Facing the Changes and Challenges of Teaching

by:
Rosalyn B. Angeles

Master Teacher I, Cabcaben Elementary School, Mariveles District

“There is nothing permanent except change”, this is one of the most popular cliché we hear when we talked about change. But come to think of it, everything really changes, even faster than we expect. Changes can be examined in all aspects: in the environment, in our home, peers, community and others. Everything shifts for advancement and development.

Being in the teaching field does not exempt us from these changes. Teachers experience a vast number of changes which includes but not limited to, a change in the set of pupils handled every school year which means a change also in their teaching approaches depending on the pupils’ needs; variation in the school administration styles; changes in the curriculum; changes and reforms of DepEd policies and guidelines and others. So how can teachers manage these changes and challenges? How can teachers adopt to the never—ending changes in the arena with a heart still blazing for teaching?

An online job site identified the following different reaction stages to change:

1. Denial is the first and complicated stage. People react to change with a shock. At this stage, most people do not believe that the change is undeniably happening and still try to ignore thinking and talking about it. This denial is mostly on an internal level and to avoid showing off, denial people focus their attention in other things except the change. Since change is understood as vague, people tend to deviate their attention and focus to the past and familiar feelings that make them feel secure and comfortable.
2. Resistance to change begins as people realize that the change is actually and finally happening and there is no way to keep away from it and refuse it. During this stage of the change, feelings like anger, self-doubt, inadequacy, fear and anxiety can build up. These can result to a compelling effect that impede the progress of the change process, besides causing the morale and productivity to drop because people are being pushed out of their comfort zones. Arguments, blame game, and non-cooperation are some ways in which the team members may show their refusal and struggle to the change.

3. Exploration stage is where the team members leave out their arguments and instead become part of the change process. This is the stage where people start acting and learning new ways so as to productively contribute towards the success of the change being done. A brand-new wave of mind set draws in where people understand the coherence of the change process and the importance of their part in the change process. People who initiated to commit towards change, they still resist and does not completely welcome the change. They experience it first and explore by experimenting and analyzing the change to see the result and what benefit to them in the overall change.

4. Commitment is the final stage, when productivity and emotional uniformity would have been effectively achieved. The team members feel more in control, equipped and familiar as they settle down into their new roles. Work activities and responsibilities return to normal as team members begin to collaborate whole heartedly and move forward.

The success and failure of a particular change in the school setting lies mainly on our attitude. Some climb with a positive attitude regarding a particular change while others fall with a negative perspective. Teachers need to be aware that change happens,
it happens in personal life, it happens in the professional life. We cannot live in the past, so denying change only makes things more complicated.

It is impossible to tailor-make all situations to fit our lives as teachers perfectly. But it is possible to tailor-make our attitudes to fit. Stay optimistic, keep a positive attitude and don’t let yourself drown in uncertainty. Involve in the new process; locate yourself properly in the new scenario. Adjust!

References: