



Frances is talking to Intel's design centre about working with their managers on increasing their innovative capacity.

When Change is a Bad Idea

This is a quote: *"I was to learn...in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing and what a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency, and demoralization."* Sounds terribly contemporary, doesn't it? Who wrote it? Petronius the Arbiter in 210 B.C.!

I do think we live in a time when change truly is the constant. But just because it's constant doesn't therefore mean stability and continuity mean lack of progress.

Gisèle Richardson (*see below*) works with managers in Brazil where the greatest compliment that can be paid on taking over a new responsibility is, "He took over without one apple falling from the tree." One Brazilian manager observed to her of North American managers, "your first task ...is to prove that your predecessor was an idiot." Oh, Petronius! Plus que ça change...

Managers still get attention and promotion by fighting fires rather than preventing them. Change has become the new fire—you can set it yourself, put it out yourself, and then move on without counting the devastation left behind.

Good managers change what is necessary and keep the rest stable. How to tell the difference? That's why you get paid the big bucks.

Frances

Thanks to Gisèle Richardson, *President of Richardson Management Associates Limited*, for the topic of this newsletter and much of its content.

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