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Managing Change Resistance

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Programs

How to 'BE' there for your people

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Do people really fear change? I asked myself this question recently and based on my experience of leading teams in fast paced ever-changing industries, I've come to the conclusion that people don't fear change. Some people thrive on it! These change addicts become bored if things aren't changing and they can be a real challenge to lead and help stay focused and motivated.

On the other hand, some members of your team may not actually fear the change itself, but they may fear loss. Some team members may fear the loss of BEING SAFE. This can occur when we no longer feel in control and we don't know what the future holds or where we stand in the business.

Others may fear the loss of BEING COMPETENT. These team members no longer feel like they know what their job is and how to do it. Some become embarrassed when faced with new tasks because they are not sure how to do it. They no longer feel confident or competent when performing their duties.

Many team members fear the loss of BELONGING. Their familiar contacts with customers, co-workers and managers can disappear. Teams are often restructured and moved to other areas within the business and we can lose our sense of belonging.

Some of us fear the loss of our SENSE OF BEING. Our purpose and meaning within the business becomes unclear and we lose that sense of where we are going and why. We create uncertainty about the areas that used to belong to us – our workspace and our job responsibilities

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and outcomes. This loss of our sense of being can be psychological as well as physical.

How can we as leaders “BE” there for our team members during times of change? What can we do to help the team?

Be Safe
Be Competent
Belong
Being

Here are 4 EASY STRATEGIES for you to consider implementing in your workplace

1. **Open and honest communication – always!** Keep your team members informed about what is happening. Create regular communication initiatives such as a monthly newsletter. Attend team meetings and offer staff the opportunity to ask you questions. Remember if you are asked a question and you don't know the answer tell your people that. Let them know that as soon as you have more information on that topic you will let everyone know. Hold company updates where all departments can get together and your MD or CEO can bring people up to date with how the changes are going. Put out an invitation to everyone that if they ever need to find out further information or just need to talk about the changes you are available. I know this strategy sounds like it can take up a lot of your time. It will, however in my experience the benefits outweigh the time spent.
2. **Conduct 1:1 discussions** with a good cross section of your staff. Ask the same questions of everyone. Tap into their understanding of what the changes are and why they believe they are happening. Take this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings and concerns. Talk about the training initiatives that will take place to assist staff with the changes. Put timeframes around these so people are clear on when the training will take place, how the training will be conducted and emphasise the ongoing support that will be provided by team leaders and managers. Remember also to speak with the influencers within your teams. These people can often be your greatest asset as they continue positive discussions around the changes with their peers.
3. **Understand the two basic emotional needs** of every single person on this planet. Validation and Nurturing. Ensure that your people feel good about themselves and their ability to work with the changes and continue to remind them of the benefits to themselves, the business and their customers from the implementation of the changes. Acknowledge any concerns and anxiety they may be feeling due to the changes and together work out ways for them to become more comfortable and accepting of the changes.

4. In our BEST® Leadership Development programs we discuss the **Formula for Failure**. People will fail if:

- They don't know what is expected of them or why their role is important
- They don't know how to do their job
- Someone or something gets in the way

Your job as leader is to provide **Clarity** for your team members so everyone is clear on what is expected of them and why. Secondly continue to help your team members **Learn** how to do their job through training, coaching and support. Finally, leaders need to ensure that they are creating a culture within their teams that when someone or something gets in the way (and this always happens!) that people **Take Responsibility** and find ways to move around, above under or through the obstacle.

Leading change in teams is a fundamental role of managers. Leaders are the change agents for the business and the people who will either make or break the acceptance and understanding of the changes. It is a vital skill that often requires leaders to have a good look at their communication and influencing skills.

If your team is going through change and are not coping as well as you had hoped, ensure that you take a good hard look at your leadership skills and continue to educate yourself on how to “BE” there for your people. Remember, as we say in our BEST® Leadership Development programs “the pace of the pack is determined by the speed of the leader”.

*To **Progress** your business to where it aims to be, you need the **BEST** people training know-how and programs. Call Progress Training Systems today!*

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Janelle Nisbet regularly speaks at conferences, seminars and workshops covering topics such as – Creating, Coaching and Leading High performance teams.