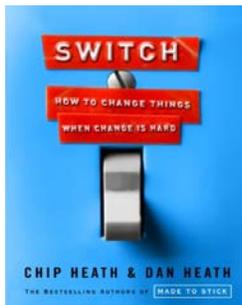


FWPMI Book Review by: Ernest Chapman Jr.
"Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard"
by Heath, Chip; Heath, Dan

Publisher:	Broadway Books
Date of Publication:	February 2010
Number of pages:	305
Book Club rating:	4.0



Plot Summary: The primary focus of this book is changing things when change is not wanted. The amazing part is how it deals with change in many aspects of life including career, family and friends. Introducing change can be difficult unless there's motivation. This book opens your eyes to things in a different light than perhaps before.

The authors do a great job of helping us realize the two positions we sometimes take when it comes to change. Position one is that of emotions (the elephant) whereas position two is our rational side (the rider). Most would think the rider controls the elephant but it is the opposite. The elephant controls the rider. "Anytime the six-ton Elephant and the Rider disagree about which direction to go, the Rider is going to lose. The book uses the analogy of someone trying to go on a diet. The rider side wants to lose weight by eating healthier but the elephant side loves the foods that are not good for you when trying to lose weight. Both rider and elephant must be on the same page and work together but this is not always the case. Your heart wants one thing but your mind wants something else. This is the Rider and the Elephant at war.

The book walks through how to get on the same page with your emotions and our rational side. There are ways to make changes other than the one we normally think about. Sometimes these are simple when a goal to achieve them is in place. It also brought to light how to react in certain situations that are simple. The authors aren't making light of the difficulty of change, but shows ways of making change in ways one would not imagine. It uses a simple approach to setting goals that are plain and simple. There is a lot of focus on finding the positive in an effort to heavily impact the desired change.

Book Club Meeting Discussion:

The first discussion about this book was how it flowed when it came to readability. Everyone could relate to at least one scenario in their workplace dealing with the “elephant”. With such a broad range of professions within the Project Management realm this book brought us to a basic concept about dealing with change. Everyone agreed change is hard, especially within organizations where the employees had been there for a long time.

There was overwhelming consensus for any change to occur; you must have a good reason, a good motivation and a good environment. We must attempt to persuade from a rational side, not our emotional side (the elephant) for change to occur in your environment (path).

Personal Comments:

This book had an immediate impact on me. I found myself using this approach with my college daughters as we discussed their challenges. Professionally the impact was even greater. I now work for a company that went through a major reorganization six months before my arrival and I could relate to 80% of the scenarios. I loved the book and the processes for making a decision based on rational, logical or for emotional reasons. So often we make emotional decisions that are not in the best interest of our organization. Now I feel better equipped to think, plan and plot a course for a better future as a new project manager.

A highlight of the book for me was considering change at every level – individual, organizational, and societal. This can be achieved within the small company I am employed by. As the book suggests, I’ll always work to find the bright spot in every situation, both personally and professionally.