



Workshop: STRATEGIC THINKING AT THE SPEED OF CHANGE



By Donna Belbin, AMM Events Coordinator

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“If you’re going to change something, you are going to need some strategy.”

A strategy for change can be simply defined as a plan, however there is so much more involved that shapes the outcome. Close to 40 municipal officials recognized this in the very involved AMM Education workshop *Strategic Thinking at the Speed of Change*.

Steve Pilote, Senior Consultant with People First HR Services, led the workshop. Steve plays a lead role in all leadership and supervisory development and change management assignments for People First. Previously, Steve served as a member of the Winnipeg Police Service, where he rose to the rank of Inspector. In this role

Steve was responsible for overseeing and leading change initiatives within a department of some 1,650 uniformed and civilian members.

After some initial group discussion of the challenges that municipalities face, Steve led the participants through the process of strategy and change.

It’s not that people don’t like change; people don’t like to be changed and they don’t like decisions to be made about them, without them. When initiating change, consider these three things:

1. Communicate - get your colleagues and employees on board by building awareness.
2. Consult and create some shared thinking - everyone’s input counts!
3. Enable these same people with the necessary resources to carry through the change.

The group then took some time for a dynamic and interactive study of personality styles. The different ways people think, decide, manage stress, deal with conflict and communicate are a direct link to the way they respond, or do not respond, to change. Each of the following personality types is a fundamental component to a successful change strategy:

- A **ponderer** needs time to think through issues, wants to know logic behind decision, cares about the quality of work and ensures all details are in place.
- A **commander** is the ‘take-charge’ individual who likes direct and short answers to their questions. They like challenge and are very goal orientated.
- An **elaborator** enjoys the



Richard Jones and Howard Corbett of Work Systems Associates Canada with Steve Pilote, People First HR Services.

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opportunity to initiate new goals and tends to be very creative. This person likes variety and wants to make things happen.


- A **harmonizer** typically supports both sides in a dispute and is most confident when he has authoritative backup for taking action.

“Strategy comes from everywhere in your organization.”

If you would like an idea to be implemented, be sure you have clarity in your vision if you want everyone involved. Effectively communicate your vision by keeping the message simple and direct, use metaphors and examples, repeat your vision often, walk the talk so your leadership is consistent, and finally, ensure everyone has the opportunity to ask questions.

A failed project or unsuccessful change may be explained by:

- the leaders not being equipped with the tools they needed to make the changes;
- a sense of urgency not being created or sustained;
- leaders not maintaining an example or showing necessity for the change; or
- progress not being monitored or not correlating to the initial plan or communications not being sustained.

The bottom line – none of us can escape change. We can choose to lead, follow or resist. While choosing to lead may prove higher risks, the potential reward is greater. 

*Thank you to the
AMM members
who have
participated in
the Education
Workshops over
the past year!*



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