

The President's Message

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“Embrace Change”

We used to have a saying in the Navy, *“You can do anything you want to a sailor except change his routine.”* So to me that really meant don't make any changes. The key thing is we all dislike change. We are comfortable doing things the way we have always done them and please don't make me learn new things!

While that is how we feel, the bottom line is if we want to be of the greatest value to our organizations then we need to be the ones who are the “early adapters” or also referred to as the “agents of change”. When management comes to you and suggests that you need to undertake new technologies, software applications, philosophies, business approaches and just basically new ideas, we need to be the people they can count on to tackle those things. It's not easy and quite honestly we would rather not do that. But in these difficult times if you want to be the person that they always keep on the payroll, then be the person who masters all the new ideas.

Now in the process of being the “new idea person” make sure that you get down to the core of these new principles. Really dig into the substance of this new undertaking. Don't try to just get by with just a cursory understanding. Make sure you can explain why this new software is better / preferable to what we have been using. Or why these new principles are important to the businesses market position. Or even why this new technique will help make the company better.

I can remember several years ago a TV program I was watching was talking to several so called “computer experts” concerning computing in general. One segment I will never forget. They asked each one in turn, *“How does a computer think?”* Not one of them could answer the question. They all sat there with this far away look in their eyes as if they could only wonder what the answer to such a question was. I nearly laughed myself silly as I watched this. Why? Because way back when I was in the Navy one of the schools I attended was maintenance of the “old” UNIVAC 1219 computer. In 12 weeks we went through every single gate for every machine instruction (essentially every circuit in the computer). What I learned was that computers don't think. They simply process instructions for whatever commands the programmer told it to execute. The computer is not capable of thought, only processing it's predetermined program sequence. Unless computers develop the ability to write, compile, de-bug and execute its very own code, then it's safe to say that it can't think! I realize within the various layers of firmware, operating systems and applications it sometimes seems like the computers think, but that is only an illusion. They don't think.

Now you would of thought that the so called experts would have know that. Apparently that was not the case. That is why, if we undertake to be the person that tackles the “new stuff” that we make sure we know what we are talking about, because someone will find us out, and you don’t want that to happen.

That may mean buying a book on the subject or it means getting a hold of real knowledge experts and asking the right questions. You will probably have to do your homework, make yourself a set of notes / study guide or use Google to look-up questions that you don’t have the answers to.

But it also means being an active member of a professional organization such as APICS. Where you can gain insight to new ideas and new concepts. It also means a chance to make contact with other people who are struggling with the same things (i.e. take advantage of networking at monthly meetings). Also, we highly recommend you log-on to web sights like “Linkedin”, and while you are at, join our Linkedin group “APICS – Tucson Chapter” and start a discussion concerning your latest objective. Your APICS experts are standing by to give you a hand.