

We've **Always** Done It This Way!



Ye Olde Killer Phrase. You may also hear:

"Let's stick with what works."

"We've done alright so far."

Defusing Strategy:

Tradition is admirable, but smart organizations know that complacency can lead to collapse. Break this endless loop with one or more of the following strategies:

Put "it" in perspective. Think together for a moment. Is there anything in life that hasn't evolved? Recall examples by saying, "At one time we believed that [so-and-so] would never work and it has been a surprising success."

Don't argue apples and oranges. Agree that the old way was good for its time. Show how things have changed, and how new ideas lead to new successes. Support your idea with concrete examples.

Identify the core issue. What stated or implied belief does the existing method support? Is that still valid? Maybe it's time for spring cleaning.

Remember the questions you asked as a new hire:

"Why do we have to fill out that form?"

"Who's in charge of this?"

"What if . . . ?"

Most of these questions come up during a person's first three months at a new company or in a new position. After that, employees adapt to company policy and stop asking. Keep the questions alive by spending time at staff meetings to challenge ingrained assumptions.