

# To be a leader you must know when to follow

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 [devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20051103-43](http://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20051103-43)

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Raymond Chen

Many people misinterpreted my use of the term “reluctant” to describe the attitude of the designers in changing the way the Date/Time control panel functions. It was a reluctance of shame, not a reluctance of defiance.

Your software is there for the users, not vice versa. If you find that your users are using the software in a manner contrary to its intended purpose, your first reaction may be to try to educate users not to do whatever it is they’re doing. But eventually you reach a point where the efforts in convincing people not to do something dangerous outweighs the cost of just making it less dangerous. (Even though this may annoy those who genuinely want to perform that dangerous activity.)

You may not do it with a smile on your face (hence the reluctance), but you know deep in your heart that it’s the right thing to do.

Side note: Why did the Date/Time control panel apply changes immediately anyway? Historical artifact. That’s the way the Date/Time control panel has worked since Windows 1.0. In fact, originally, the Date/Time control panel didn’t even have a Cancel button. Any changes you made to the time took effect immediately and irrevocably. (Mind you, MS-DOS and the original Macintosh did the same thing.) It wasn’t until after Windows 95 shipped that this behavior started being a problem.

Raymond Chen

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