

Word for 2012 – 'Change'

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Since the elections last year, the word 'change' has appeared frequently in our lives.

Who should decide the pace of change? Can change be managed? While one obvious answer is the ballot box: selecting the party that can meet our expectations, what should be our priority -- the global environment or our daily bread and butter issues? Which would be more favourable to us, and how should we respond to change?

The Chinese character for 'change' is made up for two parts. If we see a part of it as the second word that makes up the self. As such, before we demand for change, shouldn't we start with ourselves? The greatest challenge to change is if we are willing to accept the changes. We change because we are persuaded or because there are punitive measures if we don't. Littering is a case in point.

In a maturing society, it will be increasingly difficult to change policies, behaviours, values because there are now more different voices and diverse demands.

For Singapore which has built its reputation on being efficient, would a longer time be needed for consultation or delay its usual quick response?

According to popular American author Stephen Covey, 'speed of trust' is a vital ingredient to a high trust relationship for any task or project as it can accelerate the speed of any task or transaction¹. If there is speed of trust, things can be achieved quickly. For this island country to continue to prosper, perhaps we need to start with a new social compact.

¹ Refer to "The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything" by Stephen M.R. Covey, 2009.