

Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch Changes: Communication is Key

by Julie Finnegan

Raise your hand if you feel like you're experiencing some change right now... How are you feeling about your new work-life balance? Those first few days I really felt out of the loop on a lot of things. I don't know about you, but to help me adjust to this new arrangement I am tuning in to Governor DeWine and Director Acton's 2pm press conferences every day.

At first, I was watching to hear the latest developments, closures, orders, etc. Being such an unprecedented time for the world I wanted to make sure I heard official news from the experts and not second or third hand. I wanted to know what was happening with my job, my husband's job, my dog's daycare, my friend's children's schooling; all of it. I know the official directives are mostly done, but I am still tuning in.

Discovering the 'Why'

When someone asked me why I still watch, it finally dawned on me- the Governor and Director are providing exceptional change management communication. Listening to them every day reassures me that Ohio is doing everything possible to save lives and reduce the burden on our health care system, but it also keeps me informed. If our leaders were not as forthcoming with the "why" they are making decisions I don't think I would watch the press conferences every day.

Their example of providing exceptional communication during this uncertain time made me reflect on how we all can do our part to manage this change and help others move through barriers, whether they be personal or professional.

Communication is Key

As a manager, it would be beneficial to your employees to increase communication with them. Don't think of this as a way to hound them about productivity, but more of a way to stay connected and share information about how work is going while working from home. At LeanOhio, we all have our tasks to work on, but we make sure to utilize the video conferencing feature in Microsoft Teams whenever it feels necessary. We are used to doing lots of little huddles throughout the workweek to talk through topics, issues, and ideas so maintaining that dynamic and personability in our relationships and work is important.



To do this, consider the needs of your team and coworkers. Think about what information they might be curious about (put yourself in their shoes), or better yet, ask them what questions they have and do your best to answer them. It is ok if you don't know; none of us know how long this work from home policy or shelter-in-place order will be effective but talk about that. Open the lines of communication as much as you are comfortable to help others feel reassured we are all in this together.

So You Are Getting Some Resistance

From a personal standpoint, I have found myself following the [ADKAR](#) model to figure out why my parents are resisting social distancing guidelines and the shelter-in-place order. To be clear, they aren't going out and having parties or doing anything unnecessary, but, for example, my mother and stepfather are still hanging out with friends and my dad invited me over for dinner this week. I find myself sharing any and all information with them to get them to understand why they shouldn't be seeing other people, but they know- Awareness is not their barrier. So now I am working on their Desire, the WIIFM, making them understand how these policies benefit them and their parents, their sick friends, their grandchildren. To be determined if this tactic works, but it is clear they are in need of more change management. Perhaps if they started watching the press conferences, they might finally get it...

If you want help coming up with ways to better manage this change for yourself, your coworkers, or family reach out to us! We are happy to help.