

Who Moved My Cheese? An Amazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work and in Your Life is a 1998 book by Dr. Spencer Johnson. It details an allegorical tale about mice looking for cheese in a maze, working as an example for businessmen and women to learn how to adapt and survive changes in the economic landscape.

## **A 3 Minute Summary of the 15 Core Lessons**

### **#1 Change is a Constant**

Whether you appreciate it or not, the world is in constant flux and everything is always changing. Being able to roll with the punches and accept that things will always change will result in a happier outlook on life in a better strategy to reach your goals. Don't be locked into a single plan or pathway to success, as the odds are, you'll have to change at least something about your ideas at one point or another.

### **#2 Move On to New Opportunities**

If change is a constant in this world, so is disappointment and failure. No matter how skilled you are, you'll eventually run into a roadblock or stumble from a mistake. But the key between successful people and unsuccessful ones is that successful people will move on to new opportunities rather than giving up when they fail.

### **#3 Don't Take Yourself So Seriously**

This book is written largely in an allegory and is a tale about mice searching for cheese. If nothing else, learn not to focus on your fears as insurmountable obstacles and don't take your goals and dreams so seriously that you can't learn to laugh at your responses. Being easygoing is a great gift you can give yourself.

### **#4 It's Never Too Late to Change**

The characters in the story also discover that, even when things get terribly bad, they can still change their behavior or their plan and come out with some success. You always have the choice to remain where you are, frozen in failure, or to move on to new opportunities and change your behavior. Always opt for the latter option, especially since it matches the state of the world around us.

### **#5 Anticipate Change**

It's one thing to accept that change is a natural part of the world. It's another thing to be ready for the allegorical "cheese" to move from place to place. Being ready for change is critical to surviving in the business world and in your personal relationships. You should try to welcome this challenge rather than dread change's arrival.

### **#6 The Old Ways Don't Always Work**

The characters learn early on that returning to the old places where they had found the cheese before doesn't work in their new circumstances. Don't rely on the old ways of doing things when it comes to your business. Instead, adapt your game plan and be flexible enough to change how you operate to survive and thrive no matter where change takes you.

### **#7 Keep It Simple**

Don't over-complicate your plans or procedures. Over-analyzation and over-complication are not only a waste of time but confusing to your workers. As a business leader, you should form a simple message and outline for your plans and follow through. Simple plans are easier to adapt to during times of change, as well.

### **#8 Don't Be Afraid of Change**

Embracing the challenge and opportunity that comes every time the titular "cheese" is moved for your business is a much better response than dreading the inevitable altering of the business landscape. Treat it instead like the thrill of a hunt and allow it to feed your curiosity and help you see the world in a new light. You might even find new cheese you never expected!

### **#9 Keep an Eye on Things**

The characters learn to check on their cheese frequently, so they know when it'll get old or move. This is a great idea in a business context. While you can enjoy change and the opportunities that it brings, it's also smart to be aware of oncoming change as best as you can. Don't let change take you completely off guard, as you might not be as prepared as you think.

### **#10 Visualize an End Goal**

If you find that stepping past your fear is too difficult, it may help to imagine the new "cheese" at the end of the maze. Focusing on your goals rather than the new ways in which you need to reach them might be more effective if you find yourself paralyzed with indecision.

### **#11 Let Go of Old Things Quickly**

When the time does come to change, as it inevitably will, you need to let go and transition to the new system or goal as soon as possible. In terms of the story, the sooner you let go of old "cheese", the sooner you can locate the new tasty stuff and enjoy life once again.

### **#12 Those Who Don't Change Go Extinct**

Businesses die every day, and they are usually the ones who didn't move and chase after the new cheese, whether out of fear or because they just weren't quick enough. Don't be one of these businesses and die as the times change. Instead, try to make your business one of the lasting adaptable ones that is a model for others.

### **#13 What Would You Be Without Fear?**

A good way to model your business procedures or plan, both during a time immediately after change or before change, is to imagine how you would do things if you weren't worried about finding new cheese. This can help you develop action plans for when it becomes time to chase after new cheese or after things settle down.

### **#14 Always Be Ready for Change**

In keeping with monitoring the "cheese", you should also always be ready to move in

case things proceed quickly. Agile, adaptable businesses are those best positioned to take advantage of new opportunities when new cheese appears in the maze.

### **#15 Avoid Complacency**

Mastering all of the above techniques will help you navigate the maze of the business world adeptly and ensure that you can meet any challenge you might encounter. But these skills are only useful if you continue to cultivate them. Be sure to practice change readiness and enjoyment always, even if change has stalled for a time.

## **Top 10 Quotes from Who Moved My Cheese**

1. "Life moves on and so should we."
2. "What would you do if you weren't afraid?"
3. "What you are afraid of is never as bad as what you imagine. The fear you let build up in your mind is worse than the situation that actually exists."
4. "When you stop being afraid you feel good."
5. "See what you're doing wrong, laugh at it, change and do better."
6. "The quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you find new cheese."
7. "If you do not change, you can become extinct!"
8. "It is safer to search in the maze than to remain in a cheeseless situation."
9. "Better late than never."
10. "Movement in new direction helps find new cheese."