

Governing Energy

Sustainability?

Volume 3 Number 6—March 17, 2014

Pundits talk about change and the need for all of us to respond to environmental forces whether business or life driven. Early adopters are quick to try new things and invest reasonable amounts in the *potential* future. The fundamental challenge is whether or not the energy expended makes the *new* the reality.

As a physics student, this author learned that applied energy will cause an electron jump to a higher orbit. However, once that energy was withdrawn, the electron returns to its original orbit steady state. This allegory was applied to human behavior in this blog, *Repetita Placent*, Volume 2 Number 9—May 2, 2013.

So the challenge becomes sustaining the higher energy level. It is easy to conduct a “rah rah” session. A workshop, offsite or team building initiative will get everyone on the same *page*; today. But what about tomorrow?

Cultural transformation is physics. Energy must be applied and sustained. When management believes that a temporal investment is enough, they will be disappointed. A perpetual outlay is required.

Commitment is hard. It requires a decision with recognition that accountability is integral. Human energy cannot be withdrawn or else, the value drops to a lower level.

When an organization embarks on a change management program, it must recognize that transformation is truly that. Allowing individuals, departments or the enterprise to retreat cannot be an option. The energy cannot be withdrawn or the old order will reemerge.

How does your firm assure transformation sustainability?

About the Author

Dr. [Scott M. Shemwell](#) has over 30 years technical and executive management experience primarily in the energy sector. He is the author of two books and has written extensively about the field of operations management. Shemwell is the Managing Director of The Rapid Response Institute, a firm that focuses on providing its customers with solutions enabling operations excellence and regulatory compliance management.

End Notes