

## How to Adjust to a Reshaped Workplace

*By Accountemps*

If you are like many employees, your workplace is still feeling some effects of the Great Recession and the slow-to-gain-momentum recovery. Perhaps you have fewer coworkers now, as well as some new colleagues. Maybe you report to a different manager, or your job responsibilities have changed. There may be updated protocols to follow and redeveloped business strategies to understand.

People react differently to change, especially when it occurs within a relatively short period. Some find it difficult to adjust. Others may resent decisions the business has made or feel nervous about how these shifts will affect job security. You might be one who wonders if more change is on the horizon. Whatever your reaction, the question is, how can you successfully transition to what might become the “new normal” at your workplace? The key is keeping your focus on communication and flexibility.

- **Talk it out:** A great deal of the fear of change involves dealing with the unknown. If you’re unsure what changes in your workplace mean for you, take the initiative to find the answers you need. Talk to your supervisor: Ask to meet with him or her privately so you can ask questions and air your concerns. Get input from and share ideas with your co-workers, too. (Just be careful not to fall prey to the rumour mill, which can spin distorted facts.)

Look to others whose opinion you value and trust, too, such as a mentor, a former boss or coworker, or people in your professional network. Find out if they have been through similar change and how they dealt with it. What you learn may be applicable to your current experience.

- **Learn how to move on:** Adapting successfully to business changes requires looking at things in a different light. Consider your new situation: Are you unhappy because you don’t feel like you “fit in” as easily as you did before? While it may have been difficult to part ways with colleagues who were laid off or chose to leave the business, don’t pine for the past. It can interfere with your ability to build stronger bonds with remaining coworkers and forge relationships with new ones.

If change has brought more work to your desk, and you’re feeling overwhelmed, don’t be afraid to speak up. The fact that you were retained during the recession shows your contributions are valued by your employer. Ask your boss for additional support on priority assignments and whether less-critical tasks can be delegated, at least in the interim.

Additionally, if you discover your old skills don’t translate well to new duties, find out how you can update them. And if you know you can offer more to the firm as it evolves, tell your manager you’re willing to take on new projects and responsibilities or lend a hand to coworkers.

Whatever sort of change your company has undergone, it may take time for everyone to settle into a new situation. The best approach is to remain open-minded and take an active role in the process instead of letting it simply happen around you.

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