

Subject: Friday Feature (a day early): On 180-degree strategic turns and educational changemaking
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To: Faculty-Staff
Attachments: image.png, zuko.jpg

Greetings, all.

This week's EAB resources included a perfectly timed article on how to help an organization respond positively to the need for change that arises in periods of uncertainty. In "Change management principles to help guide academic leaders during COVID-19," EAB's [Rodger Patience](#) encourages his readers to embrace the strategic possibilities inherent in **180-degree turns**. This resonated so much with me, as I have had more occasions in the past three months than I can count to "embrace my 180s" and let go of the mindset that automatically considers an about-face as a bad outcome. I hope the following points are useful for all of you reading this—staff, administration, and faculty—as you consider ways to be creative, adaptive, and responsive in the face of our current uncertainties:

In order to successfully navigate change, the whole organization needs to willingly engage with uncertainty and see the possibility in it. We need to value the next success and not be distracted by the old. We need to regard uncertainty as an opportunity for growth, not as a threat.

This isn't simply an attitude shift. This is a drastic, but necessary, **180-degree strategic turn**. Organizations cannot afford to run away from or avoid uncertainty. They need to be actively running towards it. But traditional problem solving, where you simply analyze your way out of a situation, leaves little room for innovation. When everything is uncertain, there are no right answers. That is where **entrepreneurial thinking** comes in.

Four Departures from Traditional Thinking

Behaviors that Characterize an Entrepreneurial Approach



Source: EAB and The Advisory Board Company Talent and Development Interviews and analysis.

My challenge to you this week is to identify ways you can adopt entrepreneurial thinking in your area. What is a challenge you're facing as a result of the uncertainties we are all facing? What means do you have at your fingertips to respond to it? What might you try that you haven't considered before? How will you measure the results to see whether they were successful in helping you achieve your goal? If what you try fails to produce needed results, how will you celebrate what you've learned, tweak your efforts, and try again? Please share your ideas and outcomes with me and with each other!

For faculty and staff looking to expand their digital learning toolkits, I'd like to share with you another free webinar opportunity. [ShapingEDU](#)—a self-described “community of dreamers, doers, and drivers shaping the future of learning in the digital age” —is sponsoring a digital learning event from July 20 – 27 called [LearningMan 2020](#). No doubt riffing on the annual community and creative arts festival titled Burning Man, LearningMan includes a week-long series of events designed to “push the creative envelope for how we serve students and advance learner success.” One day will focus entirely on “Tech Hacks from the Toolshed: hands-on workshops and upskilling experiences around emerging technologies.” I hope some of you have the time and energy to check it out!

And to end with a little levity, I share with you the newest member of my family, our rescue pup, Zuko, who has helped me literally reframe my way of looking at things, by eating my glasses! The bright side is that Zuko has healed very well from the significant burns he had when we first met and is thus exhibiting typical one-year-old behavior, and I was eligible for a replacement, so picked out a new pair of tortoiseshell frames with lavender trim—and a new glare, resistant coating for clearer vision—welcome outcomes on any day of the week. 😎



In closing, I hope you all have a safe and restful Fourth of July weekend.

All best,

Adrienne

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