

Keeping Up With the Changes: A Workplace Must.

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In the Chinese language the word for crisis is made up of two symbols, one being the symbol for danger and the other being the symbol for opportunity (EPOTEC, 2002). Think of change in the workplace in the same manner. Although frightening, change almost always offers a new outlook with added opportunity.

The workplace has changed and will continue to change. We operate under new rules and conditions in this day and age and although not a comforting thought for many, it is the reality. Adversity, adjustment, and transition are now themes of the working force. With these changes comes the need for the ability to adapt.

- **Expand Your Vision.** Look at more than just your job. Look past your department and into the vision of the organization as a whole. Look at the BIG picture; think systemically. How does the work *you* do effect the entire agency?
- **Offer Suggestions.** Recognize that you have the power and ability to make yourself a very valuable asset to the agency. Make your voice heard. You may have suggestions that have not been thought of by upper level management or administrative staff. Search for ways that the organization can do its job more effectively.
- **Advance Your Skills.** Aim to continually improve upon your skills. With technology constantly changing, a staff member refusing to keep up will likely not make it in today's workforce. Take advantage of trainings whenever possible to add to your talents.
- **Be Open to Movement.** Some positions offer upward movement, others offer lateral. Look at what progress is realistic and possible for you. Moving sideways may be a promising opportunity.
- **Plan Change.** Whenever possible, schedule planned change within the office. For example, if the office is preparing for incoming staff, exiting staff, or relocation, consider holding off on other large changes until you've had a chance to get used to those other transitions.
- **Manage Procrastination.** Make yourself as useful and as valuable as possible to the organization. One-way of accomplishing this is to analyze why you procrastinate. If you are like most people, you put things off because you don't like the task at hand, don't know how to achieve the task, or because you feel indecisive about how to begin the task. Think about why you procrastinate and find ways to overcome this challenge.
- **Be Flexible.** In the current workplace jobs are changing as teams are being formed and dissipated. Therefore, your roles will change, as will job descriptions. Be fluid in your position, not static.

Adapted from Weiss (2002). "Managing in a Changing World"

References: *Coping with Change*: www.epotec.com/quickinfos/change

Weiss, W. (2002). *Managing in a Changing World*. *Supervision*, 63 (7). p. 17-20.