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Change Champions

Trainers often are on the front line in efforts to introduce change in an organization. As a change agent, you need to get buy-in within the first 60 days to get traction for your program. But how do you find champions of change? *Training* addressed this question to Conni Billé, the director of organizational development and training for consulting company LRA Worldwide, Inc.

“The key is to put the right people on your design team or recruit them for the beta class. In a classroom or group discussion, use your observation skills to identify the ‘champions of change.’ You will need two types: ‘inspirers’ and ‘doers.’

Inspirers are willing to give an opinion without looking around to see what the group thinks. They have energy, passion, and a sense of humor. Watch the body language of others in regard to these people; you will see empathy and relationship, and the emotion of the

speaker reflected in the listener’s expression.

Doers may not be the first aboard, but when they sign on, they will see the program through. They are not the first to speak, but when they do offer their opinion, it is well thought out, clearly stated, and the people around the room subtly nod and concur. This person has integrity and influence.

Beware the person who claims to be a champion of change because it is politically expedient but is secretly ambivalent. When the change program encounters the expected dose of resistance, the ambivalent advocate will be the first to jump ship.

The champion is the enthusiastic manager who ‘buys in’ and signs up his staff members, follows up with them to see how they apply what they learn, and notes and rewards the new skills in performance reviews.”

To see the full article, go to http://www.managesmarter.com/msg/search/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003618909