



## Essential Learnings for Turbulent Times The Workplace Adaptation Series

You've been talking, and we've been listening! You, our friends, colleagues and clients have been telling your stories, and we at FutureSense have been hearing some common themes. We are all experiencing change on an overwhelming scale and the economy has redefined the environment. So what are the essential tools that leaders need to help their organizations survive, succeed and thrive? They all spring from the same well - **Workplace Adaptation**.

Charles Darwin taught us that evolution is not necessarily survival of the *fittest or strongest*, but rather, of *the most responsive to change*. These courses will put Darwin's teachings into action, helping organizations and their leaders understand and **adapt** to turbulent and changing times.

### The Workplace Adaptation Series:

#### Course #1: Life with Layoffs

This learning explores how well your organization is prepared for the possibility of downsizing. We will also focus on how to recognize "stress fractures" as your team braces for or reacts to a layoff. You will come away with strategies to mitigate anxiety and increase team loyalty and retention.

#### Course #2: Living with Fear – The Damocles Sword Syndrome

This course will help organizational leaders recognize the fear of dealing with change in their organization and how to better anticipate its effects, how to work through it individually and as a leader of a team, and how to come out of it with a stronger sense of value and purpose.

#### Course #3: Proactive Adaptation - Adjusting Workstyles & Lifestyles

This course will focus on rekindling the work-life balance affected by our down economy. With such things as reduced hours, reduced pay, and pending layoffs hovering over the heads of many, we **CAN** maintain a fulfilling life inside and outside of work -- individually, with our families, and collectively. A guided discussion coupled with anecdotal experiences will help your organization find ways to proactively adapt to changing circumstances before and as they unfold.

All of these learning opportunities begin with a meaningful conversation and an assessment of where you are now and where you are headed. We then chart a course tailored to your team and implement it either through facilitated discussion or interactive lecture.

***In the spirit of adaptation***, these courses can and will be designed and delivered **as unique, customized individual coaching opportunities, leadership training and/or staff presentations**. We can also train your internal coaches to deliver the materials through **teacher training workshops**.

Each topic is designed to both stand alone and complement the others in the series. These learnings are typically delivered in two and half hours to easily fit into any work schedule. Please read on for detailed descriptions and topics for these courses and contact us to engage your own quest to adapt!

## Course #1: Living with Layoffs

This learning explores how well your organization's leaders are prepared for the possibility of downsizing. We will also focus on how to recognize "stress fractures" as your team braces for or reacts to a layoff. You will come away with strategies to mitigate anxiety and increase team loyalty and retention.

### The Writing is on the Wall -- What Now?

- \* How are you keeping employees informed?
  - What language are you using? *Layoff; downsizing; rightsizing?*
  - What forums are you using? *Are they interactive?*
  - How much advanced notice are you offering? *Are you limiting "crisis orientation?"*
- \* Involving employees in the decision making
  - Can you explore alternatives? *Job sharing; reduced work weeks; early retirement?*
  - Designing the release from work process **with team input**
- \* Recognizing "stress fractures"
  - Crisis orientation -- *is that all everyone's talking about?*
  - Productivity decrease
  - Environment Changes -- *has overall attendance suffered? Is there more workplace conflict than usual? How are you reacting?*
- \* Determining whether employee assistance is necessary
  - Would your team benefit from an objective outside resource?
    - ~ Anonymous surveys vs. stress counselors
    - ~ Considering investing in training -- *demonstrating loyalty*
  - Internal tools can also be developed through **Course #2: Living with Fear -- The Damocles Sword Syndrome**

### Strategies for Addressing Survivor Anxiety and Guilt

- \* What are the costs in the post-layoff environment? *Higher turnover, lower productivity, stress-related illness*
- \* Addressing certain behavioral groups and strategies for their retention
  - "Undecided" waiting to see what change means for them -- more work/same pay or new opportunity
    - ~ *Providing direction and redefining roles*
  - "Grass MUST be greener" already looking elsewhere -- generally high performers
    - ~ *Painting a picture that gets their attention*
  - "Stuck in place" keeping their heads down and hoping for the best
    - ~ *Encouraging self-direction and empowerment*
- \* Assigning roles within the team
  - Does team have "natural" adaptation **leaders**?
  - Creating an adaptation **team**
- \* Articulating your strategy with confidence
  - Do you have a communicable plan to avoid deeper cuts?
  - Have you budgeted for training?
  - How can you increase visibility of management participation in "carrying the extra load?"

*Living with layoffs can be presented in multiple forms: Focused discussions for executives or human resources leaders preparing for downsizing, or designing a strategy to increase retention in a post-layoff environment; Interactive learnings for organizational leaders; and teacher training workshops.*

## Course #2: Living with Fear – The Damocles Sword Syndrome

This course will help organizational leaders recognize the fear of dealing with change, how to better anticipate its effects, how to work through it individually and as a leader of a team, and how to come out of it with a stronger sense of value and purpose. The benefits of managing fear are both personal and organizational. Those that manage it well have lower turnover, lower absenteeism, fewer grievances and better communication and coordination both inside and outside the organization.

### ☀ Addressing the facts

- \* Fear is present in every organization and it will always be
- \* There is no such thing as “healthy” fear
- \* Courage is not the absence of fear, but the management of fear

### ☀ What are people afraid of?

- \* Fear of failure -- tied to lack of risk taking and innovation
- \* Fear of success -- success bring enemies; damages peer relationships
- \* Fear of change -- resistance; they may lose something; their power may be diminished; they are content with what is familiar
- \* Fear of speaking up -- the messenger becomes the target of criticism; associated with complaints and problems; afraid of making a mistake
- \* Fear of the unknown -- not knowing how the organization is doing and afraid of losing one’s job

### ☀ The three elements to managing fear (Deming, 1989)

- \* **Leadership** -- fear diminishes as leadership improves and as employees develop confidence and trust in that leadership. Leaders must create an environment where employees can share information without concern about repercussions.
- \* **Trust** -- creating trust is a delicate construct that take many years to build and just one act to destroy. Trust is a necessary condition for cooperation and for communication. The higher the trust, the more open the communication.
- \* **Vision** -- vision provides constancy of purpose, which can reduce uncertainty and fear. It forces leaders to take a broad look at themselves, their organization, and its future. It provides direction so everyone knows where the organization is going.

### ☀ Helping managers find an answer

- \* **Expectations** -- do you know what your peers/subordinates expect of you? Do your employees know and understand the vision, mission, and guiding principles?
- \* **Assessment** -- has the organization conducted an assessment to identify barriers that inhibit performance? Do you know what people in your organization fear?
  - Do your peers/subordinates fear you? Do you feel your boss perpetuates fear? Do you perceive that people have to do things that are against their better judgement?
- \* **Trust** -- do you believe that your employees trust you? Do you trust them?
- \* **Communication** -- are you asking for feedback? Are you listening? Are you killing the messenger? Do you believe your employees have all the information they need to carry out their jobs?
- \* **Training** -- do you believe that your employees are fully qualified to do their jobs? What have you done to make sure that your peers/subordinates acquire new knowledge and develop new skills?

*Living with Fear can be presented in multiple forms: Focused coaching for executives or human resources leaders preparing for organizational change, or designing a strategy to increase productivity in a post-change environment; Interactive learnings for organizational leaders; and teacher training workshops.*

### Course #3: Proactive Adaptation - Adjusting Workstyles & Lifestyles

This course will focus on rekindling the work-life balance affected by our down economy. With such things as reduced hours, reduced pay, and pending layoffs hovering over the heads of many, we **CAN** maintain a fulfilling life inside and outside of work -- individually, with our families, and collectively. A guided discussion coupled with anecdotal experiences will help your organization find ways to proactively adapt to changing circumstances before and as they unfold.

#### ☀️ What is proactive lifestyle adaptation?

- \* Recognizing and forming an active relationship with changing circumstances
- \* Why is it important?
  - Forecasts for the future are uncertain -- economically and environmentally
  - What are the "experts" saying?
  - What do you foresee happening? From your experience? Intuitively?

#### ☀️ Thinking outside the box...but, what *IS* this box? We live in a **sphere!**

- \* Understanding ecological philosophy and the nature of cycles
  - The ultimate connections -- the economy, the environment, & humanity
  - Balance, imbalance, & change
- \* The economic cycle & its impact
  - Is this just a phase? Will it recover? If so, how?
  - Dependent on infinite inspiration, but resources are *finite* (aka cycles!)
    - ~ "The Story of Stuff"
    - ~ "The Ecology of Commerce"
    - ~ "Animate Earth"
  - Is our collective vision and lifestyle in balance with these cycles? At what level of perception?
- \* The human factor
  - How are we affected by these cycles? Our families? Our communities? Our children?
  - What's our role amidst these cycles? What's our effect? What's our duty?

#### ☀️ Are you being proactive now? If so, what are you doing?

- \* Collectively exploring and discussing what's working and what's not
- \* What **else** can we do?
- \* How are other people proactively adapting?
  - Back to the basics -- at home and at work
  - Progressive cost-saving strategies that
    - ~ Mediate financial stress
    - ~ Enhance work-life balance
    - ~ Boost happiness
    - ~ Contribute positively to the economic and environmental cycles that support us
  - Reclaiming independence, autonomy, and enjoying it!
    - ~ Along with your community!
- \* To survive, you must adapt to changing circumstances
  - Inspiration from the *ground-up* and the *sky-down*!

*Proactive Adaptation can be presented in multiple forms: Focused coaching for executives or leaders designing a strategy to increase productivity, retention and employee satisfaction; Interactive learnings for organizational leaders; and teacher training workshops.*