

Are you ready for change?

Did you have a good, bad or indifferent 2009? If you want to make 2010 any different, you will have to introduce change...

If change is on your mind for 2010, you might want to conduct a "change audit" by looking at what worked for you in 2009 and what didn't. What changes did you make as a result? And can you take these changes into 2010?

Start your "change audit" by analysing your thinking and mindset. Has your attitude towards challenges faced in 2009 improved or become worse? What influences your attitude? Are your thoughts predominantly positive or negative? If you're familiar with *The Secret*, you'll have read that people have 60 000 thoughts a day on average. If yours are mostly negative, you're carrying a lot of baggage around with you. People seem to focus on the negatives rather than the positives. You need only glance at our newspapers to see that they run

predominantly negative stories, but people still read them. I haven't read or bought a newspaper for eight years.

Now, write down what you did in 2009 to change yourself. Did you go on a training course and implement some changes as a result? Did you train yourself by reading about or researching topics of interest? Doing the same things every day won't spark new thinking or a change in mindset. To start seeing things differently, you need to change your routine, your outlook...

Author Herbert N Casson said it best: "Learn something new every day, cut free from routine, shape your decisions quickly, acquire skill and technique, value character above all."

As a business owner, have you adapted to the current business environment? Did you communicate any changes to your team? People resist change; mainly because it scares them. Look at your fears. Is there really something to be scared of, or is your imagination simply working overtime?

Now get a handle on your working style. You may be a combination of more than one of the types below:

- **Analytical working style**

These people focus on facts more than feelings. They evaluate situations objectively and gather lots of data before making decisions. They prefer an organised environment where they know what is expected of them. Words to describe them include serious, organised, logical and reserved.

"Is there really something to be scared of, or is your imagination simply working overtime?"

- **Driver working style**

These people know where they want to go and how they are going to get there. They are good at managing tasks and are result-oriented. Drivers like competition (especially when they win). Words that describe them include decisive, independent, efficient, intense, deliberate and achieving.

- **Amiable working style**

These people are responsive and friendly, but not necessarily forceful or direct. Words that describe them include co-operative, friendly, supportive, patient and relaxed.

- **Expressive working style**

These people are outgoing and persuasive. They are enthusiastic, friendly and prefer to work with other people. Expressives thrive when they're in the spotlight. Words that describe this working style include outgoing, enthusiastic, persuasive, humorous, gregarious and lively.

Can you identify your working style? You will be able to implement change more easily if you understand yours and that of the people around you.

Now is the time to commit to paper your focus for 2010, as well as what areas you want to change and how you are going to do it. Enjoy your change process and may the best of 2009 be the worst of 2010 for you. **YB**

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