

Status quo: maintaining the status quo means doing nothing.

Performance of an organization can be assessed by performance of its end product and by analysis of quality of its output. Whether it is same, improving or deteriorating. Deterioration clearly indicates that organization is going down while maintaining the same level means maintaining status quo, which is dangerous.

Status quo is a Latin phrase that means “state in which”. It describes the current state of affairs. Term is used often politically. But use in business is also common. In academics it’s use is rare but not forbidden.

When it is used in politics by anyone, he is considered an anti-establishment rebel. When someone use it in an organization, he is often maligned for always pointing out the flaws of his organization. So often it carries negative meanings although one who is trying to bring into notice this status quo might have positive intentions.

What are signs of status quo in an academic institution?

Going to same type of meetings, generating the same reports and running the same type of campaigns are indicators of status quo. Using same ages old education, training and evaluation programs are few more clear indicators. Keeping eyes closed and turning a deaf ear towards feedback about the end product of organization is a criminal negligence and not discussing these things in boardroom may be an inadvertent or a deliberate effort to maintain status quo.

Important question is that why people wants to maintain a status quo? To maintain status quo means to keep things the way they are. Jordan Loftis writes, “Our Achilles heal is that we see something new as inherently risky, while something familiar deemed safe.”(Jordan Loftis.co schedule.com).

Some other factors why some organizations are trapped in status quo are: Lack of a clear direction. It is possible that many people sitting in boardroom does not know the clear strategy

of the organization, therefore unable to help.

- A focus on planning and not on execution.
- Unwilling to take risks.
- Excusing mediocre performance
- Reluctance to hold people accountable.

(albu-strategymanagement.com)

Change is often difficult to accept. Usually it is frightening and threatening because of its uncertainty. As a result status quo becomes more acceptable to many of us.

But unfortunately our world doesn't act the same way. It is changing fast, at a pace which we are not able to cope with. Competitors change tactics, customers change buyers, governments change policies, and occasionally events take place which were not foreseeable.

Very often these things happen suddenly, quickly and without a warning. We find ourselves in a catch 22 situation. Thus in any organization managers and organizers should always be ready to face such situations. They should be able to adapt and change. They should resist the tendency of staying same.

This anti status quo thinking and prac-

tice will help an organization surviving in difficult circumstances and will keep it progressing even in turbulent times.

So maintenance of status quo is dangerous for an institution. Wherever it is visible or perceptible it should be challenged. Challenging it is not a rebellious or negative action. It is saving an institution from disaster.

It should be challenged by:

- New ideas
- New action plan and a
- New roadmap for achieving objectives
- Secret of success lies in not staying same.

Prof Dr Tariq Mehmood Khan

Ex-Head Department of Surgery
Abbassi Shaheed Hospital/ Karachi Medical and Dental College
Ex-Registrar, Secretary, Councilor,
Ex-Director General, International relations and Senior Vice President of College of Physicians and Surgeons, Pakistan.
Professor of General Surgery,
Sir Syed Medical College, Karachi
E-mail: drtariqmehmood_k@hotmail.com

References:

1. Why Challenging The Status Quo Will Make You A Better Leader And How To Do It 77 by Jordan Loftis, coschedule.com May 4, 2018 09:30 AM
2. Status quo by From Wikipedia, the free, en.wikipedia.org November 2, 2018 10:39 The risk of maintaining the status quo by see, linkedin.com December 4, 2018
3. Business Killer – 5 Reason the Status Quo is Not Enough, by Our People, albu-strategymanagement.com March 15, 2013 03:15 PM
4. Change is Good: Why You Should Always Challenge the Status Quo, frog-dog.com | September 22, 2015