Change vs Run the Business

Every organization has to do two jobs at the same time. It must keep today's work running smoothly, and it must prepare for tomorrow. Many managers describe this as the split between "Run the Business" and "Change the Business". The idea helps leaders decide how to share three limited resources: budget, people and time. Getting this balance right is one of the quiet keys to a healthy organization.

1. Run the Business

Run the Business covers everything that keeps daily operations working. This includes serving customers, paying salaries, maintaining equipment, fixing problems and keeping systems available. People often call it "keeping the lights on". The goals here are efficiency, reliability and steady quality. This work is rarely exciting, but when it fails, everyone notices at once.

Example: at home, paying the bills, buying groceries and repairing a leaking tap keep the household running.

At work: Rana leads operations at a distribution company. Every day her team makes sure that orders are picked, trucks leave on time and customers receive what they ordered.

2. Change the Business

Change the Business covers the projects that improve or transform how the organization works. Examples are new products, new systems, new processes and new markets. This work has a start and an end, and it aims to make the business better, faster or different. Some organizations use a third bucket. The research firm Gartner, for example, splits IT spending into run, grow and transform, where grow extends what the business already does and transform creates something new.

Example: renovating the kitchen or learning a new language changes life at home instead of simply running it.

At work: Rana's company plans a new warehouse system that will track every order automatically. This project is Change the Business work, and it comes on top of the daily operations.

3. Why the Balance Matters

Budget, people and time are limited, so every hour spent on one bucket is an hour not spent on the other. If running takes everything, the organization slowly falls behind its competitors and its customers' expectations. If change takes everything, daily service suffers, and customers feel it first. Running usually needs the larger share, because operations never stop. The real task is not to choose one side, but to find the mix that fits the organization's situation.

Example: a family that spends all its money on renovations may struggle to pay the monthly bills.

At work: Rana knows that the new system matters for the future. She also knows that one week of late deliveries could cost the company important clients.

This document is a property of Asaseeyat Academy - © Copy Right Protected.

4. The Warning Signs

Too much run shows up as a business that feels stuck. The same problems return every month, old systems are patched again and again, and good ideas wait years for attention. Too much change shows up as tired teams and falling service. Projects compete for the same people, deadlines slip, and daily work is done in a hurry or not at all. Both situations are signals to look at the split again.

Example: a car that is always repaired but never replaced, and a home that is always half renovated, are two sides of the same problem.

At work: Rana notices that her best supervisors spend most of their week in project meetings. At the same time, customer complaints about late orders begin to rise.

5. Deciding the Split

There is no single correct split for every organization. It depends on the strategy, the market, the age of the systems and how much risk the business can take. A company in a fast-changing market usually needs more change, while a stable, strictly regulated business may give more weight to reliable running. A useful habit is to list all work and spending under Run or Change, and then ask whether the mix supports the strategy. Leaders should review the split regularly, not only when problems appear.

Example: before the busy wedding season, a small bakery focuses on running smoothly and moves its new menu to the quiet months.

At work: Rana and her manager list every task and project under Run or Change. They agree to automate two routine reports and to give the warehouse project a clear, limited team.

6. Protecting Run While Changing

Change must not break the daily business that pays for it. Good leaders protect running work by giving projects their own people, or at least clear time limits for people who do both. They introduce big changes in phases, test them first in one place, and keep a way back if something goes wrong. When change is done this way, today's service stays reliable while tomorrow's improvements arrive.

Example: a restaurant that renovates one section at a time can keep serving guests during the work.

At work: Rana launches the new system in one warehouse first, while the old system stays ready as a backup. Only when it works well does the company roll it out to the other sites.

Conclusion

In summary, every organization needs both Run the Business and Change the Business. Running serves customers today, and changing makes sure the organization is still strong tomorrow. Watch for the warning signs of too much of either, decide the split based on strategy, and review it regularly. The strongest organizations change with confidence because their daily operations stay strong.

This document is a property of Asaseeyat Academy - © Copy Right Protected.