

Communicating with **NANCY STERN**

COMMUNICATION PLUS

Shift Happens

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Change the way you see things and the things you see will change.

Wayne Dwyer

Change is about the only thing we can count on. It strikes out of the blue, occurs as you move through the stages of life, or presents itself as you alter the way you do business. Your ability to embrace change is critical to your success and yet it is often feared, resisted, and sometimes even ignored.

What if we shifted the paradigm a bit? What is change, really? Isn't it just another way of doing or being that, more often than not, winds up to be better? What if we stop talking about it as if it were the enemy and simply call it what it really is—a solution to a problem. Problem-solving is challenging. So is change. Problem-solving is necessary. So is change. And, problem-solving

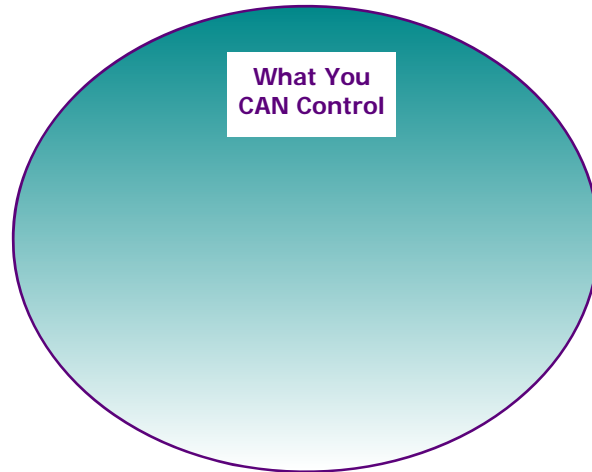


is what we do at work. Yet, the term problem-solving usually has a much more positive connotation.

Meg Wheatly who has written several books about organizational change says, "*We don't want disturbances, we don't want a different point of view, we don't want diversity, because we think if we keep it stable, we'll be safe. But a system that is stable is closest to death.*"

So, if you want to die on the vine, keep things just as they are. Or, if you want to grow, experience life and thrive at work and at home, look for changes you can make. Become more conscious of the thoughts you have when change is introduced. Change negative thoughts to positive thoughts. Don't fight the things you can't control. You'll just waste energy and stifle your growth. It's your choice!

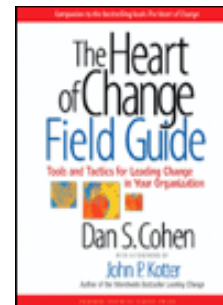
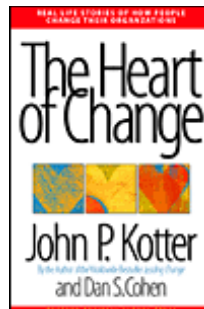
Imagine the sphere below represents your Universe. The white box illustrates what you can control. The rest is all the other stuff.



Focus your attention on what you CAN control. Regarding change, you can control your attitude and you can control your thoughts.

Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Reinhold Niebuhr



The Heart of Change is the follow-up to John Kotter's enormously popular book *Leading Change*, in which he outlines a framework for implementing change that sidesteps many of the pitfalls common to organizations looking to turn themselves around. The essence of Kotter's message is this: the reason so many change initiatives fail is that they rely too much on "data gathering, analysis, report writing, and presentations" instead of a more creative approach aimed at grabbing the "feelings that motivate useful action." In *The Heart of Change*, Kotter, with the help of Dan Cohen, a partner at Deloitte Consulting, shows how his eight-step approach has worked at over 100 organizations.

In just about every case, change happened because the players were led to "see" and "feel" the change. In one example, a sales representative underscores a sense of urgency to change a manufacturing process by showing a videotaped interview with an unhappy customer; in another, a purchasing manager makes his point to senior management about corporate waste by displaying on the company's boardroom table the 424 different kinds of gloves that the company had procured through different vendors at vastly different prices. Well written and loaded with real-life examples and practical advice, *The Heart of Change* towers over other change-management titles. Managers and employees at organizations both big and small will find much to draw from. Highly recommended. --Harry C. Edwards (from Amazon.com)

Email Your Questions to Nancy@nancystern.com

Q *We're trying to improve our engagement scores on our annual employee survey. Last year we spent a lot of time praising and rewarding but it didn't help much. What should we be doing?*

A I have heard from many clients over the years that just praising and rewarding employees is not enough. It is often received as *something they have to do to increase their engagement scores on the survey* rather than as something being delivered with feeling and meaning. A wise manager I once knew said it like this, "Praise means much more when people feel it's sincere—and sincerity can have a basis

in closer relationships."

My recommendation is to truly build relationships with your employees. This means take a genuine interest in them. Spend time getting to know them. Learn something about them. What do they like to do when they're not working? Do they have any kids? Pets? What are their hobbies?

I know it will take some time to commit to getting to know your people and I know time is often in short supply. That's not an excuse. I guarantee you it will be time well spent that will result in increased productivity. Have a positive attitude about communicating with them and you will see a change in your employees and your engagement scores.

*Be the change
you want to see
in the world.*

Mahatma Gandhi

*When change is needed
a change of attitude
is called for.*



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Whether you're experiencing change, managing people, connecting with customers and co-workers, or making presentations, getting your message across effectively is vital to your success.

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- Facing the News Media
- Shift Happens: Managing the Dynamics of Change
- Team Building for Creativity, Productivity and Peace of Mind

Why Nancy Stern?

Nancy Stern, MA is the president/owner and senior consultant of Communication Plus, a consulting firm in San Diego specializing in leadership and employee development. Since 1972, she has taught thousands the art and science of effective communication. She is a former columnist with the *San Diego Daily Transcript* and has taught at the University of California San Diego and San Diego State University Management Development Center.

She inspires managers, employees and individuals of all ages through the

simple, yet powerful, lesson that *how you say what you say, matters™*. Personal experiences form the foundation of her programs, creating presentations that are personal, professional and practical. The result: Improvement of the "whole person" and therefore, the "whole organization."

She is an EMMY award-winner, who produced and appeared in the national PBS television series *Communicating With Nancy Stern* (1990-95) and she is the coauthor of *101 Stupid Things Trainers Do To Sabotage Success*.

Nancy holds a Master of Arts degree in Communication Education from Michigan State University and is a member of the American Society for Training and Development and the National Speakers Association.



Nancy Stern