

Bridgeway to Success™

August 2009

**THEIR POWER
LIES IN DENYING
YOU WHAT YOU
WANT.**

The Push-Pull of Change

You're ready to kick-off the big initiative. The purpose is clear, the funding is set ... now you need to get everyone on board. Don't.

An all-too-common misconception is that for change initiatives to succeed, everyone has to buy in. What inevitably happens is that your time and energy get exhausted trying to engage those least willing to change.

You don't need everyone's buy-in. You need *critical mass*. Focus on those at the eager end of the bell curve. Point them in the right direction. Give them the tools and support they need to succeed. Then turn them loose. Vigorously promote their successes. Now those in the middle of the curve – the ones who are open but not the trailblazers of change – are drawn into action.

As for the skeptics and laggards, ignore them. As long as you try to push change on them, they'll resist. Their power lies in denying you what you want – their buy-in. But once the successes start to come and the accolades begin to flow, they'll feel left out. Why aren't we getting the attention? Why don't we have the opportunity? Congratulations. You've now created the pull for change. Welcome them, encourage them and reinforce their efforts.

And the very few who are entrenched at the dead end of the curve? Adios.

Successfully managing change means managing *the psychology of change*. Don't push. Create pull.

Michael Canic