

**13** days to remarkable leadership

# **Communicating Change More Effectively: Five Ways to Pull Back the Curtain on Change**

A Companion Learning Tool to this video



Kevin Eikenberry  
Chief Potential Officer  
The Kevin Eikenberry Group

In today's companion video I talked about how we as leaders must let people know what is going on with changes sooner than later. Specifically, I talked about "pulling back the curtain".

Think about attending a play, whether at your local high school or on Broadway. When you sit down, what do you see in front of you?

A big curtain.

And what do you immediately wonder?

What is behind the curtain!

This happens with changes all the time. People know something is going to change, but all they can see is the curtain. And since this is more important to them than the first scene of a play, they immediately begin to wonder what the change is, what it will bring and how it will impact them and their work.

And the longer until the curtain is drawn, the more anxiety is raised and the more they begin to think about what is behind the curtain.

Enter gossip and guessing.

When people don't know what is behind the curtain, they make it up – and what they speculate, guess and gossip about is never positive or hopeful in nature.

So while leaders are waiting to have all the information and to make a complete and full announcement, people are looking at the curtain and making it up.

If you want to lead and communicate change more effectively, you need to pull back the curtain and communicate more and more quickly. Here are five ways to do just that.

**Speak early.** This one may seem obvious – pull back the curtain by pulling back the curtain. It may be uncomfortable and you might not have all the info. Use this as your guide – share what you can, as soon as you can. Let people know you will tell them more as soon as you can – and then do it. You will reduce some potential anxiety (by reducing the unknown) and as long as you follow through, will build trust as well.

**Admit you don't know it all.** It is ok that you don't know it all (yet). People would rather know something than . . . nothing.

**Entertain questions – formally and informally.** Anytime you gather people to talk about a change, your goal is to create conversation, not deliver a scripted monologue. Make sure you ask for, encourage, reward and answer questions. Do it during presentations, do it at the coffee pot, do it as you walk down the hall ways. Give people as many chances as possible to ask their questions and share their concerns. This is critical to your success in communicating change and reducing fear, anxiety and the unknowns surrounding it.

**Acknowledge what you are hearing.** If gossip is flowing and you've heard it (directly or indirectly), acknowledge it. Let people know what you have heard. Recognize those rumors and conversations by mentioning them, confirming or denying them and moving on. The worst thing you can do is ignore them. Not only does this not clear up the communication, but your team will also feel that you are out-of-touch.

**Ask people what they have heard.** If you haven't heard stuff, know that it is there- you just haven't heard it yet. Don't ask and then get angry – ask without retribution, so you can acknowledge it, and straighten out the story as needed.

## Your Now Steps

1. Identify any current gossip or concerns related to a change.
2. Address it today, using the steps listed above.

## Additional Resources

- For some additional thoughts and writing on all things related to goal setting, check out this list of articles from my blog.
- For a more strategies for improving Goal achievement for yourself and your teams, check out our Leadership Goal Achievement Pack 2-CD set here.
- If you want a powerful set of tools for your Personal Goal Setting, check out our multimedia achievement package, Start Today – Make Your Next Twelve Months Your Best 12 Months. Use promo code 20DAYS for either of these products and receive a 20% discount!

## ABOUT THE KEVIN EIKENBERRY GROUP

The Kevin Eikenberry Group is committed to making a REMARKABLE difference...for leaders and future leaders, their teams, their organizations, and the world. We deliver that difference through a wide variety of learning experiences. Specifically, we provide thought leadership, workshops, coaching, consulting and a variety of learning products to help individuals (and their organizations) reach their potential.

You can learn more about us at: [KevinEikenberry.com](http://KevinEikenberry.com)



@TheKEGroup



/KevinEikenberryGroup



The Kevin Eikenberry Group



/KevinEikenberryGroup

The Kevin Eikenberry Group  
8021 Westover Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46268

(317) 387-1424

## ABOUT KEVIN EIKENBERRY

Kevin Eikenberry is a world renowned leadership expert, a two-time bestselling author, speaker, consultant, trainer, coach, leader, learner, husband and father (not necessarily in that order).

Kevin is the Chief Potential Officer of The Kevin Eikenberry Group, a leadership and learning consulting company that has been helping organizations, teams and individuals reach their potential since 1993. Kevin's specialties include leadership, teams and teamwork, organizational culture, facilitating change, organizational learning and more.

Kevin also is the creator and content developer of The Remarkable Leadership Learning System, a continual leadership development process based on his bestselling book, Remarkable Leadership: Unleashing Your Leadership Potential One Skill at a Time, and focused on developing the 13 competencies of remarkable leaders with virtually delivered content to leaders worldwide. He is also the developer of the Remarkable Leadership Workshop, the Coaching Training Camp and the co-developer of the Bud to Boss and Ultimate Communicator Workshops – all offered in both public and in-house versions across North America.

**PUBLISHED BY:**

**The Kevin Eikenberry Group**  
8021 Westover Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46268

© Copyright 2016

The Kevin Eikenberry Group All Rights Reserved.

