

by what has been revealed to them. Some, later, have offered public warnings as to the growth, reach and cost to the community of organised crime. Those of us who have long been exposed to the *modus operandi* of organised crime, including sophisticated corporate crime, know that success in investigations is frequently dependent on close inter-agency co-operation and on the negotiation of those jurisdictional differences and artificial legislative and procedural barriers which historically have bedevilled law enforcement.

For the criminal justice systems of this country to become more effective and less preoccupied with peripheral technical and procedural issues, which obscure the real task of determining guilt or innocence, it is critical that the long-overdue harmonisation of our patchwork of criminal laws begins in earnest and without further delay.

The present uncertainty and dissembling may be satisfactory to defence counsel, but it is giving succour to criminals and enervating law enforcement. The *Crimes Amendment Act* does nothing to redress the balance.

Athol Moffitt, QC, former Justice of the New South Wales Supreme Court, and one who has seen at close quarters the unmasked face of major crime, said in his book *A Quarter to Midnight (The Australian Crisis: Organised Crime and the Decline of the Institutions of State)*

"It is a lesson of history that a nation declines when it harbours within it organisations that operate within the community applying their own rules and codes, while defying the laws and institutions of the nation, and where that nation has become helpless to establish its authority or declines to do so..." (p.12).

Australia is in danger of mimicking the peculiar brand of criminal justice in the United States where the bewildering number and variety of technical faults available for exploitation enables a lawyer to demonstrate technically that, despite his client being caught red-handed with the severed head of his victim under his arm, he is nevertheless technically innocent.

The *Crimes Amendment Act 1991* is destined to be a terror to those who steal bread and sleep under bridges, but a consolation to the wealthy and powerful. •

Achieving change in organisations

The key to organisational change is individual change. Organisations don't change if the people in them keep doing things in the old ways.

Organisational restructuring, new leaders, new mission statements and management information systems will not, in themselves, produce any organisational change. To be effective, organisational change must evoke and be supported by, changes in the way people think and act on the job.

That people resist change is a cliché, albeit a convenient one often invoked when organisational reforms fail to take root.

How do we help people manage change better?

First, we must recognise that embracing change is rarely easy. It is stressful because it involves recognising that our tried-and-true way of doing things is no longer appropriate.

There are no simple recipes for change management which will enable us to arrive at a new understanding without the often difficult process of getting there.

Dealing with change also demands that we, as individuals, take ownership of the process.

A frequent refrain after unsuccessful organisational change efforts is: "It would have worked if only they had involved the people affected by the change."

Rather than focusing on the way change has been introduced, people need to recognise their own responses to the threat of change and take responsibility for managing it themselves, not hand it over to a consultant, their boss, their subordinates or their union representative.

In dealing with change we should acknowledge that we attempt to limit its impact through habitual defence mechanisms. This is a surprisingly difficult recognition for many who pride themselves on thriving on change.

All of us have well-developed defences that allow us to handle



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the anxiety of uncertainty and challenge. Our invocation of such defences is normal and allows us to cope. But excessive reliance on particular defences can become pathological and can severely impair our capacity to deal with change. We can only manage change better once we confront our own response.

The following is a catalogue of common defences:

Denial is a refusal to face evidence of the need to change and it is one of the most familiar defences. It manifests itself in a kind of deafness; in not absorbing or recognising signs of crisis. "We've always done it this way", "the devil you know is better than the devil you don't" and "I can't see a problem here" are the sorts of comments which accompany a denial defence.

Impotence or paralysis occurs when people can recognise the need to change but can't act. They wait for time or new circumstances to negate the need for action.

Intellectualisation is a defence against change by retreating into abstractions, concepts, statistics or

figures. Rather than taking responsibility for changing, people look to better techniques or another iteration of the model.

Idealisation occurs where an individual identifies so totally with their project, their system, their branch or their baby that it becomes a part of themselves. In suggesting the need for change, rejection of the system is experienced as rejection of self. Challenge to the project is seen as personal annihilation.

One of the reasons why organisations find it so hard to reverse obsolete practices is because individuals ARE those practices — the director of manufacturing IS assembly line, rather than automated manufacture. Challenged, he or she responds defensively to main-

"The overall organisational good is neglected..."

tain face. If you don't like this system, then I go too.

Other systems of idealisation are over-identification and 'territoriality'.

An individual becomes so attached to the fate of her or his project, branch or employees that the big picture or the overall organisational good is neglected. They also find it difficult to admit that anybody else might have useful ideas or expertise to contribute.

"I've built this branch. I know better than anyone what's needed."

Omnipotence is a deceptive defence. People respond with a flurry of phone calls or memos, orders may be given and meetings called, all creating the illusion they are on top of everything. The illusion is seductive. The individual, colleagues and superiors may all actively conspire to believe in it, producing in turn other symptoms such as grandiosity and an inability to express vulnerability or ask for help. Some organisational cultures, of course, actively nurture such a culture of action for its own sake.

Other responses to change include regression or a longing for earlier days when tasks seemed

simpler, as well as displacement, where people focus on some other issue or more tractable problem rather than confront change.

Splitting and projection occur when a resisted or hated object within oneself is separated from self and, in projecting, attributed to someone or something else. What this enables us to do is locate the blame elsewhere. A common form of this is passing the buck but there are more insidious forms now at large, such as the scapegoating of entrepreneurs and deploring the lack of leadership.

A recent example of this defence at work is the finance industry's claim that it has suffered from a decline in corporate morality. It displaces the responsibility and absolves the victims from having to examine their own behaviour.

There is disagreement about how much any of these defensive responses in the face of change are tolerable. Yet there is much scope to improve our change management processes by anticipating defensive reactions. Both individuals and organisations can then take actions to ensure they don't acquire an overpowering hold.

Such actions would include, firstly, the recognition of habitual mechanisms an individual employs as part of his or her personality and management style.

Organisations, because of their cultures, also tend to encourage and reinforce some mechanisms. Bureaucratic organisations are more likely to encourage responses of denial and paralysis, entrepreneurial organisations may encourage grandiosity, while task organisations may intellectualise and displace or divert into information gathering.

Once there is a greater understanding of the mechanisms by which change is resisted in organisations, interventions can be designed to help surmount dysfunctional patterns.

Job rotation, training and experiential learning, changes in structure and reporting arrangements, shifts in cultural rituals or signals, can act as catalysts or triggers to break out of or go around dysfunctional patterns. •

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People may be the most valuable resource of all but like any other resource, they need care and understanding to perform at their best.

This applies in few occupations as markedly as it does in policing, where the stresses of everyday work can play a devastating part in preventing people consistently performing at their best.

Police administrators have accepted the fact and from this recognition have grown personal support services designed to ease the rough spots encountered during a career in policing.

Helping resolve personal problems has become the province of the AFP's Welfare team, with specially-selected staff located wherever they can be of most assistance.

Every member and staff member of the AFP has access to help and advice.

Welfare Adviser Rod McBride sees his job as going even further.

"Our aim in the Welfare system is to offer whatever level of support is required by members, staff members and families of the AFP," he said. "When we work in a profession such as policing that responds to other people's actions, it is sometimes very easy to forget that we or our families have needs also, or that we might be affected in some way by the type of work that we do."

The Welfare Scheme has grown out of a system initially established to assist supervisors and to provide a sympathetic point of contact for those members who may not wish to disclose a personal problem to their superiors. It was felt the stresses inherent in police work, as well as the pressures faced by members and staff members in their private lives required such a scheme.

Its work is carried out by the Welfare Adviser, a full-time officer located in Canberra, supported in all Regions by Regional Welfare Officers appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the officer-in-charge of the relevant Region, with the concurrence of the Australian Fed-