Leadership Guide

DALE CARNEGIE® DIGITAL
Presents

Manage Change Effectively
MANAGE CHANGE EFFECTIVELY

Organizations today operate in an environment of rapid, continuous change. Changes engage us internally through events such as reorganizations and hiring, and externally through shifts in our marketplace, through the evolving expectations of our clients, and through innovation. As you know, managing a changing organization is a demanding, time-consuming responsibility.

This guide examines the challenges of change management and the mistakes that often result. We incorporate principles for overcoming resistance to change, managing individuals during times of change, and managing ourselves.

You will learn to:

• Avoid the most common change management mistakes
• Recognize the elements of, and apply a model for change
• Define the type of change currently occurring in the organization
• Identify ways to manage ourselves and others during organizational change
Eight Most Common Change Management Mistakes

There are eight common mistakes made when managing change in organizations. These mistakes undermine the good intentions of organizational change, and foster resistance and lack of individual commitment. By avoiding these mistakes, we can be more successful in getting everyone in the organization to embrace the recommended change.

1. Implementing too much change in too short a timeframe

   Individuals can handle only so much change at one time without feeling overwhelmed and burned out. In managing change, look carefully at the timing of new initiatives. Ask which changes are most urgent and need to be addressed today, and which changes could be introduced later. Not only will people be more cooperative, they will be more productive before, during, and after changes have been implemented.

2. Lack of a long-term change vision and strategy

   Too often in organizations, the decision is made to implement the changes now, and deal with the outcomes later. For change to be managed professionally, a clear long-term vision needs to be developed and communicated within the organization, and a strategy needs to be designed that goes far beyond the initial implementation stage of the change.

3. Not making a convincing case for change

   Just because managers within an organization understand the need for change doesn’t mean the rest of the organization sees the purpose. People need to be convinced that the change has value and is worth embracing. We achieve this by making and communicating a solid case for change, supported by relevant evidence.

4. Limited individual skills

   Some changes, such as promotions and transfers, tend to push individuals to the limits of their business skills. We avoid this mistake by preparing and training individuals ahead of time, when possible, or immediately upon implementing the change.
Eight Most Common Change Management Mistakes (continued)

5. Shortage of organizational resources
   Many change initiatives that start promisingly, end up withering and dying from lack of necessary resources. Part of the role of managing organizational change is to ensure that the organization is committing the necessary resources of time, money, and manpower to see the change successfully through to completion.

6. Leadership resistance to changing roles
   When the leadership of the organization resists change, the success of the initiative is severely jeopardized. Typically, that resistance occurs when leaders see an eroding of their control or responsibility as an outcome of the change. Leaders need the most flexibility of anyone in the organization in order for the change to succeed.

7. Failing to integrate and align all change initiatives
   Every process that changes within an organization impacts the processes that are integrated and aligned with it. For example, a software change not only affects everyone who uses it, but also every other software program that interfaces with it, and every customer, vendor, or employee who is in the network of that software.

8. Poor follow-through, measurement, and monitoring of change outcomes
   How well was the change accepted and embraced? How much were systems and processes improved by the change? What additional changes could make the initiative even more successful? These kinds of questions are too often never asked, and, as a result, there is little sense of accomplishment, or commitment to further change.
Overcoming Resistance to Change

People resist change for many reasons. And that resistance can appear in many forms. Thinking about or doing things in a new way may not come naturally to everyone. When people (including ourselves) can’t see what is on the other side of a change effort, they may not commit to it, disengage, become fearful, have difficulty letting go of the past or even sabotage a successful change effort.

Leaders can overcome resistance by keeping the “desired state” vision in front of their teams. By acknowledging the emotions and fears that change efforts can produce, and by continually communicating and building relationships with the people most impacted by the change, leaders help individuals move through the stages of change and gain commitment to the effort.

1. Where are you on the scale?

2. Where are your peers, direct reports, managers and customers on the scale?

3. What challenges or fears are your team members facing during this change that may cause them to be resistant?
Human Relations Principles

1. Begin with praise and appreciation.
2. Call attention to mistakes/attitudes indirectly.
3. Talk about your own mistakes/attitudes.
4. Ask questions instead of giving direct orders.
5. Let the other person save face.
6. Praise the slightest improvement and every improvement. Be hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise.
7. Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.
8. Use encouragement. Make the action seem easy to do.
9. Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.
1. As leaders, we are expected to model appropriate responses to change. Others in the organization look to us to see how we react to workplace change. Because of this, we have to remember to stay in control of our actions and attitudes.

2. Avoid negative self-talk. Rephrase thoughts of resentment or fear into thoughts of individual growth and opportunity.

3. Be open about your concerns. Allow others to understand your frame of mind.

4. Be realistic about the challenges of successfully coping with the change.

5. Gather information through questions and research. Be as informed about the change as possible.

6. Be as productive as you can in your current role. Focus on organizational and record-keeping tasks, so that you are prepared to hand off current responsibilities to someone else. Be ready to demonstrate your competence.


8. Practice effective stress management strategies.

9. Upgrade your knowledge and skills where necessary in order to continue being seen as a valuable, flexible team member.

10. Consider contacting your organization’s resources, such as counselors and mentors.

11. Work on being a leader in embracing and facilitating change.