

Travel Agency & Policy Transition Project

Supporting your Campus Business Representatives during the Transition

Common Reactions to Change

YOU DON'T NEED EVERYONE TO BE AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER FOR THE CHANGE TO BE SUCCESSFUL. PEOPLE'S REACTIONS TYPICALLY FALL ALONG THE REACTION CONTINUUM RANGING FROM ACTIVE RESISTANCE TO ACTIVE SUPPORT. MOVING PEOPLE ALONG THE REACTION CONTINUUM BUILDS MOMENTUM FOR YOUR CHANGE TO SUCCEED.



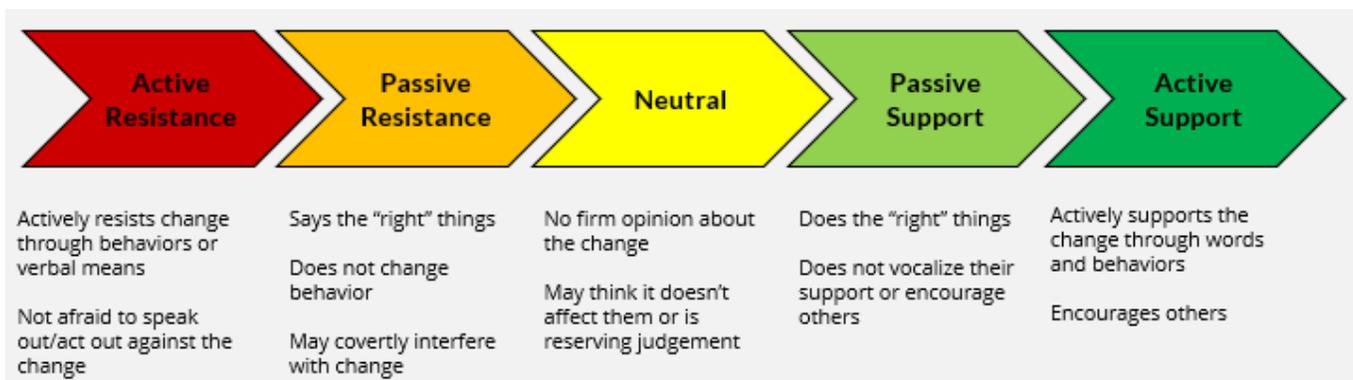
Active Resistance: Active resisters verbalize their concerns about the change. Recognize that although they can be very challenging to work with, they serve an important purpose: they may be voicing concerns that others are thinking but not saying.

Passive Resistance: Passive resisters can be the most challenging group. Since they aren't voicing their concerns (they say "OK" a lot), they are hard to identify, but they can covertly hurt the change by demonstrating the wrong behaviors when you aren't there to monitor them.

Neutral: People in this category are on the fence. Often they are waiting to see how the change will play out before deciding whether they will really be on-board. How you work with them may determine whether they move up or down the continuum.

Passive Support: This group typically gets the least attention. They generally go along with the change so you don't feel the need to "correct" them. Yet because they aren't vocalizing their support, you aren't reminded to acknowledge or thank them. It takes a conscious effort to pay enough attention to them so they don't slip down the continuum.

Active Support: People in this category are onboard with the change. If you encourage and validate them, they can help you move the team forward and generate momentum.



Helping Others Through Change

AS A CHANGE CHAMPION, YOUR GOAL IS TO HELP OTHERS UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIAL OF WHAT THEY WILL GET AND HOW IT WILL MAKE THEIR LIFE BETTER IN SOME WAY. BELOW ARE A FEW TIPS ON WHAT TO FOCUS ON.



1. Don't assume you know where someone will fall along the continuum. People will surprise you. Talk to your colleagues and look for signs (verbal and nonverbal) of how they are reacting.
2. Think about trying to move people just one notch along the reaction continuum. It is unrealistic to expect people to jump several categories all at one time.
3. Clarify expectations for success-what has changed and what remains the same- for the team and for each individual. Repeat often.
4. Be careful not to oversell the benefits of the change. Avoid creating unrealistic expectations.
5. The greatest resistance can come from those who theoretically benefit the most because they do not understand the potential value of what they will get.
6. People resist because there is a greater fear of the consequences of losing what they have now than the perceived value of the result of the change. This could be a perceived loss of expertise, reputation, authority, discretion, or familiarity.
7. Organizations don't change, individuals do. Individuals will react differently to the same circumstances. We need to understand what is important to each person and build support with one individual at a time.
8. While colleagues will need an opportunity to vent and discuss their concerns, it is appropriate for you to ask them not to carry their negativity to other people.
9. Prepare to answer questions. However, if someone asks you a question that you can't answer, assure the person that you will try and get an answer and then be sure to follow-up.

KEY POINT

Change is disruptive... so you'll need to spend more time listening to and helping people than you normally do. Your role is not to suppress resistance, but to help people work with the challenges and become better equipped to help themselves and the organization move through it.

Change Resistance Tip Sheet

Helping move people along the resistance continuum

REACTION	Active Resistance
IDEAS for working with Active Resisters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give them the opportunity to vent without shutting them down. Shutting them down will only drive them underground. They will still have concerns, and will still be resisting the change, only you won't know about it.• Demonstrate you understand what their concerns are even if you disagree with them. You can empathize with them without implying that their concerns are all valid• Be careful not to get caught in the "blame" trap. Blaming the organization or vendor doesn't help address the concern nor will it build any support from the active resister-it just justifies their concerns.• Because they are visible and vocal dissenters, active resisters tend to monopolize your time. Don't spend all your time or energy on them to the detriment of the other members of your team.• Identify at least one of their concerns is valid and actionable and try to address it.• If you take action based on a concern they voiced, be sure to tell them you did so and why.• Be clear about what is non-negotiable (i.e. things that can't change) and identify where their input is desired. It is okay to allow them to vent a little about non-negotiables, but then encourage them to focus on things negotiable and actionable.• Some active resisters may be responding based on prior negative change experiences. Try to learn about those experiences ("tell me about the last few changes you've experienced here") and clarify what's different this time.
REACTION	Passive Resistance
IDEAS for working with Passive Resisters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the passive resisters. Since they won't verbalize their concerns to you directly, one way is to ask your active supporters to help identify people who are struggling with the change or dragging their feet.• Schedule time to talk one on one with them-in private (passive resisters won't vocalize concerns in a group setting). Do not ignore passive resisters!• Encourage them to voice their concerns by explaining that it is natural to have concerns. Ask them, "What would make this work better?" A key first step to working with passive resisters is to get them to acknowledge their concerns.• If you take an action based on a concern they voiced, be sure to tell them you did so and why.• Recognize that some passive resisters learned to be that way because they were criticized for voicing concerns in the past. If it doesn't feel safe to them, they will continue to say OK to you even though they aren't on-board• Be clear about non-negotiables (e.g., things that can't change) but identify where input is possible and actively seek their input on the "negotiables"• Acknowledge that change can be disruptive, but emphasize the reason for the change and the benefits of helping the change become a success (but without overselling).• Be consistent and steady in your own support for the change. Being a "model" shows your commitment and lets them know that they can't "wait this out."

REACTION	Neutral (Neither Supporter nor Resister)
<p>IDEAS for working with Neutral Supporters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what is keeping them from being more comfortable with the change. Sometimes asking a direct question can work, “what would make you more comfortable with the change?” • Ask them what they like and dislike about the change and what they feel would make the change more successful. • If you take an action based on their input, be sure to tell them you did so and why. • Encourage them to ask you questions about the change. • Reinforce why the change is taking place and the benefits of the change for users. • In some cases, a person in this category believes the change doesn’t really affect them or isn’t much of a change. If so, you’ll need to spend some time educating them about how and why their role needs to change. Clarify your expectations for them.
REACTION	Passive Support
<p>IDEAS for working with Passive Supporters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge them when they demonstrate the right behaviors in support of the change. Sometimes a bit of positive reinforcement is enough to move them to become a more active supporter or at least keep them from backsliding into the neutral category • If you feel they “get it” but just aren’t voicing support yet, ask them to help someone else who is “on the fence.” Sometimes voicing support can encourage them to assume a more active support role. • Identify opportunities for them to be more active in supporting the change, for example asking them to describe something that worked particularly well. Perhaps you can position them as the “go to” person for a topic or issue. • Recognize that some people aren’t comfortable voicing support publicly. Some passive supporters won’t become active supporter but they can still contribute positive momentum by doing the right things.
REACTION	Active Support
<p>IDEAS for working with Active Supporters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An active supporter often appreciates being “kept informed” and asked their opinions. When possible, share information with them and solicit their thoughts to keep them motivated and involved • Solicit their help in identifying the readiness of team members (providing “pulse checks”). • Ask them for ideas to help move others along • Encourage them to continue to voice their support publicly. Explain how it is helping the team • Ask them to help someone who is struggling with the change • Regularly thank them for their enthusiasm (once is not enough!) • Don’t assume they will remain an active supporter without attention; they can slip down the continuum if ignored. They may be most susceptible when those initial inevitable problems arise and their high expectations are not being fully met.