



# Tip Sheet

communication from

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## Twenty-First Century Anchors

*Harriett Lemer, Vice-President, Einblau & Associates*

*"No matter how things change, people essentially remain the same."*

**W**ith the dawn of the 21st century most of us are weary hearing about organizational change and how to manage in a rapidly evolving work world. While recently reading Jim Clemmer's book *Pathways to Performance* (Macmillan Canada, 1995), I came upon a very interesting passage. He chronicled the most significant organizational changes in the latter part of this decade.

This chart clearly shows the large-scale changes that have influenced the way we do

business in today's world. It also started me thinking about what **hasn't changed** in the way business works.

Over our fifteen years of providing business and leadership coaching we've had the opportunity to hear about the successes and challenges of running a business through the experience of executives and managers.

Based on what we've heard, I have assembled some key business anchors—those ideas and behaviours that will endure and serve as organizational stabilizers.

Key Changes	From	To
Economic growth	Steady and predictable	Erratic fluctuations
Financial power source	Physical resources and capital	Information and knowledge
Technological change	Evolutionary	Revolutionary
Markets	Mass	Highly segmented
Communications	Delayed, multistaged, and controlled	Instant, direct and uncontrolled
Innovation	Important	Critical
Competitive edge	Size	Speed
Customers	Compliant, loyal, and forgiving	Demanding, intolerant, and value-driven
Work ethic	Followership	Shared management
Source of authority	Position	Persuasion

*Pathways to Performance, Jim Clemmer, 1995*

Developing  
Human Assets



*"With very few exceptions, none of us are born managers."*

**1) With very few exceptions, none of us are born managers.**

The good news is that management skills can be learned. The bad news is that many managers still believe that managing well takes little or no effort and practice. In fact, it's like any skill. We need to learn and practice, with feedback, in order to get really good at it.

**2) People work best for people they respect.**

The time-honoured principles of courtesy, honesty and patience greatly enhance all relationships, not just those at work. One cannot be a leader without followers and too often managers take their right to delegate and supervise for granted. They forget to manage in a way that earns them the commitment and dedication of their colleagues.

**3) Conflict happens.**

Many people spend inordinate amounts of time worrying about and avoiding conflict. Conflict, however, is an inevitable component of people working together, and if managed well, can provide opportunities for creative thought and innovation.

**4) In the absence of corrective feedback, performance problems don't go away.**

Many managers avoid what they think will be difficult performance improvement conversations with employees. Then by the time they are compelled to discuss problems, they are so worked up that their delivery doesn't achieve the results they want. No matter how busy a manager is, the sooner the conversation happens the better it will be. (The most effective performance feedback conversations stay focused on the specific, concrete problem and on future, not past, performance.)

**5) People skills are as important to business success as technical and financial skills.**

No matter how things change, people essentially remain the same. Moreover, no matter how great our business systems are, without good people skills, managers are unable to get the quality business results they seek.

**6) Staying power is what separates winners from losers.**

Successful business management is a marathon, not a short dash. If health and wellness take a back seat to pressure and stress, decisions are less efficient and far less effective. Aim for a balanced life so that creativity and excellence flourish. To quote Lily Tomlin: "If you win the rat race, you're still a rat!"

It is our hope for the 21st century that each one of us will work successfully and happily. What we do at the office should be a source of pride and gratification.©

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*"Successful business management is a marathon, not a short dash."*

We hope that this Tip Sheet is of value to you. *Multiple copies of it are available for distribution within your organization, while quantities last.* Please contact Ron Einblau or Harriett Lemer. ■



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