

The following is from an edition of Dale Dauten's column The Corporate Curmudgeon, originally published in February 2010, and mentions AAIMCo Vice President Michael G. Manes.

When things go wrong, there is something about drawing up a list of Reasons Why that is... so... so... reasonable. There's comfort in understanding. However, once you have a list of Reasons, it can be useful to cross out the word "Reasons" and write "Excuses" in its place, just to see how it fits.

What got me thinking about reasons versus excuses was doing research for a talk at a conference for an industry in long, slow decline. Doing my background work, the executives had plenty of reasons for the steady drop. I recounted this list during my talk, got everyone nodding, then announced that these were just excuses to cover-up the real problem: a failure of leadership. This came as a surprise, but only to the leaders.

It wasn't that they weren't working hard. Many of them spoke proudly of how well their businesses were serving customers. However, a smoothly functioning operation is a victory for management, not leadership. Looking down and around — making sure there's parking and that the toilets flush, and someone to take customers' money — that's management. Being the place that people want to be, being different while being the same, that is leadership. It's the leader's job to climb to

the top of the mountain with the binoculars — to see the future and get there.

Speaking of getting to the future, I've been following the work of **Michael Manes** of **Square**

Making Sure Customers Will Pay For What They Don't Yet Want

Dale Dauten

The Corporate Curmudgeon

Just because everything is different doesn't mean anything has changed. — Irene Peter

One Consulting in New Iberia, Louisiana, who, after years of referring to himself as a Change Agent, has changed his title — he's now a Change Architect.

(Let's take a minute to consider the issue of job titles. Sure, there are some that make my eyes roll, like Director of Wow! But there are others that make me smile, and offer insight into how the company sees itself — for instance,

Director of Talent Development. And while you and I might disagree over the usefulness of clever job titles, I have only to pass along one title to convince you that the wrong one can have an effect worse than making your eyes roll; it can make your eyes glaze over. This is an actual title of a guy from a national research company: NORTH AMERICAN STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT PRACTICE LEADER. Just typing that, my fingers went numb.)

But back to **Michael Manes**. He's a man of many insights, one of those whose name on my email list starts me smiling even before I can open the message. He sent me a pair of quotes to illustrate the difference between Change Management and Change Architecture.

Those who embrace change will be the winners, those who will resist it will be the losers.

— Jack Welch

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

— Peter Drucker

Even more telling, he summarized the difference between his old and new titles this way: The Change Manager believes in Carpe Diem! — Seize the day! — whereas the Change Architect believes in Carpe Mañana! — Seize tomorrow!

In that pair, Manes has gotten to the difference between management and leadership. The manager makes sure that customers get what they pay for, whereas, the true leader — Carpe Manana! — makes sure that customers will some day pay for what they don't yet know they're going to want.



Dale Dauten is co-founder of AgreementHouse.com, a company resolving business disputes. A paperback edition of his book *The Laughing Warriors* has recently been released. Please write to him in care of King Features Syndicate, 300 W. 57th Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10019, or at dale@dauten.com.

Mike Manes is the owner of Square One Consulting and a Vice President of AAIMCo. He has authored two books: *Organizational Planning, Quick and Simple* and *Gumbo, Cooking up the Organization of the Future*. His blogs include www.mycajunlife.com and www.thewisdomofscartissue.blogspot.com. Mike is a nationally recognized speaker on issues of Change and its Architecture, Risk and Insurance, and Planning. He can be reached at squareoneconsulting@cox.net or (337) 577-3885.

The American Association of Insurance Management Consultants (AAIMCo) is an association of consultants to the insurance industry, insurance companies, agents, brokers and their consumers. Information regarding AAIMCo can be found at www.aaimco.com.