Resistance to change

Personality at Work · https://psyasia.com/kb/resistance-to-change/

What are some reasons for change in the work place, and why do people resist them?

Changes in organizations can be due to several factors. Changes in technology, tasks/jobs, culture, people, policies/procedures, products or services and organizational culture are factors which affect change.

People can often resist change due to their habits, as they might be used to a certain way of doing things and might be worried about what they think might happen. They might also have a certain sense of security and have a level of comfort, which they do not want to lose. Economic factors can also contribute to individuals being resistant towards change as it affects the ‘fear of the unknown.’

Organizations can resist change also due to the fear of the unknown and if the change is negative then the organization could feel threatened. A threat to expertise and established power relationships could resist change. Organizations that have a limited focus on change and are comfortable with their current situation will also resist change. The main reasons as to why people are not willing to have a new style of work are due to fear, loss, uncertainty, misunderstanding or disagreement.

Several steps can be taken to overcome resistance to change. Involving people in the process of change and increasing participation has been shown to reduce anxiety, fear and uncertainty. Participation will improve understanding of the details of change and people will feel more committed towards the new working style if they are involved in the decision making process. Providing support, facilitating, educating and communicating effectively about adjustment to individuals in organizations will reduce resistance towards change. Furthermore, for organisations where change is a necessary part of the culture or experience, it is wise to select and retain individuals who show an openness to and comfort with change. This can be assessed during the selection phase by way of personality questionnaires such as the Quest Profiler® or the Identity Self Perception Questionnaire.