

## UNDERSTANDING CHANGE DYNAMICS

1. Change is not \_\_\_\_\_, it is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In today's world, there is no such thing as a church that isn't in need of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Without a \_\_\_\_\_, change won't happen.
4. Change always \_\_\_\_\_ something and comes with a \_\_\_\_\_. Acceptance of the change comes when we realize that paying the price now will worth it in the long run.
5. The key is to become crystal clear about what \_\_\_\_\_ be changed and what \_\_\_\_\_ be changed.
6. When making changes, promote what you are \_\_\_\_\_, not what you are \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Celebrate, respect, and build on the past, but don't \_\_\_\_\_ it.
8. Traditions/routines/rituals often continue even when their purpose has \_\_\_\_\_ and their effectiveness \_\_\_\_\_.
9. True transformation happens when the initial change becomes part of the established \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Never lose sight of our supreme example: \_\_\_\_\_

### Discussion Questions:

1. Which of these 10 items really struck you – either positively or negatively?
2. What do you believe can't be changed around here? What can be changed for the sake of promoting the Gospel and fulfilling our mission?

# UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTIONAL SIDE OF CHANGE

(Ideas gleaned from chapter 4 of *How to Change Your Church Without Killing It* by Alan Nelson and Gene Appel)

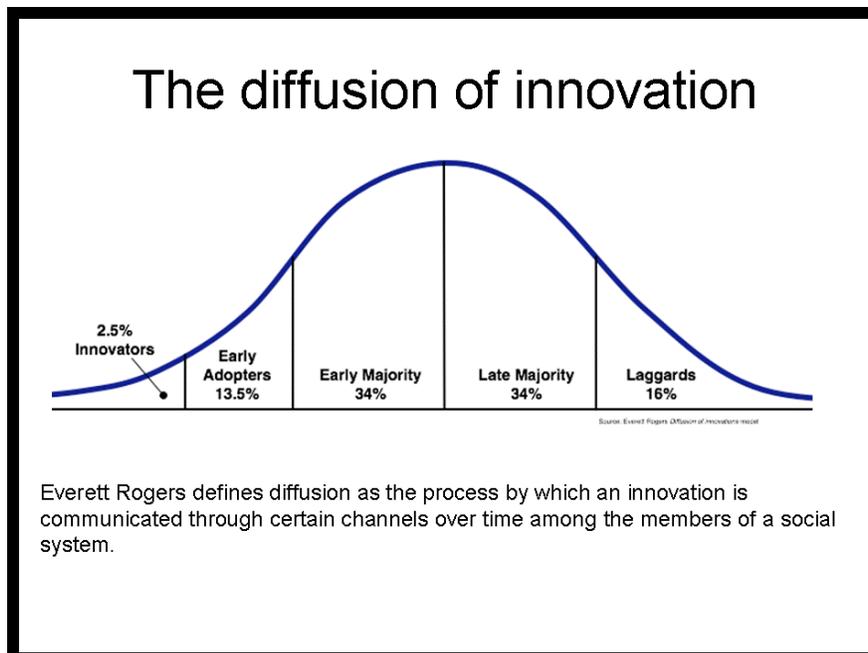
- ◆ It is important to remember that those of us who receive change well tend to be a minority; the majority of people resist change because of the way they are emotionally \_\_\_\_\_ not because they are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_.

## Seven Unchangeable Rules of Change

1. People do what they perceive is in their best interest, thinking as rationally as circumstances allow them to think.
2. People are not inherently anti-change. Most will, in fact, embrace initiatives provided the change has positive meaning for them.
3. People thrive under creative challenge but wilt under negative stress.
4. People are different. No single “elegant solution” will address the entire breadth of these differences.
5. People believe what they see. Actions do speak louder than words and a history of previous deception quadruples present suspicion.
6. The way to make effective long-term change is to first visualize what you want to accomplish and then inhabit this vision until it comes true.
7. Change is an act of the imagination. Until the imagination is engaged, no important change can occur. [The need to see and believe in what isn’t a reality just yet.]

## Changes and Our Internal Wiring:

People tend to respond to new ideas at different speeds. Each church body will contain a combination of 5 personality types.



### **1. Innovators/Creators (Explorers):**

- ◆ Are out of the box thinkers, artists, inventors, and prophets
- ◆ Have little loyalty to history or standard operating procedures
- ◆ Look at life differently from the way everyone else does
- ◆ Imitate God as creator seeking to keep all things new

Strengths: Getting the rest of us to see into the future  
Shaking us loose from a past that may no longer exist or be effective

Weaknesses: Lack of tolerance for those who don't readily see things their way  
Often alienate others by pushing risky, unproven ideas  
Often bail out too quickly on practices that have productively left in them, merely because they aren't new anymore.

### **2. Early Adopters/Progressives (Pioneers):**

- ◆ Not so much originators of new ideas as they are initiators of action based on new ideas
- ◆ Editors and refiners of the creators' ideas, putting "wheels" under them
- ◆ Tend to be better appreciated than creators because they are a bit more logical and "safe"

Strengths: Are open to new ideas and have the ability to weigh their risks and viability  
Tend to demonstrate their faith by trusting God for things that yet unproven  
Are the primary force which move organizations forward

Weaknesses: Can have a low tolerance for those who are unable to see the dream/vision, or who are unwilling to move into the promised land because of giant risks  
This intolerance can reduce communication, alienate people, and eventually work against the desired change.

### **3. Middle Adopters/Builders (Settlers):**

- ◆ Good-hearted, level-headed people who strive to keep an organization from tipping over from too many new ideas or risky ventures
- ◆ More resistant to new ideas than progressives, but are ready to "get on-board" once the progressives show them how a change will work and benefit the organization
- ◆ Will actively carry out new ideas, making them a realistic part of the present

Strengths: Being stable and loyal  
Avoid knee-jerk reactions and being swayed by passing fads  
Focus on settling the land after the pioneers have spied it out and secured the borders  
Turn changes/improvements into a productive, ongoing lifestyle within an organization

Weaknesses: Tend to gain their security and even their identity from their present setting  
Thus they can be resistant to change in untried ways that God is leading  
In attempting to figure out and apply new ideas, they can at times lose sight of their importance

#### **4. Late Adopters/Foundationals (Move-ins After the Town is Established):**

- ◆ Prefer to keep things as they are
- ◆ Are present-to-past oriented
- ◆ Cautious and conservative about change
- ◆ Help an organization avoid losing its past values and meaningful history

Strengths: Have a desire to honor and value one's heritage  
Very loyal and dependable

With the right attitudes will raise helpful cautionary flags

Weaknesses: More than any other group (because of their relative size) can thwart the move of the Holy Spirit in a particular place.

Get stuck in antiquated forms and practices that have lost their effectiveness

Apt to lose perspective concerning the value and necessity of change

#### **5. Laggards/Anchors (Last to Come, Last to Leave):**

- ◆ Place a high value on heritage, historical practices, rituals and routine
- ◆ Often perceived as stick-in-the-muds and immovable deadwood
- ◆ Push progressives and builders to synthesize and refine their new ideas so as not to "wreck" an organization or have it fly off in all directions
- ◆ Will stay in the old country and turn out the lights when the rest have gone away

Strengths: Loyalty

Love for the past that allows them to celebrate their heritage

Cause organizations to think through new processes and ideas

Weaknesses: Possess a significant fear of the future and fear of change

Can be close-minded, divisive and inflexible

Earnestly believe that they are right and their cause is righteous, when in

reality they have created idols out of past traditions and religious practices

#### **Additional Observations:**

1) Entrepreneurial, upstart churches and businesses tend to have higher percentages of Creative and Progressive types. More static and long-term churches and organizations tend to have more Foundational and Anchors. The exact percentages of these types within a church will determine how quickly that congregation adopts new strategies and forms.

2) For any significant new idea to become adopted, it must first be accepted by a critical mass of opinion leaders within the organization. (reference: *The Tipping Point* by Fred Marchant)

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Where do you see yourself on the bell curve? Is your position/placement on the curve different in different arenas of life? How so?
2. Why is it helpful to know your own 'wiring' when it comes to change? Why is it helpful to know other people's wiring?
3. What new thing may God be calling us to do that will be frowned upon today, but embraced tomorrow?