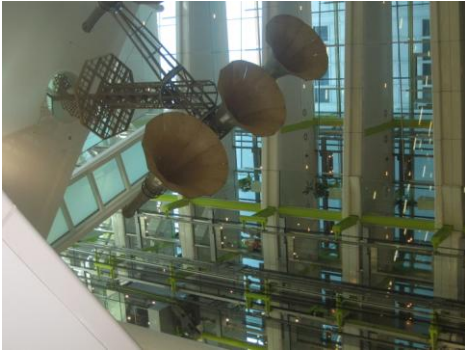


## Change Management – a dark art or just plain common sense?

Thursday 7 April 2011 at Unilever, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4

Introduced by: Robert McLean, Workplace Committee, CoreNet Global UK Chapter  
 Moderator: Adryan Bell, Regional Lead for New Workplace Programme, Deutsche Bank  
 Speakers: Professor Paul Winter, Professor Strategic Management, Oxford Brookes University  
 Michelle Pattison, Global Agile Working Director, Unilever plc  
 Jane Scott Paul, Chief Executive, Association of Accounting Technicians



Set up and organised by CoreNet's UK Chapter Workplace Committee under the leadership of Robert McLean, who introduced the event, this terrific breakfast forum, held in Unilever's impressive auditorium, concentrated on the management of change in the workplace.

Adryan Bell, moderating, kicked off the event by making us all realise how many major changes we undergo in our daily lives. How much more difficult then, he asked, was it to manage changes in the workplace with 100s buying into management's proposals? Failures he said, promoting his latest book, were often where the cultural side of life is overlooked in favour of numbers.



Taking on the narrative, Paul Winter took us back to our anthropological and Darwinian roots. Property, he said, is a cave and our natural response is to protect the cave and ourselves against the roaming Siberian tigers. Of three types of change (anticipatory, reactionary, and crisis), crisis is the most expensive - if the deck has burnt it has to be completely replaced. You have to decide, he said, how you regard your property: as a factor of production, or as a stage on which to play out the life of the company.

Discussing actual changes, Michelle Pattison described how Unilever had managed in two different places: 100 Victoria Embankment, which had undergone a recent total refit, and Leatherhead where a new complex had been constructed. At Leatherhead, under single leadership and clear governance, the move resulted in 'amazing' positive behaviour changes; at Victoria Embankment, while the workplace had changed significantly, changes in behaviour patterns were less obvious. Change management is not, she said, as much as common sense - and an absolute necessity.



Finally Jane Scott Paul told us about her professional institute's successful move into the twenty first century, from an old Victorian building with closed offices to open plan working. Over 18 months' planning, building three key change teams including a third of the 140 staff, giving them a voice in the choice of new furnishing, involving those who would or could be difficult and showing them the space before the move, all contributed to a smooth transition. We have weathered the recession well, she said, and it's absolutely to do with the change.

Speaking over, there was a further chance for some real talking as we moved upstairs into Unilever's impressive atrium for more coffee and networking. A most stimulating and successful event.

The CoreNet UK Workplace Committee, in support of this forum, has produced their '[10 Top Tips](#)'. If you would like to join this committee you would be more than welcome. Please contact Robert McLean via [ukchapteradmin@corenetglobal.org](mailto:ukchapteradmin@corenetglobal.org).