

Approaches to Influencing Change

1) Educate / Communicate

Make the case for change. Explain in multiple ways the rationale for change, why it is needed, how it can be done. Facilitate discussions, meet with people, teach, write memos / reports, make speeches.

Reduce resistance caused by lack of or wrong information.

2) Participate / Involve

Engage stakeholders in planning, analysis, data collection. Empower them to make decisions regarding implementation. Clarify end results / outcomes.

Do focus groups, listen one-on-one, use surveys, committees, teams.

Reduce resistance caused by lack of control.

3) Provide Support

Help those who will experience the negative effects of change. Give emotional, financial, tactical support. Go slow. Remove organizational barriers, change rules / policies, expect mistakes and handle them as learning opportunities.

Provide the needed tools, resources.

Reduce resistance caused by fear and/or lack of training, needed resources.

4) Compromise and/or Compensate

Reduce the costs of change by making modifications, or increasing the rewards.

Give incentives that stakeholders value.

Reduce resistance caused by perceived loss or inequity.

Avoid:

5) Manipulate

Distort information. Engage others in false participation. Bribe those who are resistant with undeserved rewards. Use "any" means to achieve the end.

Reduce resistance by changing the "game" altogether.

6) Overpower

Use command, coercion, force, threats, punishment to gain support for change.

Communicate the negative results if stakeholders don't change. Assert authority to require change. Anticipate and deal with backlash.

Overcome resistance by making compliance the only alternative that doesn't result in loss.