



SWITCH *Principles*

Arts and Culture Puget Sound

© 2010 Based on *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

Direct *the Rider*

Follow the Bright Spots.

Change is often difficult because you don't know what to change to. The Rider needs direction to avoid getting bogged down on *True But Useless* analysis. Jerry Sternin gave direction to the Rider and solved problems of malnutrition in poor Vietnamese villages by looking at bright spot kids who ate brine shrimp and sweet potato greens.

Script the Critical Moves.

People may look like they're "resisting change" when they actually have no clue how to change. To overcome decision paralysis by the Rider, one group proposed that people buy 1% milk. A principal needed to explain what "being a presence on campus" meant for how her assistant principal should act at the Friday night football game.

Point to the Destination.

Change is easier when you know where you're headed. A Teach for America teacher told first graders they could be third graders by the end of the year.

Motivate *the Elephant*

Find the Feeling.

You can't analyze your way into change. The Rider is outmatched by the Elephant, so it's best to help the Elephant feel excited about the change. The Glove Shrine helped motivate a large business to tackle its logistics problems.

Shrink the Change.

People are easily demoralized by big changes, so figure out some way to give the Elephant a feeling that it is making good progress. The 5-minute room rescue takes the dread out of housecleaning and shrinking the change helped a small university make necessary cuts to its budget.

Grow Your People.

Is there an identity you can appeal to that makes people feel strong and competent for the task? Wal-Mart employees didn't respond to appeals to "sustainability" but did respond to "waste not." Don't forget to inoculate people against failure. Breakthroughs require people to smash into walls. IDEO lets people know that every innovation passes through the Valley of Insight.

Shape *the Path*

Tweak the Environment.

The Fundamental Attribution Error leads us to blame *people* when we could be changing behavior by smoothing the path. In the food drive study, the jerks in the dorm who had a map were three times more likely to donate than a saint without one.

Build Habits.

Eating two cups of soup a day helps dieters minimize self-control battles. Having a 5-point "central line" checklist helped doctors execute flawlessly what they already know to do, it saved millions of dollars and 1500 lives.

Rally the Herd.

People follow the lead of others, particularly at times of change when situations are new or ambiguous. Jerry Sternin in Vietnam organized practice opportunities to allow people to see others eating the right foods. Hotel towel reuse went up dramatically when people were told that others like them were already recycling.