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**Summertime and the Living is Easy**

"People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy."  
-Anton Chekhov

It's amazing how quickly summer goes by. It can feel like every month is a little shorter than the one before. Change is a constant, and managing change isn't getting any easier. But in the summer months most of us can at least take a little time to exhale as things slow down just a tad.

Everything you read in *The Leader Letter* (and more) is published throughout the month on my blog <http://jimclemmer.blogspot.com>. Think of it as a bit of fresh air whenever you need it.

To find out more about how to use the blog go to the posting "The 'new' Leader Letter" at [http://jimclemmer.blogspot.com/2007/06/new-leader-letter\\_04.html](http://jimclemmer.blogspot.com/2007/06/new-leader-letter_04.html).

**Why Change Processes Fail**

A new consulting Client is struggling with organizational change in an industry that is experiencing rapid change. The pressures on this company to reduce costs while improving customer service are some of the most ruthless we've seen. We're helping them completely overhaul their systems and processes as well as leadership practices and culture. Understandably, there's lots of nervousness about getting this right. Their CEO asked me for examples of other companies that have failed in their change process and what they could learn from those experiences.

I've studied and written about the key issue of how companies fail in their change process quite extensively over the past twenty-five years. The problem is that it's a bit like asking why people die prematurely. The reasons are many, complex, and often situation specific.

It is an organization leadership question that has been studied extensively by many people. I have synthesized some of this research and our own experience in my article "Why Most Change Programs and Improvement Initiatives Fail." You can read it at [http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article\\_77.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article_77.aspx).

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You can get deeper into many of "The Top Five Failure Factors" from the above article through reading these sections of [The Leader Letter](#):

- [January 2004](#) - under the item "Keys to Effective Reward and Recognition" scroll down to "Assessing Management Commitment." This continuum is key to Failure Factor #5.
- [June 2005](#) - both "Common Causes of Priority Overload" and "Steps to a Goal Deployment System" get at Failure Factor #1.
- [May 2006](#) - the first three sections get at Failure Factor #5.
- [July 2006](#) - The first article, re-printed from one of my *Globe & Mail* columns, continues this critical discussion of leadership behavior. The second item is a positive example from Barrick Gold. Click on the "tool" hyperlink (last word in second paragraph) for a good look at how they are defining effective leadership behavior at all levels.

The impact of many of the above points can be summarized in my article "[Bolt-On Programs or Built-In Culture Change.](#)"

The CLEMMER Group's organizational consulting and customized training business continues to be the fastest growing part of our business. That's in large part because of executive consultant Scott Schweyer's and our training designer/facilitator Karen Lee's highly effective Client work. You can learn more about what we offer at <http://www.clemmer.net/consulting>.

**Process Mapping Stops "The Blame Game"**

The downside of today's focus on accountability and performance management is a fragmented view of how work flows across every organization. As a result departmental silos are reinforced and way too much finger pointing occurs. This leads to a culture of "if it's not our fault, it must be yours."

I love to get examples of the power of process mapping, like the one Jeff Johnson provides below. The [Improvement Point](#) Jeff is referring to precedes his comment.

**"As important as what's measured is how the information is used. In many organizations, team members and managers resist measuring accuracy rates, cycle times, rework, customer satisfaction levels, wait times, and the like because they've been beaten up with this information. Despite the mountain of evidence showing that 85 - 90 percent of errors and mistakes originate in the organization's structure, system, or process, all too many managers still look for who rather than what went wrong."**

- from Jim Clemmer's article, "Organizational Measurement and Feedback Pathways and Pitfalls (Part 1 of 2)" [Read the full article now!](#)  
[http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article\\_226.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article_226.aspx)

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*Jim,*

*Today's Improvement Point mentioned how we often focus on assigning blame rather than looking at the structure or process. I agree with your comment.*

*In the past year I have also gained leadership responsibility for our IT team. Through that work, we have been looking at several of our core business processes (i.e. how we track inventory, record sales, report lab results, etc.) Almost all the conflict we ended up resolving was NOT a result of an employee being incompetent or not wanting to do a good job, but rather an outdated or poor process. In the last 14 years the company has grown from single digit employees to over 150, but we hadn't re-examined some of our core processes, which no longer worked in the larger organization. It wasn't until we mapped what is that we saw the big picture as no one person was seeing the whole picture. Once we had it in front of us, it was clear to see the conflict that had become endemic in our organization.*

*The best part is I didn't have to solve it. When the people involved in the process saw the clear big picture, they had better solutions than I likely could have come up with. That joint process stopped the "blame game" and actually resulted in better relationships with the people that needed each other.*

*Jeff Johnson, Marketing Manager  
Africa, Pioneer, A Dupont Company*

The [July 2005](#) issue of *The Leader Letter* is dedicated to strategic process management. It includes sections on:

- It's Often About Processes Not People
- Why Strategic Process Management
- Steps to Strategic Process Management
- Process Management Pitfalls and Traps
- Keys to Strategic Process Management
- Further Info on Strategic Process Management
- Thoughts That Make You Go Hmmm...on Process Management

You can learn more about The CLEMMER Group experiences, perspectives, and approaches to Strategic Process Management at [http://www.clemmer.net/consulting/consulting\\_strategic.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/consulting/consulting_strategic.aspx). The section entitled "Strategic Process Management: Optimizing Cross-Functional Performance" (part way down the page) provides the slides from the executive briefing overview we provide on our approach.

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You can also find five of my articles/excerpts on process management at [http://www.clemmer.net/articles/subject\\_7.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/subject_7.aspx). Four of these are from *Pathways to Performance: A Guide to Transforming Yourself, Your Team, and Your Organization* and one is an older *Globe & Mail* column.

**Boosting Your Emotional Intelligence**

I came across the emerging research on emotional intelligence about ten years ago. Having focused much of my own personal development on these issues and then making the training and development of these “soft” skills my life’s work since 1981, I was really excited by this new research. Finally we had hard proof for the personal and professional pay-offs of these “soft” skills! I began incorporating the burgeoning EI research into my presentations and books.

You can view video clips of me giving an EI overview at <http://www.clemmer.net/video> (scroll down to “Leadership Lessons from the Emotional Intelligence Research”). You can also find references to EI in some of my Management and Leadership Definitions/Balance book excerpts and articles at [http://www.clemmer.net/articles/subject\\_2.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/subject_2.aspx).

Both *Growing the Distance* and *The Leader’s Digest* feature sections on EI and provide detailed steps for improving it.

Writer, Diann Daniel, interviewed me a few months ago for an article she was writing for CIO and CSO magazines. She also interviewed Daniel Goleman and other leading EI researchers and writers. The resulting article (“[Soft Skills for CIOs and Aspiring CIOs: Four Ways to Boost Your Emotional Intelligence](#)”) is excellent. You can read it online [here](#).

I’d love to get your experiences with personally developing your own EI as well as any approaches you’ve found useful to help others build these vital skills. E-mail me at [Jim.Clemmer@Clemmer.net](mailto:Jim.Clemmer@Clemmer.net).

**Quick Q & A on Teaching Managers How to Have Effective Performance Review Discussions**

*Jim,*

*I enjoy reading your newsletter. I'm looking for a "best practice" in the area of teaching managers how to have effective performance review conversations. I don't want this to be limited to just conversations with poor performers, but with all employees. Any ideas? Thanks,*

*Bob*

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Hi Bob,

You're asking a very broad question. The CLEMMER Group gets quite involved in helping our Clients with performance management and coaching. We have a variety of training programs and developmental processes that we try to fit to the situation.

In a nutshell, we've found that effective performance management is a combination of three factors; 1) Coaching skills, 2) Organizational culture, and 3) Performance management process. Too often HR professionals and managers focus on just one or two of these elements (usually #1 and/or #3) and end up with fragmentation and ineffectiveness.

Thanks for your feedback and question. I hope my response is helpful.

Jim

**Site Seeing: Recent Changes to Clemmer.net**

If you've been to the site lately, you'll know we've been making changes. The latest is adding each new blog entry to the homepage as it's posted. I've also posted a new article [Recognition Do's and Don'ts to Inspire and Energize](#). So come by and have a look. And after you're finished send it on to a colleague or two. Our web guy loves to see the daily web stats spike.

**Convincing Command and Control Managers to Involve Employees in the Planning Process**

A reader asked, "When working with senior managers that come from a 'command and control' background, how do you work with them on the power of involvement of more of the employees in the planning process?"

That's a great question! If I had the magic answer I'd be the Bill Gates of the training and consulting industry! It's hard to give a specific answer to a very broad question. We do run into this problem quite often. Here are a few approaches we may use depending upon the situation:

- Suggest they review the Emotional Intelligence research in order to reach their heart through their head - you can watch short video clips of me explaining some of this work at <http://www.clemmer.net/video>. Scroll down to "Leadership Lessons from the Emotional Intelligence Research."
- Link what's keeping them awake at night (productivity, cost control, revenue growth, innovation, retention, absenteeism, teamwork, etc.) with a more participative approach that gets at these "soft issues."

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- Help them understand the management-leadership balance and how command and control is only one half of the equation. You can view video on The Performance Balance at <http://www.clemmer.net/video> and review articles on this at [http://www.clemmer.net/articles/subject\\_2.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/subject_2.aspx).
- Review some of the research on the pay-offs of a more participative approach. Watch a very short video on this in the "Passion and Commitment" subsection of Timeless Leadership Principles at <http://www.clemmer.net/video>. Chapter Five on "Passion and Commitment" in *The Leader's Digest* is full of stories and statistics on this.

**Thoughts That Make You Go Hmmm...on Leading Organizational Change**

**"Everything has been said before, but since nobody listens we have to keep going back and beginning all over again."**

- André Gide, French writer, *The Immoralist*

**"The statistics on implementing strategy are abysmal. Seven out of ten organizations fail to execute strategies. It's not that they have bad strategies it's just that they can't execute."**

- David Norton, co-creator of *The Balanced Scorecard*

**"Mike Smith did a meta-analysis in 2002, which is, in consulting terms, a study of studies. He looked at 49 global studies across consulting firms, public and private companies, and looked at the reported success rates of the executives sponsoring those changes. He found five buckets or categories of change consistently across organizations, and these are global organizations of all sizes. The rates reported ranged from 28% to a high of 60%."**

- Richard Roi, Right Management's regional practice leader

**"Although it may have looked like a single-stroke breakthrough to those peering in from the outside, it was anything but that to people experiencing the transformation from within. Rather, it was a quiet, deliberate process of figuring out what needed to be done to create the best future results and then simply taking those steps, one after the other, turn by turn of the flywheel."**

- Jim Collins, *Good to Great*

**"Learn the fundamentals of the game and stick to them. Band-Aid remedies never last."**

- Jack William Nicklaus, American golfer, won 17 major tournaments

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**“Examining close to 100 cases, we found that most people did not handle large-scale change well, that they made predictable mistakes, and that they made these mistakes mostly because they had little exposure to highly successful transformations.”**

- John P. Kotter and Dan S. Cohen, *The Heart of Change: Real Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations*

**“Every few years we rediscover formal planning, then we rediscover the importance of people, and then in another few years we discover cost control. When you look over the last forty or fifty years there is nothing much that is genuinely new. It is a recycling and elaboration of something that has been proposed as far back as Plato.”**

- Edgar H. Schein, Sloan Fellows Professor of Management Emeritus and Senior Lecturer at MIT's Sloan School of Management

**Favorite July Improvement Points**

[Improvement Points](#) is a free service providing a key thought or quotation from one of my articles, provided three times per week, directly to your e-mail inbox. Each complimentary Improvement Point links directly into the full article on our web site that spawned it. If you'd like to read more about that day's Improvement Point, you can choose to click through to the brief article for a quick five-minute read. This is your opportunity for a short pause that refreshes, is an inspirational vitamin, or a quick performance boost. You can circulate especially relevant or timely articles or Improvement Points to your team, Clients, or colleagues for further discussion or action.

Here are my personal three choices of the [Improvement Points](#) we sent out in July:

**“Whether we choose to focus on our problems or our possibilities is a key leadership issue. When we are faced with obstacles and failure, those who can overcome adversity and learn from their experiences, turning them into opportunities, are the ones who will be truly successful.”**

- from Jim Clemmer's article, "Growing the Leader in Us"

[Read the full article now!](#)

[http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article\\_81.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article_81.aspx)

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**“Variations of management by exception are leading causes of the demoralization and fear that's rampant in so many groups and organizations. People feel criticized, ignored, unappreciated, and even used. They feel like a piece of equipment or just so many "human assets with skin wrapped around them.”**

- from Jim Clemmer's article, "Recognition and Appreciation Inspires and Energizes"

[Read the full article now!](#)

[http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article\\_179.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article_179.aspx)

**“If we are unhappy with the behavior of people on our team or in our organization, we need to take a closer look at the system and structure they're working in. If they behave like bureaucrats, they're likely working in a bureaucracy. If they're not customer focused, they're probably using systems and working in structure that weren't designed to serve the servers and/or customers.”**

- from Jim Clemmer's article, "Organization Structure Limits or Liberates High Performance"

[Read the full article now!](#)

[http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article\\_156.aspx](http://www.clemmer.net/articles/article_156.aspx)

**Feedback and Follow-Up**

I am always delighted to hear from readers of *The Leader Letter* with feedback, reflections, suggestions, or differing points of view. Nobody is ever identified in *The Leader Letter* without their permission.

I am also happy to explore customized, in-house adaptations of any of my material for your team or organization. Drop me an e-mail at [jim.clemmer@clemmer.net](mailto:jim.clemmer@clemmer.net).

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**Keep learning, laughing, loving, and leading -- living life just for the L of it!**

**Jim**

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[www.clemmer.net/subscribe.shtml](http://www.clemmer.net/subscribe.shtml)