

Action Steps to “Moving” Your Organization Ahead

Researchers have identified three phases of organizational change: unfreezing, moving and refreezing. These action steps focus on the second stage—moving. In this stage, your organization has already been primed to incorporate changes. As you go forward with the changes here are the important things to keep in mind to make the transition period a success.

- 1. Create a vision.** Sadly many attempts at change end somewhere other than originally desired. For this reason it is vital that a plan be worked out as to where you want to end up and how you intend on arriving there. In the midst of the change, this will give your organization something to refer back to in order to stay on track. It will also aid in the communication of the goal and the measures you expect others to implement as part of attaining that goal.

How you create the vision is also important. We suggest involving the staff in a collaborative process is critical to the process. Most Christian organizations employee educated intelligent “knowledge workers” that do not respond well to authoritarian approaches.

- 1. Communicate the Vision.** You need to clearly explain what the vision is to your staff, but even more, convince them of its

importance. It can be especially helpful for staff to see how they will personally benefit from the intended change. Once they are won over to the idea, help them see what is necessary in order to achieve it and specifically what their role is in the plan. Actions are just as important as words in this phase of transition! Let your staff see the confidence you have both in the plan and in them. As a leader, you need to go above and beyond to set an example for your staff in implementing the change. Try to find symbolic ways of emphasizing the key values to give your staff something to rally around.

- 2. Empower your people.** Unless you make it clear what you expect of each of your staff during this time of transition, they will assume that the leadership will be responsible for seeing it through. Instead, identify staff who are especially dedicated to the change process and enlist them to help influence others and implement the planned vision. There will be various roles that your staff can fill in this change process, ranging from a change manager to a change model. One other important thing for you, as a leader, to keep in mind is that research has identified a marked difference between the level of empowerment leadership

believes they have given their staff versus the level of empowerment the staff acknowledge. It may be helpful to take a survey, such as the Best Christian Workplaces employee survey, in order to identify any such discrepancy in your organization.