



**Change? Why?**

**I haven't done anything wrong, have I?**

**You may have to explain what you mean by change.**

Words like *renovate*, *update*, *modify*, even *overhaul*, all imply one thing: change. In my line of work change is the main ingredient to becoming more profitable, and I believe that change is necessary if we want to continue to succeed. No, it's not you... it's the industry, it's the ever growing competition, shrinking margins, managed care, mail order and a myriad of other things.

In many minds and hearts when we hear the word *change* we think of negative things. We might think we need to change because we have done something wrong. We may think that if we change anything in our store, customers will no longer like us. One might even ask: "*Why do we need to change? Isn't the reason we are successful is the fact that customers like us the way we are and we haven't changed? If we change anything we may lose people, did you think of that?*"

A very wise friend of mine offered a great example on how to talk about change: "*Change can be positive – use the word to create energy instead of fear.*"

When you begin overhauling your front-end, ask the staff to help you embrace and put in motion positive change. You may be changing policies, floor plans, product mix, hours and or pricing but you are only doing it to meet the challenge of staying successful head-on. Explain that they did nothing wrong, and you know they will continue to excel with the new updates.

I once was involved in a major redesign of an independent pharmacy in the Northeast. The store had two entrances, I took one out, the fixtures use to run horizontal to the pharmacy, I rotated all the fixtures 45 degrees, I moved the checkout from one end of the store to the opposite end, and I cut the card department by more than half. The owner's wife called me in the middle of the night. She said she didn't think her husband could take all the changes and I may have to move everything back. I told them I would, but after one month. We didn't have to do it. After the first 12 months the store showed a 37% increase and has showed a gain each year after that. The owner still hates change. But he is learning to live with it. 😊