manageris

Support your employees

during periods of change

Stakes

Changes within organizations are increasingly frequent and varied. Change, however, is never easy to accept. We tend to prefer the more reassuring status quo, because change, be it positive or negative, challenges our ability to adapt and triggers a stress reaction which we would rather avoid. This is why many managers are surprised to see their teams "resist" proposed changes even when everyone agrees that they are absolutely necessary. Line managers play a key supporting role in this respect.

Step-by-step support

Accepting change always takes time. Psychologists compare this phenomenon with the mourning process, in which people must break with the past before they can turn towards the future. You can help your employees deal better with change by helping them get through these stages both emotionally and intellectually.

Breaking with the past

• Show that you are aware that change is hard

- Listen to your employees' feelings.
 E.g.: "I understand that you are concerned / disappointed."
- Point out that not "wanting" to change is normal.
- Recognize change management errors that may make people uncomfortable with the situation.

Show that you are concretely acting on people's perceived difficulties

e.g.: Set easier goals if people feel objectives are unattainable, delay an aspect of the project to allow time to talk it over.

Turning towards the future

Rekindle desire to contribute to success

- Propose a stimulating yet credible vision of what your team or the company hopes to achieve.
- Translate this vision into a project likely to appeal to employees according to their individual personality.
 e.g.: Show people who enjoy a challenge that
- they will have a chance to outdo themselves.

 Listen to ideas and suggestions.

Provide required support

Be available and attentive to the inevitable ups and downs inherent to any transition. E.g.: Set aside time to listen, be tolerant of hesitation and setbacks.

• Explain why the status quo could not continue

- Base your arguments on indisputable facts.List the risks connected with the status quo
- List the risks connected with the status quo and the potential benefits of the proposed change.

e.g.: Possible site closure if the company is not restructured, more interesting jobs thanks to the new organization.

Review the change process to make it clear that there is no turning back

- Clearly state the plan of action, objectives, and deadlines.
- Also clarify what won't change.

Focus attention on the end goal to keep people from dwelling on the past and trying to turn back

- Set priorities and define an action plan to get people engaged.
- Translate general goals into individual objectives to engage every employee.
- Provide support to ensure that people don't question the validity of the change when they encounter major challenges and setbacks.

Encourage people to be change drivers, rather than change victims

- Encourage them to take initiative.
- Put together teams to work on specific topics.

Rational

level

Emotional

level