

Adapt and Adjust to Manage Change and Uncertainty

Pat Heydlauff

Are you stuck with the “things will turn around” philosophy? Are you still trying to live your personal life the same way you did five years ago or operate your business by pushing products and programs out onto the marketplace in hopes someone will buy them?

According to Fred Crawford, CEO of AlixPartners, the global business-advisory firm, “Americans don’t expect their quality of life or spending levels to return to pre-recession levels until mid-2013. Obviously, despite some modest movement forward in the economy, individual Americans remain greatly concerned about their personal economic situations.” All of these signs indicate there will be no consumer driven economic recovery in the near future. He went on to say, “This could translate into a ‘new normal’ environment for businesses of all types that rely upon the American consumer: lower plateaus of consumer spending for years to come, maybe for the foreseeable future. Today, it looks like this new normal is already happening.”

While some things may turn around sooner or later, life and doing business in our country has changed dramatically in the last few years and might never be the same. The good news is you can get off that roller coaster ride. If you adapt your thinking and adjust your strategies you will be able to manage the change and uncertainty and will come out ahead of the curve with less stress and more prosperity.

Think “Different”

What worked before doesn’t work anymore. If you are a family of one, four or ten, you need to adapt your thinking, lifestyle and spending habits to accommodate the new economy. If you are a small one-shop business or a mega-corporation, you cannot depend on past business strategies, research information and marketing plans to bring you the same results.

Almost everything has changed - but the things that should not change are your core values and the principles for the way you live your life and do business. Those should stay consistent because they are the very foundation of whom you are and who your company is. It is this foundation that needs to stay balanced; it is your approach and your tactics you need to adapt and adjust to manage all of this change and uncertainty. Use the Feng Shui principle of maintaining balance to keep you on the right course.

- **Adopt the “not yet” attitude.** If you need to learn new skills to hold onto your current job or help an ill family member find out how and where to obtain the new tools you need

to advance during such turbulent times of change. Do not let your mind tell you “you can’t” or “you don’t know how.” You may not know how “yet” but you can learn.

- **Improve your mental outlook.** Read, read, read – everything inspirational in site and then find more. Also read biographies of successful people and people who have overcome great obstacles in their lives. Don’t just sit there, read and be encouraged.
- **Improve your personal environment.** Get rid of clutter, stacks of “stuff” and even clothing that no longer serves you well. When you remove these energy drainers you create a new flow of positive energy into your life as well as clean the mental cobwebs out.

Repetition, Repetition, Repetition

Repetition is the mother of all learning. The more you repeat an action or thought the more likely you are to remember them and they will become a habit. A habit can be good or bad depending upon whether it brings you positive or negative energy so be careful of what you repeat.

Where is your thinking today? Are you constantly repeating mentally, “I’m never going to make it through this economy,” “where do I turn for help and encouragement,” or “it’s no use, things just keep getting worse.” Such negative thoughts turn into the habit of “I might as well quite, it’s not even worth trying.” Or, are you repeating mentally, “I found a job and while not ideal I am bringing in money,” “my husband was in the hospital so ill but today his walking is 80% better,” or “I feel in control because I have new skills to meet the future head on.”

Repeat only positive thoughts and actions so you create a habit that will help you successfully navigate change and uncertainty.

Optimism by Design

It is times like these that you need to find out what you are good at and then do more of it – not less. Success grows optimism. Build on what you can control - you can control your life by sticking to your core values and living within your means. You can also control your thinking and attitude by not allowing the negativity of the 24 hour news cycle seep into your soul.

Focus on your strengths not your weaknesses. If you focus on your mistakes during such trying times, you will continue to attract more mistakes and your optimism will be drained leaving you empty with no reserves. For example, if you made a decision 20 years ago to get a divorce and now you realize you should have listened to your attorney’s suggestion about obtaining rights to your half of the retirement income, what do you do? Let go of the past in order to adapt and adjust so you can stay optimistic and create the future you want. Remember to use the Feng Shui principle of balance by standing firm on your foundational values to maintain or increase

optimism. The following technique will help you adapt and adjust the past so you can manage the uncertainty and grow your optimism.

- Using a yellow tablet and a pencil, create two columns on the paper heading the left one Old Ways and the right one Different.
- Write everything you can think of quickly in the left column that no longer works for you or you are questioning whether it is working.
- Set the tablet aside for at least an hour to a day. Then see if anything more needs to be added. Once your list is reasonably complete review each item individually in the left column.
- Determine if that item really is obsolete or if it can be adapted and adjusted to work differently and effectively in a changing uncertain world
- Eliminate permanently those that cannot be used and move the others to the right column
- Next, using a new sheet of paper as necessary, take each item in the right column one at a time and create **your new strategy** for dealing with the issue. You may come up with a number of answers giving you options and putting you in control which automatically makes you more optimistic.

Managing change and uncertainty can be much easier when you adapt your thinking and adjust to using new methods, strategies and tactics to manage change and uncertainty; all of which continue to support your core values leaving you on a solid balanced foundation.

© Pat Heydlauff, all rights reserved 2010

Pat Heydlauff, president of Energy Design, helps business leaders streamline and transform their companies, resulting in employee satisfaction, client retention and bottom line profitability. She energizes and enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of workplace environments using color, design and organization principles. Her new book, "Feng Shui: So Easy a Child Can Do It," provides change that leads to success and prosperity. Contact Pat for consulting and speaking: www.Energy-by-Design.com or call: 561-799-3443 – Feng Shui Music for meditation, relaxation and energizing <http://www.energy-by-design.com/HealingMusic.html> .