

The Elephant in the Room



Change is inevitable. It happens around us and to us every day, yet we avoid it like the plague.

When we decide major changes are needed we are reluctant to tell our staff because it is uncomfortable. The funny thing is that they already know that something is up. They see leadership going to meetings that nobody is talking about, they see folks in hushed discussions and they are forming their own picture of the impending doom and gloom. The decision makers dread suffering the wrath of Mary who has sat in a cubicle for many years surrounded by piles of paper by telling her she is losing her privacy or telling Bill that the company is moving to an open environment and he will no longer have an office or telling Jerry that he will not have an assigned space because he is only in 2 days a week.



The Elephant in the Room



Once the decision is made to change the structure of your office it must be communicated to the staff in a way that can help them understand it and hopefully embrace it. Not just once, but repeatedly. Use a variety of mediums; videos, town halls, catered events (food is a great enticer for participation) to discuss specific parts of the change process. Please DO NOT barrage your staff with a series of emails. They should be limited in number and used only to deliver information after it has already been shared or to

circulate a new process or guidelines.

If you want to develop ideas that will speak to your staff, form a Change Management committee. The size of the committee should be aligned with the size of your office and the significance of the change to be implemented. Leadership should not participate on the committee, why? Your presence tends to stifle creativity and free thinking. Your committee chair should have Change Management experience and be tasked with keeping leadership apprised of progress and recommended communications for approval. Invite your young leaders to be on the committee. Make it prestigious for them to participate. Give the committee recognition every chance you get. Most importantly, empower the committee and trust them to deliver excellent work product. Finally, reward them for contributing up and beyond what is normally expected.

Start the process early. Be thorough in your plan development. Include an implementation timeline. Seems daunting? Need help? You eat an elephant one bite at a time. We would be glad to help. Contact me at tvoltin@cosourceinc.com to set up a consultation.

Tracy M Voltin
President

