



(U//FOUO) Letters to the Editor: About 'Roadblocks to Change'

FROM: the editor
Unknown
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(U) The recent article [Study Points Out 'Roadblocks to Change'](#) prompted a lot of feedback! Here are some reader opinions:

(U) This is an excellent article, but it overlooks a critical point and one which is endemic to this agency: management responsibility. The only effective way to overcome such institutionalized behaviors, as shown in this article, is through good management. This means setting up processes which are capable of measuring effectiveness while minimizing personal bias.

(U//FOUO) While NSA certainly needs technical managers who understand specialized fields well enough to make effective decisions, those decisions will tend to be biased (or even avoided) when all we have are managers who come only from within the analytic ranks, no matter their managerial training. There should also be true business managers who, when paired with the analytic managers, are capable of more unbiased decisions using proper SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses. It is a critical checks and balances system which is largely absent at this agency.

-- [REDACTED]

(S//SI) Excellent article and the results found by the JHU/APL team aren't a surprise to any analyst. Count how many contact chaining tools we have... Mainway, Proton, Banyan, etc. All overlap A LOT in capabilities, yet all have some unique feature or data feed that makes them indispensable. Same goes for reporting tools... We can't seem to figure out how to draft, edit, and publish I-series, E-grams, GRASP, all from one tool... no, we have multiple tools for even that! Now we have Analyst Cockpit AND Green Dragon AND Mission Managers Cockpit all seeking very similar functionality. How about some consolidation and improvement of EXISTING well-used tools?

-- Anonymous

(U//FOUO) Re para 1) " ...JHU/APL was surprised at the number of analysts who were not only uninterested in improving the tools they used but were completely opposed to the idea. " Perhaps JHU/APL did not ask the right questions, since I know no analysts who feel that way. Analysts welcome new systems which increase their capabilities. The real reason analysts/voice language analysts resist new systems is because they often work less efficiently than existing systems... Of course, old systems have to be replaced, but whenever beta systems are dumped on the workforce, the natural reaction is what you call "resistance to change." When senior management tells us that a 40-50% loss of efficiency is

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(U) Roadblocks to Change

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acceptable, the reaction will be to create a class of "complainers, whiners, and resisters to change."

-- Anonymous

(U//FOUO) I'm no expert, but I'm troubled by the notion that security should not be a "litmus test" for adoption of a new technology. It's already hard enough to keep important secrets. Security ought to be non-negotiable. If a technology is needed, then a secure means of using it must be devised before deployment.

-- Anonymous

(S//SI) Regarding the article "Roadblocks to Change," I had to give an ironic laugh at the title of the first roadblock. "Resistance to Change" is not really accurate - resistance to degradation and inefficiency would be a better description. What linguist didn't do a happy dance with the introduction of digital audio, which was a true upgrade? The resistance is against change for change's sake, against technology driving operations (shouldn't technology RESPOND to operations?), and against slower tools which are not only more complicated, but usually provide LESS of a capability and less flexibility than the systems they replace. Also, these more complicated tools require people who are trained as linguists and analysts to spend more time troubleshooting and maintaining computer systems; to be computer analysts, which takes away time better spent sifting through language material.

-- Anonymous

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