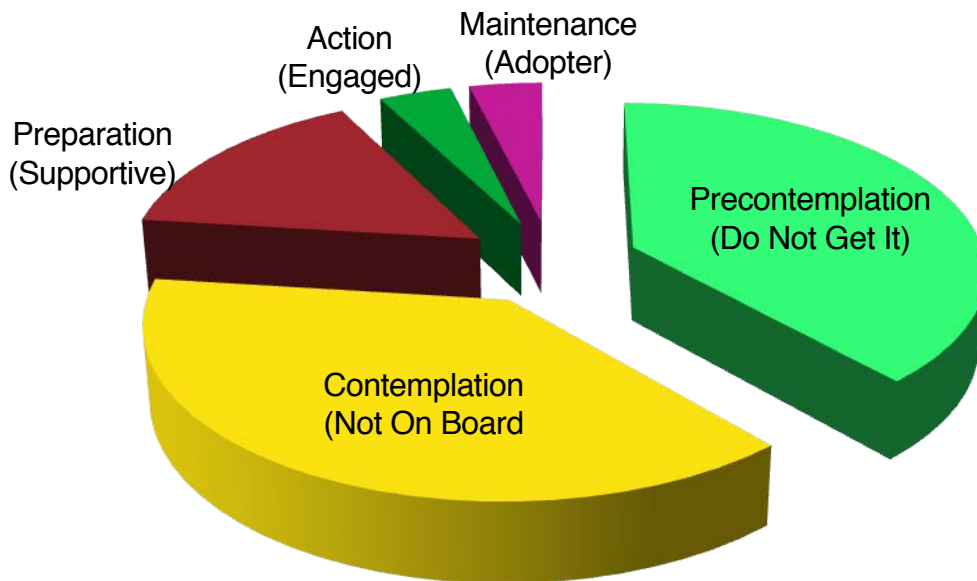
are doing the new actions because they believe the new behaviors and actions are better than the old. External stimuli are not the primary drivers for this category. The primary driver of behavior comes from within. We refer to this type of behavior as **true change in behavior**.

Individuals who have changed their own assumptions and thus their behavior exhibit characteristics like making suggestions, volunteering, working on an improvement team and other characteristics we would describe as highly engaged. Individuals who are addicted to the status quo and are being compliant to a new behavior or action generally do not exhibit the characteristics of the highly engaged. Many leaders often mistake compliant behavior as change in behavior and assume that because a person is being compliant his or her behavior has changed. Individuals who are exhibiting compliant behavior are usually waiting for the opportunity to return to the status quo.

A characteristic exhibited by many compliant individuals is they act and speak in a way that appears to be congruent with the change, but when they are with their peers they make comments like, "Here we go again ..." or "I wonder how long ... will last?" As innocent as these phrases appear to be, they are actually sabotage and reinforcing stimuli to maintain the addiction to the status quo.

Our research shows that in an organization about 25 percent of the population is open to examining and altering their assumptions to allow them to truly change their behavior. Approximately 75 percent of the population will exhibit the characteristics associated with addiction to the status quo.

Typical Early Employee Segmentation Associated with a Change



Employees in the "Do Not Get It" and the "Not On Board" segments exhibit the characteristics associated with "Addiction to the Status Quo". Classical coaching, persuasion or influencing increases resistance and reduces the rate of change for these individuals.

The coaches at the bank reached out to the clinical community to seek wisdom in how to assist the 75 percent of the population that is trying to maintain status quo. Three important lessons were learned.

First, no person can change another person; each person must change themselves. Every individual has the irrevocable right to say no.

Second, for the majority of the 75 percent, presenting logic, selling, persuasion, influencing, coaching and other methods used to convince individuals that change is good increases resistance to change and lowers the rate of change.

Third, performing the "Righting Reflex" increases resistance to change and lowers the rate of change. The "Righting Reflex" is the reflex people have to correct someone/something. It means to offer advice, info and tips to correct whatever is wrong or help by offering advice you would preferably do. When people use the methods above, they are generally using them because they are projecting their needs onto the person they are trying to assist rather than being empathetic and meeting the person where they are and using methods they need.

A common misconception is, if it makes logical sense, then people will do it.

People can be convinced and coached to a new way. Demonstration of the benefit will sway decisions. Logic and persuasion will change the behavior. We've discovered that all of these common coaching thoughts are off the mark. In fact, if a leader or associate is experiencing the addiction to the status quo, then presentation of logical arguments may actually make things worse. The addiction to the status quo is much stronger than the desire to maintain the status quo. Research indicates logic presented by someone else has little to do with behavior change. True behavior change is more of an emotional issue than a logical issue and must be evoked from within.

Individuals experiencing the addiction to the status quo will seek reinforcing stimuli to maintain status quo. They will look to their peers and to leadership. Here are a few common practices leaders use that provide reinforcing stimuli to maintain status quo:

- Leaders ignore the actions or words of those seeking to maintain status quo. Doing this reinforces that maintaining status quo is OK. Many leaders think that given enough time those in the 75 percent will come around. What so often happens is the next change occurs obsoleting the previous, and the individuals in the 75 percent get reinforcement that they should maintain the status quo.

- Extrinsic rewards are often used as a form of stimuli to change behavior. However, many leaders report that most individuals return to the old behavior because the individual's intrinsic reward for the old behavior is stronger than the extrinsic reward.
- Link the new behaviors or actions to performance appraisals. For some individuals, this helps them change their behavior; for most, this sets the minimum bar they must do to survive. The net result is the majority is behaving and performing at the minimum to comply while maintaining status quo when possible.

Stages of change

The James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente stages of change model provides descriptions of the five stages that people exhibit as they move from an old behavior to a new.

Precontemplative: Traditional coaching models might describe these as the people who "just don't get it." The insight from the clinical model is that it is much deeper than understanding. Leaders and associates in precontemplation have no intention of changing.

Contemplation: Coaches might describe these people as "not on board." This

Want to hear and/or learn more? Attend the "[Coaching those who are not on board, in denial or Addicted to the Status Quo and are actively or passively resisting change.](#)" workshop lead by the authors and sponsored by LeanFrontiers on Sept. 29, 2015 or attend the AME Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Oct. 19-23, 2015. Bank leaders will be presenting at AME their transformation experiences. AME special interest sessions and workshops will give you the opportunity to learn more and to practice the application of motivational interviewing. Join us in our continuing transformation/learning journey.

Unable to attend the workshop or conference? Visit us at onesystemonevoice.com.

traditional description fits this stage well in that contemplation translates to being aware of a need but not yet committed to change. People start to look at the pros and cons of their continued actions.

Preparation: At this stage, people are intent on taking action but just don't do it.

Action: People have made specific overt modifications in modifying their behavior or in acquiring new healthy behaviors.

Maintenance: People have been able to sustain action for a while and are working to prevent relapse.

Coaches' reflection

Each of us is working through the stages of change every day. Each time we are presented with a new idea or thought, we slip in and out each of the stages.

Some people will only spend a brief time in some of the stages; others may get stuck in a stage. Moving from stage to stage is bi-directional. The critical question is, can you recognize where a person is in his or her change journey? Take a moment and think about what you have read thus far. Where are you? What do you think of the ideas we have presented thus far. Which stage best describes your mindset?

Motivational interviewing

With a desire to create sustainable results, we determined that assisting people move from precontemplation to preparation was an appropriate pursuit. This was after consideration of the traditional conversation about getting the right people on the bus, getting the "concrete heads" off the bus and other standard approaches. We found these approaches to be short-sighted, since at the bank, as in all organizations, some of the precontemplative and contemplative leaders and associates were in either critical leadership or technical roles. Sustainability looked more like figuring out how to work with these leaders and associates versus replacement.

The quest of the coaches for wisdom on how to allow every associate to transform led us in nontraditional directions. We recognized that the traditional coaching methods of presenting logical (mind driven) reasons for making change did not work most of the time. For the part of the associate population that is ready for change, the common methods, including kata, work well. If a person is ready to change, most of the logic driven, systematic approaches will suffice. The larger portion of the associate population is, however, not particularly ready to change. For this large population, the coaches found wisdom in the clinical world, where transformation takes on life-critical components. While a complete understanding of how people change was not part of our discoveries, we did identify methods that clinical practitioners have

effectively utilized to assist the process. The discovery allowed the coaches to develop methods to assist every employee in becoming comfortable with change. These added components of change, getting people ready, can add dramatically to the success of any transformation. The coaches believe the addition of the people-centric practice of motivational interviewing enhances existing efforts undertaken by change agents. We'll state outright that this method, consistent with lean thinking and principles, requires an investment in people on the part of the coach. It also will challenge coaching tools and methods and will put coaches in the learning mode.

The practice

Motivational interviewing first emerged 30 years ago. To date, more than 25,000 articles citing motivational interviewing and 200 randomized trials have appeared in print.

In spirit, motivational interviewing overlaps with millennia-old wisdom on compassion that crosses time and cultures and on how people negotiate with each other about change. Perhaps this is why leaders who encounter motivational interviewing sometimes have a feeling of recognizing it, as if it were something they had known all along. In a way, it is. What we have sought to do with it is to make it specifiable, learnable, observable and useful. At Toyota, leaders learn and use the fundamentals of motivational interviewing to meet associates where they are, prepare them to be coached and to assist them to navigate change.

Motivational interviewing involves attention to natural language about change, with implications for how to have more effective conversations about it, particularly in contexts in which one person is acting as a helping professional for another. Our experience is that many such conversations occur in a rather dysfunctional way, albeit with the best of intentions. Motivational interviewing

is designed to find a constructive way through the challenges that often arise when a helper ventures into someone else's motivation for change. In particular, it is about arranging conversations so that people talk themselves into change, based on their own values and interests. Attitudes are not only reflected in, but are actively shaped by, speech.

Motivational interviewing is now applied in a wide variety of settings. Depending on the context, the recipients might be referred to as associates, employees, leaders, clients, patients, students, supervisees or consumers. Similarly, the providers of motivational interviewing might be leaders, counselors, educators, therapists, coaches or practitioners.

Motivational interviewing involves a collaborative partnership, a respectful evoking of providers' and recipients' own motivation and wisdom and a radical acceptance recognizing that ultimately whether change happens is each person's own choice, an autonomy that cannot be taken away no matter how much one might wish to at times. This partnership aspect bespeaks a profound respect for the other, a core tenant of lean.

The most important aspect of using motivational interviewing is the mindset and heart-set of the person using it to assist another. There is a profound underlying "spirit" that must be present or it becomes a trick, a way to manipulate people into doing what they don't want to do. In short, it becomes just another version of the righting reflex, a battle of wits in which the goal is to outsmart your adversary.

The spirit of motivational interviewing has four key interrelated elements: partnership, acceptance, compassion and evocation. For each of these, there

is an experiential as well as a behavioral component. One can, for example, experience acceptance or compassion for others, but without behavioral expression, it does them no good.

Let's examine the four elements beginning with **partnership**. It is not something done by an expert to a passive recipient, a teacher to a pupil, a master to a disciple. In fact, it is not done "to" or "on" someone at all. Motivational interviewing is done "for" and "with" a person. It is an active collaboration between experts. A partnership is like dancing rather than wrestling.

Acceptance is a respect for the other as having worth in his or her own right. To accept a person in this sense does not mean that you necessarily approve of the person's

actions or acquiesce to the status quo. There is a fascinating paradox here. When people experience themselves as unacceptable, they are immobilized. Their ability to change is diminished or blocked. When, on the other hand, people experience being accepted as they are, they are free to change.

Demonstrating accurate empathy is an important part of acceptance. Accurate empathy is an active interest in and effort to understand the other's internal perspective, to see the world through his or her eyes; to sense the other's inner world of private personal meanings as if it were your own, but without ever losing the "as if" quality. Accurate empathy is the single best predictor of a higher success rate in change conversations.

To be **compassionate** is to actively promote the other's welfare, to give priority to the other's needs.

It is possible to practice the other three spirit elements in pursuit of self-interest.

The other three elements can be used to exploit, to pursue one's own advantage and gain undeserved trust and compliance (Cialdini, 2007). To work with a spirit of compassion is to have your heart in the right place so that the trust you engender will be deserved.

The last element is **evocation**. So much of what happens in conversations about change is based on a deficit model, that the person is lacking something that needs to be installed. The implicit message is, "I have what you need, and I'm going to give it to you," be it knowledge, insight, diagnosis, wisdom, reality, rationality or coping skills. Evaluation is so often focused on detecting deficits to be corrected by professional expertise. Once you have discovered the missing ingredient, what the associate lacks, then you will know what to install. This approach is reasonable in automobile repair or in treating infections, but it usually does not work well when personal change is the focus of the conversation.

When Stephen Rollnick and William Miller began teaching motivational interviewing in the 1980s, they tended to focus on technique, or how to do it. Over time, they found, however, that something important was missing. As they watched trainees practicing motivational interviewing, it was as though they had taught them the words but not the music. What had they failed to convey? They realized the most important ingredient: the spirit.

The primary purpose of motivational interviewing is to strengthen motivation for change — the person's own motivation. People learn about their own attitudes and beliefs in the same way that others learn them: by hearing themselves talk. ●

"Addiction to the Status Quo" is a registered trademark. Anderson is president of ResourceSyncing, Chamblin is a lean coach and Oslin is business director of Lean Leadership Coach Capital One. The article was reviewed by Michelle L. Drapkin, PhD of Motivational Enhancement Therapy.

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