Change will come to the workplace. Be ready to change with it.

You know the old saying: Change is the only constant. In other words, even in the most stable of situations, change is going to happen. That's a given. What's not a given is a person's ability to deal with and adapt to that change.

This is particularly troublesome when you're talking about workplaces and even entire industries. When the marketplace changes, successful companies and the individuals within them, need to be ready, willing, and able to change with it.

If you think you're immune to this type of change, ask yourself the last time you saw an LP record, a cassette tape player, or even a Walkman. How about a mimeograph machine, a bottle of White-Out or even a typewriter? How about a gas station attendant? Technology is changing so fast, it has a way of obsolescing businesses in the blink of an eye.

But there are tactics companies and employees can use to guard against going the way of the Beta video player—and this goes for individual employees and companies as a whole.

For companies:

• **Survey your employees.** I know I harp on this a lot, but surveying your employees once (or more) each year is an invaluable tool for a whole host of reasons because you can customize the questions in any way you'd like. When you're surveying your employees about possible changes in your marketplace or industry, ask them questions that will, in effect, make them your eyes and ears. What is their perception of your competition? Do they believe you're doing everything to keep up with competitors? Can your company improve its processes and procedures to better keep pace with the times?

• **Hire a “marketwatcher.”** Assign one person in the company or in each department to keep themselves totally immersed in and abreast of what's going on in your marketplace. This person or people should get all pertinent industry journals, newsletters, and magazines, as well as a broad range of other publications that might keep them informed of industry trends and tactics.

• **Review your hiring practices in general.** It might be worth your while to think about not hiring for experience, but aptitude. Yes, you need experienced people on the job, but you also need people who think differently. Experienced veterans at any job tend to think inside the box rather than outside of it. Instead of taking the seasoned salesperson, why not consider hiring someone with a demonstrated knack for sales (test for this before hiring, of course) and an open mind filled with new ideas? They'll bring a freshness to your company too.

• **Embrace technology.** I shake my head when I hear people proudly proclaiming they don't have a cell
Employees and the companies that employee them need to stay on the cutting edge of technology. If you don’t, there will be someone who figures out how to use New Technology X to put you out of business. Just the basics: If your company needs a robust website. Make someone on staff responsible for creating a fabulous online experience for your customers, before a competitor does it for you.

For employees:

• **Hone your skills constantly.** Make sure you are a master of the latest and greatest technologies available for your profession. Make yourself the one everyone goes to for help and advice.

• **Attend conferences.** Managers should send employees to at least one industry conference per year. There’s no better way to see the latest trends and tactics that are making money for your competitors.

• **Read.** Make sure you are subscribed to email newsletters, magazines, and other publications aimed at your profession.

In summary, change is coming. Savvy companies and businesses know how to change with it.