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The Kaizen Concept: Your Key to Continuous Improvement

Adapt this practice from the automotive industry to overhaul anything.

By Libby Gill

Ever feel stuck with a challenge that seems so big you just can't imagine reaching your goal? You think, "What's the use? How will I ever get there?" Well, first of all, stop being so hard on yourself. And second, welcome to the single most valuable tool to get you the long-term results you crave - assuming you take action: *Kaizen*.

I discovered the *kaizen* philosophy when I lived in Japan as a teenager and watched how our florist applied it to the elegant Ikebana floral arrangements he created every week – each one more beautiful than the one the week before. *Kaizen*, literally *kai*, meaning "change," and *zen*, meaning "good" or to "become good," is the practice of ongoing incremental change. Adopting *kaizen* in both your personal and professional life could be the single most important change you make in your journey to living the destiny you deserve.

Practicing *kaizen* gives you the kind and gentle permission and time you need to create the permanent change you desire. It creates a safe, non-judging, non-blaming space – either literally, like a workplace, or emotionally – where you can evolve into the person you want to be.

If you're overweight and out of shape, for instance, you won't wake up tomorrow fit and trim. But by folding the practice of *kaizen* into the way you eat and exercise, you will see the small change on your scale tomorrow morning and congratulate yourself for choosing to walk off your stress instead of trying to eat it away. Same with your business, where minor, but consistent, changes will ultimately reap major rewards.

Kaizen teaches you to honor the small, incremental changes that will eventually allow you to blossom into the person you know you can be. With every passing day, with every passing week, you will be transforming into the person who is equipped for the fulfilling life you desire. Learn how to practice *kaizen* and that's the first, most powerful change you'll make in the direction of your future.

*Libby Gill is an executive coach, leadership expert, and international speaker. She is the former head of communications and PR for Sony, Universal, and Turner Broadcasting. Author of award-winning **You Unstuck: Mastering the New Rules of Risk-taking in Work and Life**. Her new book, **Hope IS a Strategy: Leading Through Change, Challenge, and Chaos** will be published in Spring 2018. You can learn more about Libby's work at www.LibbyGill.com or take her career assessment at <http://www.YourCareerQuiz.com>.*

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