Turning Resistance into Commitment

Human Dynamics of Change
Part 1

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Objectives

• Understand What Causes Resistance

• Learn Strategies to Turn Resistance into Commitment
Agenda

- Core Human Needs
- Emotional Transitions
- Levels of Commitment
- Strategies to Deal with Human Dynamics

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People Are Multi-Dimensional

- Body (behaviors and actions)
- Emotions (feelings and energy level)
- Mind (thoughts and interpretations)
- Soul (purpose and meaning)
Resistance

• People do not resist change
  ▪ They resist *being* changed
  ▪ Especially when they *perceive* the outcome will be bad

• Change unconsciously triggers a core need; and they feel fear

• Resistance goes away when they believe:
  ▪ Their core needs will be met
  ▪ The future will be better than the past
Core Human Needs

- Security
- Inclusion
- Power
- Control
- Competence
- Justice/Fairness
- Liked/Connected
Seven Core Human Needs

SECURITY

“I need to feel secure and physically/emotionally safe.”
Seven Core Human Needs

INCLUSION

“I need to be in the inner circle, invited to join the group, a part of what’s happening.”

- Security
Seven Core Human Needs

- Security
- Inclusion

“I need to have direct influence on the process and outcome of the change.”
Seven Core Human Needs

- Security
- Inclusion
- Power

“I need order in the change and a predictable map to follow.”
Seven Core Human Needs

COMPETENCE

“I need to be capable, effective, skilled, and right.”

- Security
- Inclusion
- Power
- Control
Seven Core Human Needs

“\(I\) need things to be fair and equitable.”

- Security
- Inclusion
- Power
- Control
- Competence
Seven Core Human Needs

- Security
- Inclusion
- Power
- Control
- Competence
- Justice/Fairness

“I need to be cared about, admired, and in relationship.”
Core Human Needs

- Security
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- Control
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- Justice/Fairness
- Liked/Connected
Strategies for Security Needs

• Announce all protections early
  ▪ Example: no downsizing, protecting pay

• Keep informed from beginning
  ▪ Share both what you know/don’t know
    • Surprises trigger security needs
Strategies for Inclusion Needs

• Ask people to input or give feedback
• Engage in action
• Announce “no team member changes” early
• Do team-building soon after new teams are formed
Strategies for Power Needs

• Announce senior positions early

• Find ways to give people influence; global changes but local decisions

• Make decision-making overt: roles, style, process
Strategies for Control Needs

• Create/communicate change strategy and process plan early

• Keep people informed
  ▪ Decisions, progress, course corrections, next steps

• Catalyze conversations to understand impacts
Strategies for Competence Needs

• Announce training plans early
  ▪ Tell people they will be trained in new jobs

• Make learning expectations/pace known

• Provide learning resources, coaching

• Match job responsibilities to realistic learning pace

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Strategies for Justice/Fairness Needs

- Transparency
- Equal representation on multi-functional teams
- Make job selection criteria overt
- Treat people fairly
Strategies for Being Liked/Connected Needs

• Show care and concern
  ▪ Acknowledge the difficulties people face

• Be empathetic and *initially* tolerant of resistance

• Stay in contact; make frequent contact

• High touch: use face-to-face, phone, and then email in that order
Emotional Reactions to Change: Seven Stages of Transition

1. Losing Focus (Denial) (Shocked, Confused)
2. Minimizing the Impact
3. The Pit (Fear, Anger, Sadness)
4. Letting Go of the Past (Grief)
5. Testing the Limits (Curiosity, Bargaining)
6. Searching for Meaning (Hopeful)
7. Integrating (Confidence)

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Key Understandings about Emotional Transitions

- Natural process, including the pit
- Cannot force transition to go faster
- People will work themselves through it on their own to some degree
- Degree of commitment at end is the question
Emotional Reactions to Change: Seven Stages of Transition

1. Losing Focus
   (Shocked, Confused)

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Strategies for Losing Focus

• Provide reminders: priorities, job tasks
• Gently increase check-ins, progress reports
• Make requests explicit; SMART
• Talk about the change in casual, everyday terms
Emotional Reactions to Change: Seven Stages of Transition

2. Minimizing the Impact
(Shocked, Confused)

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Strategies for Minimizing the Impact

• Provide information about the change

• Discuss scenarios and possibilities for the future

• Ask how they think change will impact them, their team
Emotional Reactions to Change: Seven Stages of Transition

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Strategies for the Pit

• Ask how they feel
• Listen, listen, listen
• Reflect back what you hear
• Accept them; do not fix or minimize their feelings
• Make sure they feel heard!
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Strategies for Letting Go of the Past

- Discuss what was positive about the past
- Celebrate the past
- Make overt what will no longer be
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Performance

Time

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Strategies for Testing the Limits

- Ask or tell how they fit in
- Clarify boundaries, how things will work
- Complete operational re-designs
- Try out possibilities

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Time

Performance

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Strategies for Searching for Meaning

• Discuss benefits (customers, personal, organizational) of new state

• Help them realize how they will contribute to larger picture

• Tie change to personal and organizational purpose
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Strategies for Integrating

• Put new state in action

• Support their success with coaching

• Announce and celebrate positive behaviors, performance, and results
Levels of Commitment Model

Motivation by Fear
- Avoidance of pain or threat
- Punishment, negative consequences, ultimatum, coercion

Motivation by Choice
- Attraction to creating value or pleasure
- Reward, benefit, possibilities, contribution

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Key Strategies for Building Commitment

• Communicate
  ▪ Case for change and change strategy
  ▪ Vision and desired outcomes
  ▪ How the change adds value

• Listen
  ▪ Accept negativity as valid
  ▪ Invite it out
  ▪ Listen and ensure people feel heard
Key Strategies for Building Commitment

• **Make Requests**
  - Ask them to be productive
    • Voice concerns in healthy ways
    • Stay open and consider merits

• **Provide Information and Support**
  - Ask for what they need to commit
  - Provide as much as you can
  - Positively reinforce small steps
Key Strategies for Building Commitment

• Engage
  ▪ Keep them informed; two-way dialogue
  ▪ Get them involved
  ▪ Ask them to apply their strengths

• Positively Reinforce
  ▪ Throughout change process
  ▪ Praise
  ▪ Celebrate successes
Key Points

• People have universal needs
• Resistance occurs when people fear their needs will not be met or believe the future state will be bad
• Emotional transitions are natural and predictable
• Commitment is only internally generated
• Consciously design your change process to not trigger resistance; instead, support people into commitment!

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