

# CHANGE AND RESISTANCE TO CHANGE DURING COVID-19



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## INTRODUCTION

People generally hold the status quo and resist change. Under COVID, people are forced to change the status quo, which creates additional stress.

People resist change for a variety of reasons, many of which have to do with miscommunication or misunderstanding. Under COVID, people resist change due to a lack of accurate information and assumptions.

Once the change has been accepted, people resist turning back. Under COVID, people must accept change and adapt to the new norms.

Internal and external changes are predictable. Organizations try to predict the future under COVID, but with limited certainty.

Change is managed by establishing trust using competent leadership that makes good decisions and maintains positive communication. Under COVID, employees' trust is a result of good leadership and sound decisions.

Employees should be given a support system to care for their mental and physical health due to the stress caused by the pandemic.

# WHAT IS CHANGE?



## CHANGE:

- ALTERATIONS IN PEOPLE, STRUCTURE, OR TECHNOLOGY.
- CHANGE IS AN ORGANIZATIONAL REALITY.
- CORONAVIRUS HAS CHANGED HOW WE BEHAVE, SOCIALIZE, AND LEARN AND WORK.
- COVID HAS FORCED PEOPLE TO CHANGE.
- RESISTANCE TO CHANGE UNDER COVID IS NOT ACCEPTABLE MORALLY OR SOCIALLY.

External changes...

...leads to Internal Changes

External Changes:

- **Technology** advancements led to speed in movement of people/things and facilitated access to information
- Access to **global marketplaces** that responds to consumer needs
- **Governments** continuously change policies and regulations in response to their citizens' needs/feedback.
- **Economies** constantly change in response to uncertain market conditions, currency exchange rates, and budget deficits.
- Technology is the main driver of change.

THE  
ACCELERATION  
OF CHANGE

External changes...

...leads to Internal Changes

External Changes Under COVID:

THE  
ACCELERATION  
OF CHANGE  
(UNDER COVID)

- **Technology** advancements led to the creation of various COVID vaccines, which somehow helped restore hope in people's lives and reduce stress.
- Access to **global marketplaces** that responds to consumer needs is being restored slowly (many countries enforce complete or partial lockdown).
- **Governments** adopted policies to protect the people (adopted support packages to protect all impacted by the pandemic).
- Local and Global **Economies** have suffered since the start of COVID in 2019. Most countries are facing a recession.

THE  
ACCELERATION  
OF CHANGE

External changes...

...leads to Internal Changes

Internal Changes:

- Operations of the organization react to changes in strategy, technology, and consumer demands.
- Managers are change agents and responsible for introducing and implementing change.
- Managers monitor and address employees' attitude and resistance towards change

External changes...

...leads to Internal Changes

Internal Changes:

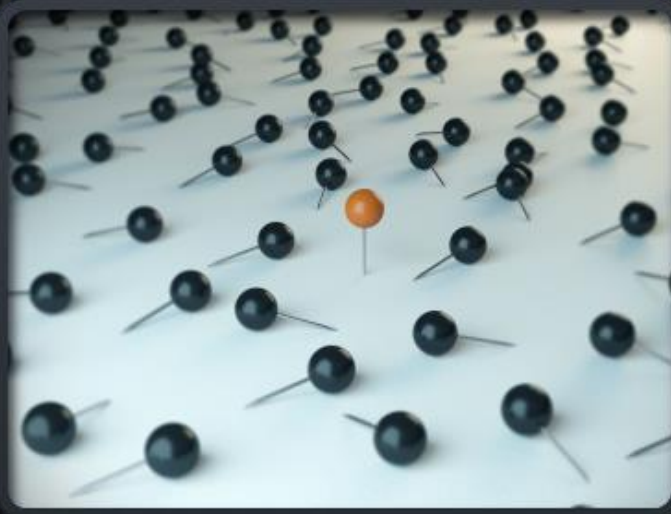
- Many organization reacted to changes and adopted a remote work model
- Managers are change agents and responsible for making the right balance of the hybrid work model
- Managers monitor and control employees' productivity, sense of purpose, sense of belonging, and work ethics.

THE  
ACCELERATION  
OF CHANGE  
(UNDER COVID)

# RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN THE WORKPLACE

## LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF:

- THE PURPOSE OF CHANGE:
  - LOWER-LEVEL EMPLOYEES MAY NOT HAVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION TO JUSTIFY THE NEED OF CHANGE.
- THE BIG PICTURE:
  - EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS MAY HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE OVERALL VIEW THAT LEADS TO CHANGE.
- THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ORGANIZATION:
  - WORKERS MAY RESIST CHANGE WHEN THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.
  - THEY CONSIDER IT UNNECESSARY AND VIOLATES ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES.





# RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN THE WORKPLACE (UNDER COVID)



- EMPLOYEES UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF CHANGE UNDER COVID:
  - THEY SHOWED LITTLE OR NO RESISTANCE.
- THE BIG PICTURE:
  - EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS HAVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION TO JUSTIFY THE NEED TO CHANGE.
- THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ORGANIZATION:
  - WORKERS EXHIBITED LESS RESISTANCE TO CHANGE BECAUSE THEY UNDERSTAND ITS URGENCY TO PROTECT INDIVIDUALS AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE.
  - THEY CONSIDER IT NECESSARY, AND IT ALIGNS WELL WITH ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES.

# RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

## *WHY PEOPLE RESIST CHANGE*

- CHANGE BRINGS FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN, IT BRINGS AMBIGUITY AND UNCERTAINTY
- THE CHANGE REPLACES THE STATUS QUO WITH A NEW REALITY
- THE BELIEF THAT CHANGE CONTRADICTS THE ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES
- CHANGE REQUIRES AN INVESTMENT TO LEARN NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS.

“THE FIRST STEP TO LEADERSHIP IS SERVANTHOOD.” JOHN MAXWELL



# RESISTANCE TO CHANGE (UNDER COVID)



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people Normally Do not resist change for COVID Related reasons.

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The know the purpose of this change, It preserves life and the well being of the community at large.

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The change replaces the status quo with an acceptable new reality

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The belief that change aligns well with the organizational values

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Change requires an acceptable investment to learn new ways of doing things.

## RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN THE WORKPLACE

### LACK OF:

- TRUST IN MANAGEMENT AND ITS MOTIVES.
- FAITH THAT MANAGEMENT CAN EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENT CHANGE
- PERCEPTION OF FAIRNESS:
  - SUCH AS LAYING OFF EMPLOYEES OR MOVING THEM TO OTHER POSITIONS.



## RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN THE WORKPLACE (UNDER COVID)



- ALTHOUGH EMPLOYEES HAVE SHOWN LITTLE RESISTANCE TO COMPLY WITH MANAGEMENT'S DECISION TO WORK REMOTELY, EMPLOYEES WOULD LIKELY EXHIBIT MORE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE (REASONS NOT RELATED TO COVID).
- A CLEVELAND CLINIC AND PARADE MAGAZINE SURVEY SHOWS THAT THE MOST COMMON ISSUES DUE TO COVID ARE: STRESS (33%), ANXIETY (30%), DEPRESSION (24%), AND LONELINESS (24%)
- THE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES FOR EMPLOYEES WOULD TRIGGER RESISTANCE TO CHANGE (EXCEPT FOR COVID RELATED).

# Techniques for reducing resistance



Managers can involve employees in the decision that lead to change. Employees will own change, promote it, and support it.

Management must provide adequate training and support to all staff

Change takes time.

Management must:

- Introduce change and provide information and answer questions.
- Show a demo of how the change would look like
- Brainstorm and solicit feedback from all employees
- Inspire the team to make a decision that embraces change
- Assign trained mentors
- Implement change, be involved and provide support

# FORMS OF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

## OPEN AND CHALLENGING

SOME EMPLOYEES MAY CHALLENGE LEADERS, OBJECT TO CHANGE, AND TRY TO GET SUPPORT FROM OTHER EMPLOYEES.

## IMPLIED AND DELAYED

EMPLOYEES MAY LOSE INTEREST IN THE JOB, MAKE MISTAKES, AND LOSE LOYALTY TO THE ORGANIZATION.



# MANAGING CHANGE



## Clear Communications

Provide facts and clear fiction



## Allow Transition Time

- Change must be introduced early to employees.
- Allow employees the time to understand it
- Allow time for answering questions.
- Allow adequate training and practicing periods.



## Management Participation

Management presence and support must be clear  
Identify key employees who praise change to inspire others  
Provide incentives to employees to meet due dates and deadlines





KEEP YOUR COINS,  
I WANT  
CHANGE