



Chart Your Change Now

Mastering the Workplace Newsletter

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Quotes on Possibilities:

" The possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not react" -- George Bernard Shaw

"in the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's mind there are few."
-- Shunryu Suzuki

Dear Reader,

Restate the Obvious

"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I will meet you there." -- Rumi

After the President's State of the Union speech this week, the opposing party was invited to debate the merits of the speech - so that no one would walk away with their very own opinions of what they just heard - they would now have to decide who's telling the truth. Not so easy! There's an old adage about politicians: you never hear the truth when politicians are talking. Several pundits, and members of both parties gave their opinions. This just added to the confusion. Occasionally, I watch the McLaughlin Group duke it out. It always astounds me to see how entrenched pundits are in their convictions (maybe they do it for the ratings?). I suppose there's no room for doubt with such an ingrained sense of certainty. It's not that easy to state the obvious when minds are set to believe otherwise. After all, when we have a perception of a situation, we use our individual filter (not reality) to interpret the facts. Infrequently, have I seen people employ [critical thinking](#) or an objective, un-biased view of the facts. Perception becomes something we start to believe and then (according to neuro-scientists) it actually moves to that part of our brain that informs us that this is a core belief and we're not going to shake it easily.



See short video clip to [visualize the national budget](#).

Did you know you have a plastic brain? Well, not really. It does have the quality of plasticity: The term "plastic" in this sense, refers to "moldable." This distinctive trait makes the brain constantly adapt itself to deal with new input and information, continually change, grow, and remap itself. So it's interesting to note how rigidly people hold on to their position, even in the face of the facts -- sometimes it is a challenge just to ascertain the facts.

And, even when restating the obvious, such as the evidence for evolution, people will choose to believe otherwise -- and it's our right to choose whatever works for us. But now we come to motivation. We are insanely motivated to hold tight to our firmly held beliefs because? Well, they define use or makes us right and the other person wrong, or justify our perception of the world.

We all have ideas of how to live our lives, how the country should be governed, how to raise our families and yet I wonder about such things as the greater good. What would it look like for our political parties to actually play nice for the greater good? Is it possible for politicians to think beyond their next election and possibly lose because they've crossed into bipartisan territory for the greater good? Actually, yes. There was a time when opponents banded together to lead the country through one of its greatest crisis.

In Doris Kearns Goodwin's biography, *A Team of Rivals...* Lincoln had a genius for understanding human behavior and motivation. He chose to work with the best people, even opponents and selected and convinced three formidable adversaries to take cabinet positions. It took time to change beliefs and perception but eventually these three men grew to admire Lincoln.

So, what do you think? What is obvious in your conversation or situation? Do you employ [critical thinking](#) to state the obvious? Does the national arena reflect in any way how business is managed in your industry? Have you noticed how we all use our individual filter (biases and beliefs) to perceive a situation? Instead of coming from a place of being right and making the other person wrong, suspend that thought, restate the obvious, find a solution or empower others to perform at their best.

Is leadership really about positional power? Or does your authority spring from personal power? What does leadership mean to you? How would you define it? Comment on my blog [Chart Your Change](#).

With loving support, I thank you for being part of the *Chart Your Change* community.

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