

# Debbie Nicol: Embrace change and manage it wisely

Debbie Nicol

July 6, 2014 Updated: July 9, 2014 12:58 PM



## Related

Take a harmonious approach to the integration of workplace change

The role of managers when change needs incorporating

Get the team on board when company changes occur

Alignment a vital element in corporate change

Topics: [Management](#)

Change can confound, intimidate and downright scare people at all levels of an organisation. When a manager finds himself at the helm of corporate upheaval, a warning bell should go off, a reminder that any action taken must simplify rather than burden the process. While it is essential to apply structured processes, complexity will only increase resistance levels. These tips have all brought tangible benefit to an often-intangible process:

### • Planning is the key to success

Failing to prepare is preparing to fail would be a great motto for any major turnaround project. Nothing should be hit and miss but rather guided by an executable strategic plan with milestones along the way. Ensure this planning is not done in isolation of your environment, allowing that plan to be part of an enterprise-wide approach. Investing time in this vital phase allows a strong foundation to exist for the remainder of the project. It will also illustrate a priority to real results with a 'no compromise' approach, thereby endorsing the necessity of adequate resources such as time, budget and dedicated assistance. This may seem like common sense, yet why then is it not always common practice? Without proper planning, there's often a flurry of unexpected activity. Due to the nature of this, many people react and go with the flow to survive, yet unfortunately when time moves on, resistance will emerge, eradicating opportunity for real results.

### • Remember to share the responsibility

Whether you are an operations manager or part of the change team heading the project, share the load and responsibility. Collaboration is vital for success with change, often fostering a community aspect in a non-communal situation. Specific roles must exist across all levels of the organisation with each dependent on another. This will forge a cause and effect relationship, with all parties aware of the essential contribution they make, and the consequences of not fulfilling their role.

### • Be clear on current and future state

It is all well and good to announce a restructure is pending because of a merger, or a new sales process will involve the team gaining revenue, yet whoever is leading the initiative must have clarity in their mind's eye. What does the current picture of a sales person working with the existing sales process look like? What challenges does that bring and what opportunities is it losing? See it, feel it and ensure you can describe it, as that's what people will relate to – it will provide reason for them to escape the comfort zone and dare to move to the new or future state. Change should represent hope for a better future, meaning one that is quicker, faster, more efficient, easier. Know, understand and describe the future in vivid and visual terms. Let the people's excitement build as they feel the way this new future will make their lives better.

### • Invest time in sending messages

While any activity must be linked to the level of risk the change poses, communication is one activity that never disappears from the list. There will be so much information to share at specific times, by specific people, in specific ways. The surest way to encourage the rumour mill is not to communicate. Communicate the same message in several formats so consistency will reinforce its importance. Provide ambassadors and first adopters a chance to be part of the communication. Design your messages with the needs of those who will enact the change in mind.

### • Ensure you, the change leader, has an impartial person to connect with on a personal level

This person will assist you in many ways. While strategies and action plans will support you, there will be times when you will feel lost, drained, overwhelmed and simply needing time out. This person will be able to be the shoulder you need to lean on, the eyes you need to see through a different lens. Transformation projects can become a quagmire of resistance and stress. By linking up with this impartial person, you will be able to breathe fresh air, reinvigorating yourself and clearing the mind. In the middle of these initiatives, you must identify progress and when remaining in the centre of the change, this cannot easily be identified. Remember, the team relies on you, and for that they need a strong and active leader showing strength and resilience.

Change is a corporate leader's function. Encourage confidence in a future with hope. By keeping the approach easy, regular and consistent while also building a common language, you'll not only serve yourself, but also those who are the core of your results.

*Debbie Nicol, the managing director of Dubai-based business en motion, is a consultant working with strategic change, leadership and organisational development. Email her at [debbie.nicol@businessenmotion.com](mailto:debbie.nicol@businessenmotion.com) for thoughts about your corporate change initiative*

Follow us on Twitter [@Ind\\_Insights](https://twitter.com/Ind_Insights)



[Add your comment](#) | [View all comments](#)

## Related

Take a harmonious approach to the integration of

The role of managers when change needs incorporating

Get the team on board when company changes occur

Alignment a vital element in corporate change

workplace change

## More The Life



Listen, plan, then pick your own path, Just Falafel chief advises budding entrepreneurs



Interior packs a punch at this apartment at Dubai's World Trade Centre Residence



London leather tote for the working and well-paid woman



Dubai landlord issues eviction notice while tenant's Rera case is open

## MOST VIEWED

[BUSINESS](#) | [ALL](#)

**1.** In pictures: Megaprojects coming to the UAE

**2.** Dubai Legoland theme park on track for 2016 opening

**3.** Interior packs a punch at this apartment at Dubai's World Trade Centre Residence

**4.** Japan's ANA finalises \$13 billion deal for 40 long-haul Boeing planes

**5.** In pictures: Dh13 million apartment at World Trade Centre Residence in Dubai comes with Versace furniture

**6.** Listen, plan, then pick your own path, Just Falafel chief advises budding entrepreneurs

**7.** Aldar to launch apartments in Abu Dhabi's tallest tower

**8.** End of holy month means busy times for UAE retailers

**9.** Megaprojects in the UAE raise concerns, economists say

**10.** Dubai International Airport on track to be the world's busiest by early 2015

[More Most Viewed](#)

Safari Power Saver  
Click to Start Flash Plug-in

# HEALTHCARE EVER, EVER!

---

## EDITOR'S PICKS

In pictures:  
Megaprojects  
coming to the UAE



In pictures: Where  
Dubai rents have  
risen and fallen,  
Q2 2014



In pictures: Where  
Abu Dhabi rents  
have risen and  
fallen, Q2 2014



July/August  
corporate and  
economic calendar  
for the UAE and  
overseas



---

FOLLOW US

Like us

Like 107k

Tweets

Follow



**The National**

@TheNationalUAE

5h

Friday Fact: Readers can access @TheNationalUAE's best online content each day by scanning the QR code on the front page

Expand



**The National**

@TheNationalUAE

18h

Crowd-pleasing Ramadan and Eid Festival draws to a close [bit.ly/1qtrIQX](http://bit.ly/1qtrIQX)  
[pic.twitter.com/nH3oINeZsu](http://pic.twitter.com/nH3oINeZsu)



Expand



**The National**

@TheNationalUAE

18h

Two and a half times more water used to irrigate palm trees than needed [bit.ly/1oeyCGJ](http://bit.ly/1oeyCGJ)  
[pic.twitter.com/oX392njz2O](http://pic.twitter.com/oX392njz2O)

