

John Kettle's November 1995 Future Letter

15 Myths About Change

I have had this document, clipped out of some trade magazine, hanging beside whatever desk where I happened to be working for at least ten years. (It was originally published in 1994 or 1995. A scan of my yellowed original is at the end of this document.) I have gone looking on the Internet for the original source but Google has not helped other than to find some references to it.

Source: John Kettle's Future Letter reprinted in TQM in Higher Education, January 1995.

15 Myths About Change		
Myth	Realities About Real Change	
1	Change has to hurt	Real change should be fun
2	Change is a one-time thing	Change happens in small steps
3	Change is radical	Real change is continuing, unfolding
4	Change must be imposed	Real change is self motivated
5	Everyone wants to buy into change	Real change has to be sold
6	Everyone likes change, so it's easy	Real change is hard
7	Change does not cost a lot	Real change is expensive
8	Change is for the better	Real change can make things worst
9	Others have to change, not me	I must change if I want them to really change
10	Change is fast, we can't fail	Real change is slow, some failure is inevitable
11	Change won't be resisted	Real change is resisted
12	People know how to change	People need skills to really change
13	Change goes in a straight line	Real change zigs and zags
14	People like to be the first to change	No one likes pioneering

15 MYTHS ABOUT CHANGE

Myths

Realities about *real* change

Change has to hurt	Real change should be fun
Change is a one-time thing	Real change is continuing, unfolding
Change is radical	Real change happens in small steps
Change must be imposed	Real change is self-motivated
Everyone wants to buy in to change	Real change has to be sold
Everyone likes change, so it's easy	Real change is hard
Change doesn't cost a lot	Real change is expensive
Change is for the better	Real change can make things worse
Others have to change: not me	I must change if I want <i>them</i> to really change
Change is fast: we can't fail	Real change is slow; some failure is inevitable
Change won't be resisted	Real change is resisted
People know how to change	People need skills to really change
Change goes in a straight line	Real change zigs and zags
People like to be first to change	No one likes pioneering
You gradually wear down resisters	You try harder, resisters get tougher

Source: John Kettle's *FutureLetter*