

Change and how to manage it

Everyone manages change differently, but for sure, we all manage better if we feel we have an idea what is happening, that we are kept informed and that we hold some form of control over what we do and what we know.

It is often difficult in any setting, to accept change for what it is, simply, it is really like changing from one thing to another. As children, we didn't often question changes and yet, there were many. From home maybe to a nursery, playgroup or to a childminder and, having made the transition from the care of "our" adults, we moved to being in the care of other adults and accepting them as part of our carers network. From the early years to school, maybe to college or university. Whatever you or your children did, we moved through each transition as a fairly normal pattern or routine.

In adulthood there is the work setting, the home setting and the personal setting and, as adults we feel we have more choice and more control. We experience change almost every day and are relatively okay with it when we feel we have a choice and that is because we usually have some control over what happens.

We choose which holiday to take and where, we choose a home, the furnishings, the car and where we live. We choose our partners and usually whether to have a family or not. We have choices and we do what feels right for us. However, in the workplace, somehow change feels different and that is because we often have little choice or control over what happens, and often, we feel as if things are being done "to us" rather than having a say in the process.

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought about many changes to all aspects of our lives. We were given instruction about what we could and couldn't do and, in the main, the majority of people followed the instruction. There was (and still is) home working, using more technology to stay in touch with friends and family and more technology to enable us to do our work. Many have struggled with such huge changes to our lives over which we had little control. However, many have thrived through this and continue to do so.

The pandemic has taught us so much about adaptability, change and resilience and in the main, the change has been the biggest thing for all of us, irrespective of how you feel you have coped?

So, how do you cope and manage change? Looking at Dr Spencer Johnson's book "Who moved my cheese", he tells us a story about 4 characters, Sniff and Scurry (the little mice) and (Hem and Haw the little people) who live in a maze and learn to deal with unexpected change. The story follows their hunt for cheese, the representation for what we want in life (career, relationship, money, etc.). The maze symbolizes the place where we spend time looking for it. He talks about how change works, how to adept to it and the stages of moving through the "maze" –

Change happens: They keep moving the cheese

Anticipate Change: Get ready for the cheese to move!

Monitor Change: Smell the cheese often so you know when it is getting old!

Adapt to change quickly: The quicker you let go of the cheese the sooner you can enjoy the new cheese

Change: Move with the cheese

Enjoy change!: Savour the Adventure and Enjoy the taste of new cheese

Be Ready to change quickly and enjoy it again: They keep moving the cheese

Like the characters, learn that these lessons are applicable to the circumstances we encounter in our personal life and in our career. It may change your thinking and attitude towards change to be more positive and accepting. It is ideal to be like Sniff and Scurry who are always ready and adaptive, but it's not too late to be like Hem who learned to embrace change.

If you feel you may need some support, you can contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on '**How to manage change**' this is being delivered live on Friday 17th July at 2pm-3pm, please use the below link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6158830128686481936>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.