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INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND THE BENEFIT OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT

CEOCFO: *Ms. Streck, what is the concept at Kaizen InfoSource?*

Ms. Streck: Kaizen InfoSource is a records and information management consulting company. The name is derived from the Japanese concept of making changes in small increments, reviewing those changes, and building on those changes. We, at Kaizen, believe that is how improvements in information management within any organization are made; small incremental changes and building on changes over time.

CEOCFO: *When might a company turn to you? What is a common engagement and something outside the box?*

Ms. Streck: We get calls from large and small companies. We have supported companies with employees that number in the hundreds of thousands as well as very small companies, and we get calls from organizations at various stages of maturity in managing information. Our engagements usually begin with developing the governance requirements for an organization. We can start from scratch to build the requirements or we can engage with an organization that has some structure but does not know how to apply that governance to the electronic information.

Traditional programs for records and information began with paper, but that is not where the problem is today. Today it is in the volume of electronic data, especially email that companies amass over time. Usually companies do not contact Information Management consultants until they are over ten years or older, and over that period a great deal of information has been stored. Therefore, we write the governance, policies, procedures and retention schedules. We also help with the change management, improving user adoption of the tools and rules of governance. If you have allowed a certain behavior for ten years, during which an employee has individual control of his/her documents, bringing uniform standards and governance to employees can be difficult to implement. Kaizen InfoSource is unique from other consultants because we help manage this change for improved user adoption.

CEOCFO: *Are people coming to Kaizen InfoSource because they understand the depth of what you do or often surprised to find out that you go that extra step?*

Ms. Streck: Surprise comes from not fully understanding the overarching role information governance plays in an organization every day. It affects all users and all systems. We go the extra step because we offer our clients the skills and experience of practitioners with over 100 combined years in these areas of specialty, within corporations and law firms supporting many industries, public and private. Just writing governance or improving governance does not ensure user adoption. Our experience has shown that it will not be successful without change management. Companies that do standard bid processes will not know the significance of change management without talking to our consultants.

CEOCFO: *Do you find that as regulations and the need for governance increases, companies are starting to look earlier or still not getting it yet?*

Ms. Streck: In generally they are not getting it yet. Consultants have to be able to quantify why the absence of information governance is costly. A recent article talked about the loss in productivity that comes from poor information management. If two people on the same team have the same information, but title it differently, manage it differently, then how does an organization know which is the right document. There is a great deal of time spent by employees looking for information, and they often find the wrong information. There is a huge amount of lost productivity as a result of the poor management of information.

CEOCFO: *There are services that offer a standard solution. Is your offering more customized? What do you look at that you would need to incorporate for any specific company that others may not?*

Ms. Streck: We start with trying to understand where the information is and how it is used. That step, in essence, makes every engagement a custom engagement. As consultants we must understand the organizational information flow. It is that understanding that drives some of the governance criteria and which will tell us how long they will need to keep the information. There are federal and state legal requirements that address retention of information. Legal citations are a framework for minimum required retention. They do not tell a company how long that information is of **value** to the organization. Therefore, we start with how they use and keep the information. Then we work to build the right requirements that comply with legal requirements, and reflect the needs of the organization. Organizational needs vary from industry to industry and company to company. After the governance is built, we address change management and work with their technology team on how to get the governance to be applicable within existing and/or new systems.

CEOCFO: *It sounds daunting.*

Ms. Streck: That is why many companies find it hard to get started; they are overwhelmed with the concept. This is where we can help. We meet with the company and let them know that we can guide them one step at a time to reach where they want to go. We recently had a meeting where we asked them to define the problem, and there were four answers from four different people. One of the things that we start with is to define the problem and the end game, then work with them to apply systematic processes.

“We are the only information management consultancy that will actually take you from where you are today through the review or creation of all new governance, apply it to existing technology or help you find the right systems, and help your employees adopt the change. We know how to write rules and processes that can be understood by RIM and IT, and can be adopted by employees at all levels.”- Helen Streck

CEOCFO: *You work with government agencies. Do you find more challenges in that arena?*

Ms. Streck: When working with government agencies we commonly find a resistance to change. Why should an employee change their work habits if they can find what they need on their assigned computer or exclusive network drive? This is a foundational element in information management. Knocking down the barriers to change how information is managed. Without change management money is lost from inefficiencies and lost productivity every day. The volume of information is increasing, and with it the potential risk from discovery. However, what we do is educate that agency that there is a better way to govern and manage information. They need to change because it is not efficient, and they are working harder than they need to work. Unexplained change creates fear. We really do take them out of their comfort zone, which is why we spend time talking about change management and how they communicate with staff. I have been on large projects where I have worked side-by-side with the technology vendor, and I have to rewrite their slides, because what they tell employees frightens them. We bring change down to where they understand exactly why it's being changed for them personally, what they need to do and why. Therefore, change is probably the hardest because it is the most frightening to an individual.

CEOCFO: *Do you find that understanding why, is really important to people and that they will perform an action more when they understand the reasoning?*

Ms. Streck: Most of the time yes, because employees want to be a part of the solution. If you can explain the benefits of change and why adding rules is needed to help them, they will want to be a part of that success.

CEOCFO: *What terms would someone key in to find Kaizen InfoSource? Would it be information governance, consulting or is there a broad category?*

Ms. Streck: The two types of categories that people will look under when they are looking for consultants like Kaizen InfoSource: one is information governance and the second is information management. Organizations really do understand the basic concept of what that means, but what organizations are missing is what it takes to make these rules take hold. There is a great deal of work involved, and it is our job as consultants to explain and quantify the work to be done, as well as quantify the consequences if nothing changes.

CEOCFO: *How does security fit in?*

Ms. Streck: When you can categorize your information, which is what a retention schedule does, you can then begin to identify what information needs to be secured and at what level. Without categorizing it, the tendency is to treat all information the same; either over-securing everything or under-securing because of cost. Without categories of information organizations are over spending or under spending. Therefore, security is a part of defining what information

is, how important it is and whether it is provided to the public or not, then locking it down. We see many news articles about data being accessed illegally or breached. Part of the reason for data breaches is information is not classified appropriately.

CEOCFO: *Do you find people reluctant to keep everything or keeping everything in case they may need it?*

Ms. Streck: I see more people keeping everything, because they do not know what to do with it. Information governance is missing.

CEOCFO: *When someone calls you in, how important are budget constraints? Are there different levels that you can help a company with if they are limited in what they can spend?*

Ms. Streck: We can help them whatever their budget may be. If there is a limited budget, we start by putting a plan in place. They would pay us to build the plan and then execute it over time. We realize our clients may come into this process without a real understanding of what it is going to take. With a plan, they will know what they are going to need over time. Implementing information governance over paper and electronic documents after 10 years without governance takes time. That is why they need the plan. Therefore, we can work with any budget.

CEOCFO: *What happens as regulations and governance changes? How are you able to help a company with something that may come up down the line?*

Ms. Streck: If you have the information categorized appropriately, making changes becomes easy and can be done efficiently. It is easier to make changes to categories of documents rather than applying the new values to individual documents within each individual's filing structure. Applying change that way is overwhelming. Having the right categories of information is the foundation for efficient information management, for retention, security or privacy. It is not simple, but it does get easier.

CEOCFO: *How would you help a company classify their information?*

Ms. Streck: We create broad categories of information. Understanding how the categories work and how they are applied to the information is essential. For example, if you look at accounts payable and accounts receivable, we consider those accounting transactions. In this example every accounts payable and receivable document would be in the same category, and their retention requirement would come from the retention value assigned to the category, not each individual document. Security is applied the same way.

CEOCFO: *How is business these days?*

Ms. Streck: For Kaizen InfoSource, business has been very steady. There has been a great deal of interest and what we see is many companies are asking a great many questions. They are starting to step forward and realize that they should look at this, and that is very encouraging. Interest has been across the spectrum from recognizing the need for information management and engaging Kaizen proactively, to needing to respond to a court order for the disclosure of information when it has not been well managed.

CEOCFO: *Put it together for our readers. Why choose Kaizen InfoSource?*

Ms. Streck: We are the only information management consultancy that will actually take you from where you are today through the review or creation of all new governance, apply it to existing technology or help you find the right systems, and help your employees adopt the change. We know how to write rules and processes that can be understood by RIM and IT, and can be adopted by employees at all levels.

CEOCFO: *Final thoughts?*

Ms. Streck: If companies take the smaller steps and get started today, they can realize immediate improvement. Do not be overwhelmed. Improved, efficient information management is achievable. Treat information as an asset, and information management like a program that must be supported and funded with resources to achieve constant improvement.



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