

progressing business

Change, it's easy isn't it?

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Change, it's easy isn't it?

IF ONLY IT WERE THAT EASY...

PART TWO

Narelle Stratford

Psychologist and Master Practitioner NLP, Timeline and Hypnosis



*In the last article, we finished at the point of realising that when we don't know what we don't know, we are at the stage of **Unconscious Incompetence**. So once that has been realised and experienced, we move to **Conscious Incompetence**.*

This is where the fun starts because it can be very frustrating to know you are doing something wrong, and to continue to do it that way, one or several or dozens of times more even though you catch yourself too late to do anything about it.

LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE

I moved into a unit a year and a half ago, and the first night that I got out of bed to go to the kitchen, in the dark, I came from the bedroom round the corner to the dining room and put my hand on the wall where I figured the light switch would be.

Huh? Not there...

So I swung my hand to the other side of the doorway and again, not there...

What was going on, who moved the light switch?

No-one of course, it was on the opposite wall between said dining area and the kitchen.

A year and a half I have lived here and guess what, I still do it! And I know I'm doing it wrong as soon as I throw my hand up! Now, I'm not trying to learn a new skill, I just want to remember where the switch is but guess how I feel each time I do it? I've actually learnt now to stop beating myself up and laugh at myself, which is a definite improvement.

Now, take a look at a workplace where a process has always been done a certain way, and it's going to be changed.

People do become entrenched in their habits because those habits made life easier for them, as a rule of thumb. So, when change is being implemented and it is still new, there may be feelings of frustration (because you can't remember to do it), annoyance, resentment (why do we have to change this, it was perfectly okay before) and sometimes

sabotage or obstructionism so that there is a drive to return to the way things were in the good old days.

In the previous article, you read about a sportsperson who is working to change their swing of a racquet or golf club. It feels odd, strange, uncomfortable and sometimes demoralising when you repeatedly miss because now you know what you need to do differently as you swing, even though it's not happening yet. You are conscious of your incompetence.

This stage is rather like the messy soup when everything is a fluid liquid culture, which occurs when a caterpillar is in the metamorphosis stage inside the chrysalid and hasn't yet become a butterfly.

But the caterpillar inside does have a plan to follow because it has what are called 'imaginal disks' inside that messy soup which are the blueprint for each part that will become a butterfly so it just follows the grand vision.

Of course, the caterpillar only has itself to worry about. It doesn't have to ensure communication flows through a team of caterpillars, which some might say is easier for the caterpillar than us humans.

In this stage of conscious incompetence, where you find out that you know what you are doing wrong almost as soon as you do it, it is important to remind all the players in the project that mistakes may occur no matter how much you have worked to prevent them, to be forgiving of each other, to maintain a sense of humour and to keep being excited by the plan, the vision, the blueprint of the end result.

If a team member is being obstructionist or a saboteur, take that person aside and help him or her to process their feelings about the changes being made. Make sure that they understand all of the steps involved, and the reasons behind the change. Help him or her to get excited about what is coming up so that they step out of the land of old beliefs and take a small step towards the new vision. They may have to go back a pace or two in order to review, or to feel safe, or to just take a little bit of time out.

Everyone has a different pace that they work at, and adapt to change at, so while some members of the team can charge ahead, others may need to move more slowly. The challenge with this is that the slower members will usually be the ones

to feel that they are letting others down. In fact, the faster members may actually miss things because they are not taking time to pause and reflect. All team members need to be reminded to stay steady and together for the good of the team, and be praised for their actions and even their conscious incompetence because they are getting there.

This will allow you to move to the next stage of Conscious Competence. More on that, next time.

Narelle Stratford is a Psychologist and director of Live Life 2 The Max! www.livelifelife2themax.com.au

More information request *Change2*
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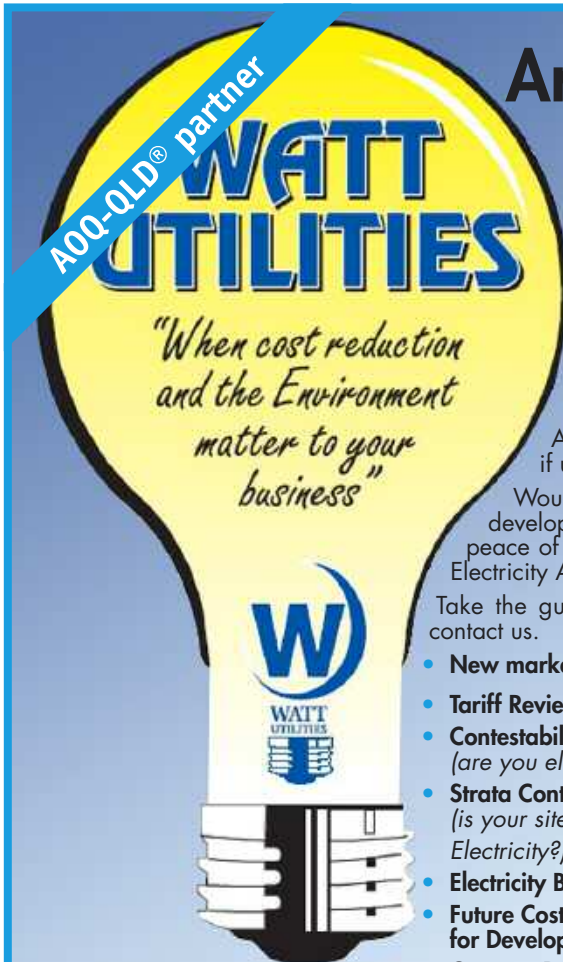
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- Encourage development and implementation of business continuity plans

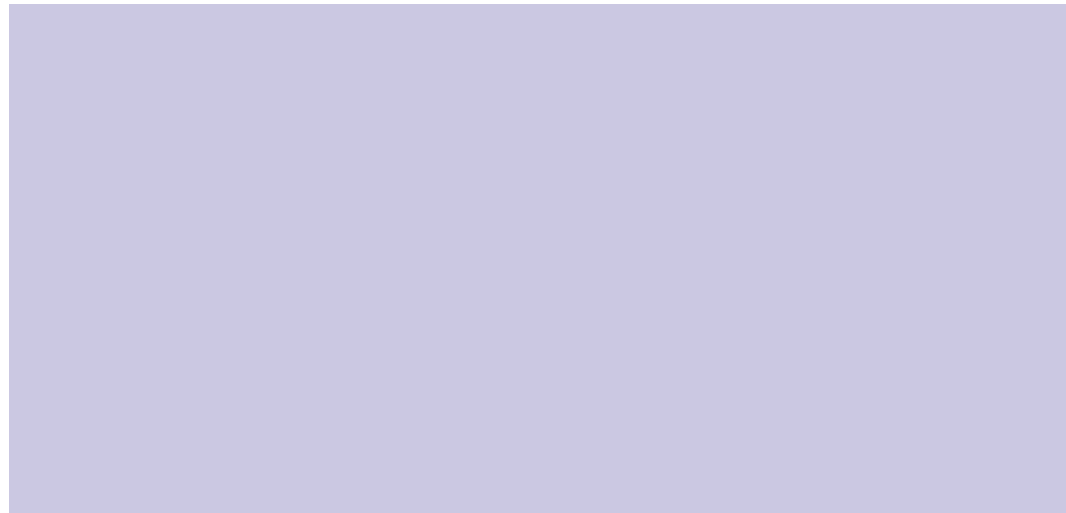
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