How to Introduce New Technology.

With companies looking for ways to cut costs, a common solution is to introduce new technology to increase efficiency and cut down on labour costs. This can lead to staff feeling anxious about the change and some can be resistant to using the new technology.

Ensuring successful implementation of any new technology requires a great deal of preparation. Not only do you have to make sure you choose the right system with all of the components you need, you also have to relieve any anxiety that staff may have and you also have to make sure your staff members know how to use it correctly in order to get the most benefit from your investment.

New and emerging technologies such as computers, printers, telecommunications, CD-Rom and multimedia are flooding the business marketplace. But there’s much more to introducing these technologies than simply purchasing the hardware and the supporting software. To avoid costly mistakes, remember that the success of any technology purchase in your organization is directly proportional to the time and effort you spend on the planning you do before purchase and implementation – and the guidelines listed below provide some valuable practical advice in that regard…

1. Develop a rationale for the use of the new technology.
   
   What are the advantages and disadvantages for the organisation (increased production, better efficiency, improved quality…)

2. Build ownership among the key participants.

   Ensure that the staff understand how the new technology will benefit them, not just the organisation (eg, better working conditions)

3. Examine fully all budgetary considerations.

   Investigate the costs of purchasing the new technology and training the staff against the expected improvement in production and profits.

4. Develop a staff training and professional development strategy.

   Determine how you will train the staff (bring in outside agencies), offer inducements (bonuses) for successful completion of training.

5. Guarantee access to technical and professional support.

6. Be sure, then purchase.

7. Evaluate the initiative.

   Once the new technology has been introduced evaluate how successful it is. Look at production rates, quality of the products, profit margins…

8. Appreciate the value of people.

   Demonstrate appreciation of the workers’ efforts by offering bonuses or awards.
It’s a problem. People do not like change.

They are comfortable with the way they do things, always have, always will be and anything new, complicated and high tech can be immediately rejected, costing the company a small fortune of wasted equipment, cause a major setback in the development of the company and worse if not done carefully it can destroy good will with your employee base as well as cause a fierce reduction of moral... and the company does not get the advances in productivity it is looking for.

Key employees will quit over this issue. Rebellion will be the tone of the day.

If possible it is advisable to identify and discuss cooperation with at least one employee in each employee group to vocally support the program and let the others know they are on board. Others will follow and this will help break down the barriers.

Many business owners simply will not go down this path for fear of the potential of rejection.

Here is how you do it... successfully.

1. Give your employees lots of advanced knowledge. Let them get used to the idea. Have meetings about it. Allow and support opposition, encourage their complaining, support their feelings, however always let them know that it is going to happen.

2. Start from the bottom up. Have meetings with groups of employees first for discussion and then for training. Bring in outside specialists to train the employees on how to operate and use the new technology. Start from the bottom up as that is where you will find the most resistance. Gain support there and the rest is easier.

3. It is important, critical, that they see how it will work for them, how it will eventually make their job easier for them to perform. This is very important and goes back to the training and the discussions. This must be the theme. It being good for the company does not carry enormous weight if they do not see that it will benefit them as well.

4. Create incentives, so the employees are rewarded for successfully utilizing the technology to accomplish the stated goals of the program. This is a huge opportunity to turn this into a win win for everyone.

Follow this plan and you will achieve your goals. Don’t and you risk utter failure and a major setback in many areas. Do not do what so many business owners do, buy the program and hardware and toss it into the crowd to let them teach each other and figure it out. That’s a disaster guaranteed and this is what so many do. Follow the plan as outlined it will work wonderfully.

Discuss, train, and provide incentives.... this works