

Directions:

Read the following text and answer the questions by choosing the most suitable subheading from the list A-G for each of the numbered paragraphs (41-45). There are two extra subheadings which you do not need to use. Mark your answers on the **ANSWER SHEET**. (10 points)

Five Steps to Suggesting a Change at Work

That'll Actually Get Taken Seriously

Everyone wants to be that person—the one who looks at the same information as everyone else, but who sees a fresh, innovative solution. However, it takes more than simply having a good idea. How you share it is as important as the suggestion itself. Why? Because writing a new script—literally or figuratively—means that other team members will have to adapt to something new. Not to mention, if the process you're scrapping is one someone else suggested, there's the possibility of hurt feelings. To gain buy-in on an innovative, new idea, follow these steps:

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Great ideas don't stand alone. In other words, you can't mention your suggestion once and expect it to be adopted. To see a change, you'll need to champion your plan and sell its merits. In addition, you need to be willing to stand up to scrutiny and criticism and be prepared to explain your innovation in different ways for various audiences.

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Sometimes it makes sense to go to your boss first. But other times, it's useful to build a coalition among your co-workers or other stakeholders. When it works, it works great—because you're ready for your stubborn supervisor's pushback with answers like, "Actually, I connected with a few people in our tech department to discuss how much time these kinds of website updates would take, and they suggested they have the bandwidth."

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One of the biggest barriers to gaining buy-in occurs when the owner of an idea is viewed as argumentative, defensive, or close-minded. Because, let's be honest: No one likes a know-it-all. So, if people disagree with you, don't be indignant. Instead, listen to their concerns fully, try to understand their perspective, and include their concerns (and possible remedies) in future discussions. So, instead of saying, "Martha, our current slogan is confusing and should be updated," you could try, "Martha raises a great point that our current slogan has a long history for our stakeholders, but I wonder if we might be able to brainstorm a tagline that could build on that—and be clearer for new customers."

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New ideas are the grandchildren of old ones. In other words, don't throw old solutions under the bus to make your improvement stand out. Remember that in light of whatever the problem the old system solved—or, maybe, has failed to solve in recent memory—it was a great idea at the time. Appreciating the older contributions as you suggest future innovations helps bolster the credibility of your idea.

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When pitching a new idea, it's important to use the language of abundance instead of the language of deficit. Instead of saying what is wrong, broken, or suboptimal, talk about what is right, fixable, or ideal. For example, try, "I can see lots of applications for this new approach" rather than, "This innovation is the only way." Be optimistic but realistic, and you will stand out.

- [A] Stay positive.
- [B] Respect the past.
- [C] Use channels.
- [D] Give it time.
- [E] Invite resistance.
- [F] Be a salesman.
- [G] Be humble.