

How Change Impacts Your Leadership

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We know change is a constant in our lives and leadership. There's nothing you can do to stop change from coming your way. But do you know what change will do to your leadership? How will it impact your leadership?

This is the thought every leader needs to keep in the back of their mind as they're leading through change. You need to think about the implications of change. They are there. They are real. And they will throw you for a loop if you're not anticipating change.

How Change Impacts Your Leadership

There are three things change can do to your leadership. Change can positively impact your leadership. Change can negatively impact your leadership. Or change cannot impact your leadership at all.

You probably figured the first two were coming. Of course, change can negatively or positively impact your leadership. I don't think anyone will challenge those two assumptions. But that last one? The one about change not impacting your leadership at all. I don't know if I can buy that.

Let's take a look, though. Let's see how change impacts leaders and their organizations.

Change can positively impact leadership:

There's a lot of change happening in the world around us. We're experiencing it in our daily lives along with our business lives. You've probably seen some of the positive impact change has on leadership already. Change can bring positive impact by:

- **Increasing productivity:** New technology and ways of doing things can definitely improve your ability to lead and get things done. Be open to change that brings about an increase in productivity.
- **Improving communication:** Technology has advanced to the point where you can *always* reach someone. We bring our phones with us everywhere. Email can be sent and received at any time. Communication has changed and positively impacted leadership by keeping us connected.
- **Giving us new places to work:** Once more, technology is the factor behind this change. You are no longer tethered to your desk. You can work from virtually anywhere by connecting to a VPN or remote desktop session.
- **Finding better employees:** Sometimes, team members don't work out. They have to be let go. This is a change. This change can be positive because you can bring in someone who is a better fit or harder worker.

- **Making a better fit:** You or a team member might not be the best fit for the position you or they are currently in. By making a change in your position, you can have a positive impact on leadership and the organization.

Change can negatively impact leadership:

While there are plenty of ways change can positively impact leadership, there are also ways change can negatively impact leadership. Change can negatively impact leadership by:

- **Making you always available:** One positive change in leadership is the ability to always be connected. This has a dark side as well. Being connected allows people to reach you at all hours of the day. This can drain a leader and make him less effective. Beware of being always on.
- **Bringing in a bad team member:** There are bad, good, and great team members. Bringing on a bad team member is a change that will negatively impact leadership. You will have to take time away from your important tasks and deal with the issues a bad team member cause.
- **Losing a great team member:** Change happens. Team members come and go. But what happens when you lose a great team member? You and your team suffer. Losing a great team member will negatively impact your leadership.
- **Increased costs:** Yikes! This is a change no leader likes. Increased costs mean decreased profits. Decreased profits mean less money to go around. Yup, gotta say this is a negative impact.

Change can have a neutral impact on leadership:

This one is probably the hardest to get your mind around. How can change not impact my leadership? It's like everything else in life, there are neutral changes that don't make much of a difference.

Change can have a neutral impact on leadership by:

- **Neutralizing cost increases:** Cost increases are bad for business. They hurt the bottom line. But what if a cost increase encouraged you to look at other aspects of your business? While looking, you discovered another way to decrease costs and neutralize the cost increase? It's no longer a negative. It's not necessarily a positive. But it is something we could look at as a neutral change.
- **Keeping things, the same:** Sometimes, a change keeps things the same way they were. Bring in a new team member and they perform the same way as the previous employee? It's a neutral change. This isn't to say the change is a welcome one. However, it doesn't bring a positive or negative change.

These are a couple of ways change can impact your leadership. Remember, there are positive, negative, and neutral changes you will battle in leadership. Be ready to face change when it comes for you.