

Being A Change Agent: Sacred Cows Make The Best Hamburger

(With Sincere Apologies To Mark Twain)

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If there is one thing that is constant in the world, it is change. Since the beginning of time, change has moved civilizations forward as they adapt to new surroundings, new environments, and new challenges.

At the same time, there is nothing people fear more than change. Change creates an unknown; it brings discomfort and anxiety. Have you ever noticed how people frequent the same handful of restaurants? And, when they go to a restaurant, they order from just a handful of things on the menu? There is great comfort in knowing what to expect as an outcome. Change brings disappointment, while consistency yields a comfortable result.

How is it possible that people fear change so much, yet we live in a constantly changing world and society?

The simple truth is that change is brought on by leaders who have a vision. Whether that vision is a nice hot fire to roast the brontosaurus burger, shoes to ease the pain of walking through briars, or the newest internet product, the leaders always have a vision of what they want and are taking action to make that change a reality. Only when that change is inevitable do others accept it and incorporate it into their daily lives.

What does any of this have to do with sacred cows?

With all due respect to our Hindu readers, sacred cows are those things in an organization that cannot be changed. They have been around for years, and everyone (supposedly) implicitly understands their value. They are often enormously costly, complex, and can show little real value.

You cannot expect to achieve new goals or move beyond your present circumstances unless you change. - Les Brown

Look around your organization at both the processes and the teams. Is there a “sacred cow” that no one dares touch, yet no one can quite explain its raison d’être (“reason for being”)? Maybe it’s time for you to light the campfire, sharpen the cleavers, and herd the sacred cow toward the pen.

As the leader, it is your responsibility to encourage innovation (change), promote process improvement (change), and eliminate stagnation (also change). It can be painful to lose a sacred cow, but the payoff makes it worthwhile.

An engaged and energized workforce leads to higher productivity, reduced costs, improved customer service, and increased profitability. Employee engagement happens when your Corporate Culture, Leadership Style, and Employee Expectations are in synch.

The Fusion Program from ECI Learning Systems is designed to align these 3 concepts in your organization – engaging your employees and creating positive energy that will propel your company to new heights.

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