

A TIME OF TURMOIL



CHOOSE THE RIGHT TEAM: Ruth Tearle has helped many companies manage transition

How to bring about change painlessly

CAPE Town-based Ruth Tearle has been helping organisations manage change for 20 years — and she likes to use a board game to do it.

Tearle recommends using the game, available for just under R7 000 from her website, www.changedesigns.co.za, at the start of any change project. “It’s a series of cards and a board game that gets you thinking through your whole strategy,” she said. “The first element of the strategy would be choosing the right team and making sure everyone understands the role they need to play, to support one another and to reinforce one another.”

Each card represents a different role, and part of the game focuses on tactics: “Your tactics will include making sure you know what you’re trying to change, making sure that the change is worthwhile, how you communicate it to people, how you overcome resistance to change and so on.” The game helped to make launching the change process “positive and stress-free”, she said.

“We’ve got various cards on mixing the head, heart and soul. Because change is about planning properly; that’s the head. Then it’s understanding how people feel about the change, and getting them to want to do what they have to do to change; that’s the heart. And then there’s the soul stuff which is about inspiring them, pretty much like Obama and Mandela do.”

So, does a change management expert need an MBA, or would a degree in psychology be better? “You need life experience, and wisdom rather than knowledge,” said Tearle, who has written several books, including *Blackboards, Bubbles & Cappuccinos*, which promises to reinforce training in “personal mastery, spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence”.