

# Employee Resistance to Organizational Change



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In any industry, several environmental factors affect the smooth running of the business, either directly or indirectly. These factors include external environment factors and internal factors. Such external factors include competition level, change in government regulations, economic stability, change in technology or political issues. On the other hand, internal factors include human resources, organization structure, financial resources, physical resources, organizational mission and objectives.

Irrespective of what environmental factors are prevailing, they have a significant impact on the activities taking place in the workplace, as well as on employee behaviors. Such factors bring about issues such as expense reduction, restructuring or shutting down projects. As a result, the resistance of employees to change occurs. This is because of the fear of the unknown, job insecurity, change in job responsibilities and lack of trust in higher management.

Because of these factors, the employees will be affected psychologically, mainly due to family and financial obligations they have to handle. This means that any feelings of threat by the employees will trigger their resistance to change. Additionally, in some cases, this may lead to aggressive relationships, negative attitudes, low performance in customer services, formation of informal groups and low level of participation. Instead,

they will try to prove to higher management that this change will harm the organization.

It is the role of higher management to decrease this level of employee resistance by opening honest communication channels with employees. This permits discussions about the organization's new strategy and the potential impact of this change to the workplace. This allows the employees to see the benefits and opportunities they will gain from the organization in the long term. As a result, there will be a significant decrease in the level of uncertainty and hence, clarification of the new vision of the organization.

One of the most successful methods used to reduce employees resistance is the formation of participation groups. This allows for employees on the transition stage to get involved, thus helping in gathering their suggestions or ideas. Moreover, employees should be provided with career

counseling and coaching to motivate them into accepting change.

Employees are the greatest assets of an organization, they are the key factor for organizational success, and because they run the day to day operations they are capable to offer to higher management great ideas on how to link the new vision of the organization with their day-to-day activities if they were allowed to play a role in the transition process to be part of the change. As a result, the mindsets of the employees will be changed and thus, causing a decrease in the level of resistance.

One of the most important factors to succeed in the process of organizational change is the level of employees engagement, it's crucial for the implementation of any new strategy, higher management need to activate employees engagement to ensure the smooth running of the implementation process.