Resistance to change

Leadership Dimensions	**Inspiring shared purpose**	**Leading with care**

We often assume that **once we KNOW** the 'attitude' of a given population toward change, **we are ready** to develop the right strategy for winning their support.

However, **KNOWing** may not be enough. We need sufficient understanding of **WHY** people are resistant to change to **ensure the strategy that we choose will be effective**.

Addressing resistance in a constructive way

There is a **tendency to view all types of resistance as bad** - with a resistance rating of 'high' being 'really bad'. This is a destructive way to look at resistance.

All resistance is valuable because it gives you important **information about why people are saying 'no' to a change**. When you can identify the major reasons people say 'no', you can address resistance in a constructive, problem solving way.

The **Resistance to change** tool enables you and the team to analyse and understand the reasons for resistance and then specify a strategy to use to influence stakeholders and gain their support.

When to use

Though usually used early on in the change initiative cycle, this tool can and should be used whenever a new source of resistance is identified.

Even during the 'home stretch' resistance should be expected. This tool can save the team valuable time in understanding the nature of the resistance.

How to use this tool

1. Select one of the groups (stakeholders) impacted by the change initiative and ask team members to **list all the reasons** the members of the group are resisting the change initiative.

2. **Determine the level of resistance** (high, medium, low) that each 'reason' represents.

   - A rating of 'high' indicates that there is a high level of resistance due to that 'reason' and the team must do something to address it or the success of the change will be significantly impacted and could fail.

   - A rating of 'low' indicates that there is a low level of resistance due to that 'reason' – the success of the change will be only slightly impacted if this resistance is not addressed.

3. For each reason with a 'high' rating, the team should **develop a strategy for dealing with this resistance** that includes a specific who/what/when action plan.

   For example, influencing the opinion leaders, involving key individuals, holding communication meetings or one-on-ones, or developing customised 'pitches' to address these concerns.

Determine the nature of the resistance you will encounter and develop a strategy to eliminate or lessen the resistance

List members of the group of stakeholders	List their individual and group reasons for resisting the change initiative	Note level of resistance (H, M, L)[1]	Write down your strategy for dealing with the resistance Plan and note WHO will implement the strategy and HOW.

[1] **High** means that the team must do something to address the resistance or the success of the change will be significantly impacted.

Low means that the success of the change will be only slightly impacted if this resistance is not addressed.

Leading across London

Leading change