

Getting Real for a Change

Change and change management top many a trainer's "hot topics" list. Here are three new products—one activity pack and two videos—that address the reality of change. The reviews are co-authored by Lynn Monaco, director of custom training for PDG, Framingham, Massachusetts; and Bill Ellet, editor of *Training Media Review*.

Manual for Change



Managing People Through Change, by Arthur Proud, 1999, 180 pages, Fenman; 800.599.9876, www.fenman.com. Purchase US\$199. Other material: none.

The Fenman change-management activity pack consists of 19 activities that an instructor can conduct with an individual or a group. The collection is thorough, offering everything needed to lead the activities. Each activity includes the following:

- introduction
- purpose
- application (who this works for and in what situations)
- what happens during the activity
- time required
- materials and resources needed
- preparation required
- step-by-step process, including questions, statements, and discussion points.

For example, one of the activities is recommended for people in a change-management program because it helps with a common problem: holding onto your self-esteem during major workplace change. The activity is done in small groups. Participants discuss a major change—such as a job change, birth, marriage, or death—and the feelings they had about it initially, how those feelings changed over time, and the lasting effects. The package provides numerous discussion and debriefing points to make this a meaningful exercise.

This text isn't something you read cover to cover unless you're searching for a specific exercise. However, you can locate an appropriate activity easily by reading the introductions

RATINGS KEY

★★★★	Outstanding
★★★1/2	Very good
★★★	Good
★★★1/2	Above average
★★★	Average
★★1/2	Below average
★	Poor

and purpose statements.

Managing People Through Change's introduction covers the types of activities in the book, how they can be used, why the book was written, how to use the collection as a resource, and how to string several activities together to create a two-day change management course. There's also a useful appendix.

Managing People Through Change

N/A	Holds reader interest
★★★1/2	Instructional value
N/A	Self-study value
N/A	Diversity
★★★★	Value for the money
★★★1/2	Overall rating

Just Get Out of the Way!



The New Pioneers *video*, 1999, 30 minutes, *corVision Media*; 800.537.3130, www.corvision.com. Purchase US\$695. Other material: leader guide (not furnished for review).

Watch the video *The New Pioneers* and you may wonder when American business is going to get it.

"It" is the idea that the people who do the work are generally the people best equipped to make it more efficient and more satisfying for themselves and customers. Yet, top-down management is

still prevalent, despite years of widely broadcast messages about the importance of empowering all members of an organization.

When a top-down organization needs to change, it follows a familiar path: The people at the top do it. They evaluate the need for change at the top, make the decisions, and mandate it by exhortation and memo. If things don't work out, it's the fault of the rank and file. Failure—or, at most, partial success—is the most likely outcome because people at the top are often cut off from the daily work over which they preside. They may understand the market need for change better than anyone in the organization, but they aren't likely to know how the change is best executed. That requires collaboration with people who do.

This message has been out there for 10 years. You must infer from this video and the book of the same title on which it's based that it's taking American business a long time to accept it. Managers and supervisors still believe that their primary job is to tell people what to do. They don't want workers coming up to them with any bright ideas about changing processes or reconfiguring the workspace because that's going to make them look bad. After all, if they're the boss, why didn't they think of it first? That lose-lose approach is the target of this video.

The video is built around documentary interviews with workers and managers in three companies—Monarch Marking Systems, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services, and Rowe Furniture—that have allowed workers free rein to change their work and workplaces. The workers at DaimlerChrysler and Rowe Furniture are forthright about the "old days." They were embedded in rigid bureaucracies that didn't like boat rockers. People did their jobs and kept their heads down and their ideas to themselves.

The mostly women team members at Monarch are honest about the messiness of change. Seven women who assemble handheld bar coders were formed into a team and given a 30-day deadline to plan and present work-process improvements to management. As one member puts it, "We were the worst team ever. We all tried to quit."

No one did, though, and the team

eventually came up with a plan, since put into place, that has improved productivity greatly—and improved working conditions for the team. The women didn't have executive-suite grammar, but they did have what counts: excellent ideas, honesty, and integrity.

Tom Petzinger Jr. is the resident content expert and author of the book *The New Pioneers*. His appearances are frequent enough to frame the material and few enough to keep the momentum going. He reminds us several times that change efforts can't be a setup for layoffs. For example, the featured companies have an ironclad rule that if a worker improves him- or herself out of a job, he or she is guaranteed another one.

A 20-page leader guide ships with the video. Because it wasn't furnished to us for review, we can't judge its quality.

The New Pioneers

★★★1/2	Holds viewer interest
★★★1/2	Acting/presenting
★★★★	Diversity
★★★★	Production quality
★★★★1/2	Value of content
★★★★	Instructional value
★★★★	Value for the money
★★★★★	Documentation
★★★★	Overall rating

Say Cheese



Who Moved My Cheese? video, 1999, 13 minutes, DoubleTake Productions. Review copy provided by VideoLearning Systems;

800.622.3610, www.videolrn.com. Purchase US\$495, rent \$125. Other material: discussion guide (not furnished for review).

Videos based on bestselling books can be tough to pull off. *The New Pioneers* succeeds in part because the case studies in the book make good subjects for documentary video. But what if the subject on which the video is based is a semi-corny (we're trying hard not to use

cheesy) allegory involving two mice named Sniff and Scurry and two "little people" named Hem and Haw? And when the book is described with adjectives such as *inspiring* and *motivational*, we automatically put up our guard, if only because we've never considered mice to be inspirational.

We haven't read the book, but we can report that the video works. At 13 minutes, it's too brief to allow its cuteness to wear thin. The producer has made sure that the animation is fun but low key. The characters and story are offered matter-of-factly, with a dryness that lets us know that we're all in on the joke. Yes, DoubleTake could just state the key points baldly and amplify them, but it's more fun to run around them and poke fun at ourselves. It's a story in which the mice outsmart the people.

What are the video's key points? Change happens: The cheese keeps getting moved, and there's nothing we can do about it. So, anticipate change and be prepared to enjoy it. Be ready to change quickly. When we move beyond fear of change, we feel free. The video prepares us for the certainty of change.

There's not much to quarrel with, partly because there's not enough content to start a quarrel. The video is a fun repackaging of familiar ideas about change. The one caveat is that the depiction is inevitable and inexorable. In other words, if the cheese is being moved, you move with it. What about a principled resistance to change? Some change is disastrously misguided and should be resisted. That points toward a lack of depth and nuance in the video.

Who Moved My Cheese?

★★★★1/2	Holds viewer interest
N/A	Acting/presenting
★1/2	Diversity
★★★★	Production quality
★★★★1/2	Value of content
★★★★	Instructional value
★★★★	Value for the money
★★★★★	Documentation
★★★★	Overall rating

Wrap-Up

For \$199, the Fenman collection of training activities is worth the price. We would recommend it for any organization going through major change—if it's willing to commit to live, face-to-face group learning. The program needs facilitators, but the support furnished is sufficient for managers and team leaders or members to conduct the activities if they're willing to prepare.

The New Pioneers makes an important point about change and the power of personal responsibility: If you (management) get out of the way, workers will take responsibility for their work and find ways to improve it. The program is careful to use case studies that include manufacturing and services and office and factory work. Can you change authoritarian management with a video? No, something else has to trigger the desire to change. But this program can be a good tool to abet and direct that change.

The effectiveness of *Who Moved My Cheese?* will depend on several *ifs*. This program will work

- if your audience will sit still for an animated short feature
- if a simple message is appropriate
- if you're prepared to explore implications with learners.

The exception to the last *if* is showing the tape and leaving it at that, simply to get people thinking about their attitudes and responses to change. We don't recommend that approach, but it's not implausible. The tape has a simple point of view about coping with change in a change-addicted environment. It's also concise. We're ambivalent about the content because it's analogous to a self-help book, but we're trying hard not to be curmudgeons.

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