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Who Moved My Cheese is the title of a motivational book by Spencer Johnson written in the form of a business fable. The book is about change and its inevitability. Its message is to anticipate, monitor and adapt to change and embrace it with open arms.

Ironically, the book was published back in 1998, the year I left my role as a Partner at Plante & Moran. I moved my own cheese back then to pursue a more “balanced” life/career experience. That change sent me on a journey of learning; learning more about who I am, my vision for my ideal future and the skills that I wanted to further develop.

Fast forward to 2010. I am now fully engaged and loving my role as an executive coach and organization consultant. While I love my work, my day to day office experience, until now, has been somewhat of a solitary one. I’m writing this from my new, spectacular office. Let me tell you how I got here.

For the last several years, my office was located in the suburbs and included a few lawyers, insurance agents and recruiters, each of us in our own world. I am a person who enjoys people and camaraderie, however, and the solo existence was not energizing for me. My office situation had to change.

As a coach and facilitator of positive change, I looked at my dilemma as if I were my client. The current situation was not ideal, I was motivated to make a change and I was willing to put the time and effort into creating a new experience for myself and my clients.

So what did I do? I followed a process that I utilize with many of my clients who are looking at making a change. My process was the following:

- Clarify your purpose
- Create a vision
- Develop an action plan
- Act on it

Here’s how I applied it.

Purpose: I have always been consistent about my purpose. That would not change. Find a practice setting that would allow me to continue to provide the highest quality coaching and consulting experiences for my clients.

Vision: Next step was to create a vision for my ideal practice setting. What would it look like? Well, that was easy. I wanted to be around other professionals, ideally in a similar or related field. I



envisioned conversations and connections. Of course the physical space would be comfortable, not necessarily palatial. It would be a space where I could meet with my clients either face to face or via telephone conference calls in an environment conducive to individual learning and growth. Clients would be warmly greeted by a friendly receptionist. I would have access to technology and training facilities for my group meetings and presentations. Oh and of course, the monthly expense would have to continue to be affordable.

Plan: My plan involved identifying organizations in the community that might fit the bill. Would a firm or company be interested in subletting space to an executive coach and allow me to be “embedded” in their office? I was not looking for a merger. I wanted to remain independent. The criteria envisioned above would be my outline.

Action: Being a professional in the same community for 30 years does have its advantages. I am fortunate to have wonderful connections and history with people who know me and my reputation. On my very first inquiry, I hit a home run. “Your timing is perfect, Mary. We just made a decision to move into new offices and there will be extra space for you.” The organization, [Findley Davies](#), provides HR and benefits consulting (no executive coaching) with offices in three states. Great people, outstanding professionals and synergistic with the work I do. The office setting is fantastic although I will have to get used to being downtown again after 25 years in the suburbs. Oh, and the price is right.

My process worked. I moved in over the weekend. Packing up all my boxes and memories after spending many years in one spot was nostalgic. (I did save my relic red and blue “tick” pencil. I think it’s probably 20 years old but it holds fond memories for me.) But I’m excited for this change and the possibilities that it brings.

Who moved my cheese? I did and I’m excited for the next phase of my journey.

Please note my new address:

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