



Recommendations

1



Enhanced Maternity / Paternity Pay

In response to the data analysis derived from the employee survey there is a case to implement an enhanced maternity / paternity pay policy.

- After 26 weeks continuous service and by the 15th week before the expected week of confinement, the maternal parent would be entitled to receive:
 - 90% of their weekly earnings based on their qualifying earnings during the relevant pay period, for the first 6 weeks, followed by 75% of their weekly earnings for the following 14 weeks. The remaining 19 weeks would be statutory maternity pay, (GOV.UK, 2013).
- If the maternal parent decides to take maternity leave up to 52 weeks, then this would be unpaid. This would provide Bluestone with a competitive advantage from an employee experience perspective, improving employee engagement, productivity and attrition (Wang et al., 2017).



Costings

- Bluestone should assess the affordability of this option.
- On average there are 14 employees who take maternity leave each year, this additional payroll would cost up to £50,873.28 in the first 20 weeks, and assuming the company could claim the statutory amount back from HMRC.
- A significant uplift from the previous 5 years average annual cost of £12,000 each year.
- The additional cost to the business would equate to £38,000 per annum (GOV.UK, 2013).
- Time and resource to develop an enhanced maternity scheme policy
- Employment law consultant fees – up to £2,000.
- Enhanced maternity scheme administration costs (ongoing).

Estimated Total Costs: £45,000.



2



Communication & Engagement Plan

- The CIPD's (2022) recent commentary on employee benefits suggests that employers maybe missing an opportunity to engage employees because of poorly communicated benefit schemes.
- It is crucial that the proposed enhanced maternity / paternity policy is supported by a clear communication and engagement strategy to ensure it is effectively implemented, understood and celebrated as an enhanced employee benefit.
- The communication plan must consider key stakeholders, utilise a diverse and neuroinclusive range of communication platforms that send compelling messages tailored to employee groups.
- Engage stakeholders early and encourage two-way communication and monitor feedback closely to adjust strategies as needed. The process should also engage with Bluestone's Employee Consultation Group (ECG) to maintain transparency throughout the process and regularly capture employee feedback to ensure continued effectiveness (Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka, 2010).

2

Costings

- Bluestone should be mindful of the associated costs of developing and launching a communications plan. Such costs include:
 - Resource requirements – time and salary of People Services and Communication Teams.
 - Creation of the communication content plan creation and planning its launch / publication (internal or outsourced costs).
 - Tools and platforms to be utilised – face to face briefings, digital, employee apps, design of new internal marketing collateral to include posters, ‘table talkers’ in staff areas and updating existing documents, such employee handbook.
 - Cost of engagement event expenses.
- Effective internal communications also requires investment in feedback systems and employee engagement tools to foster a cohesive work environment, (LaGree et al., 2021).

The estimated costs is between £5,000 and £8,000.



3



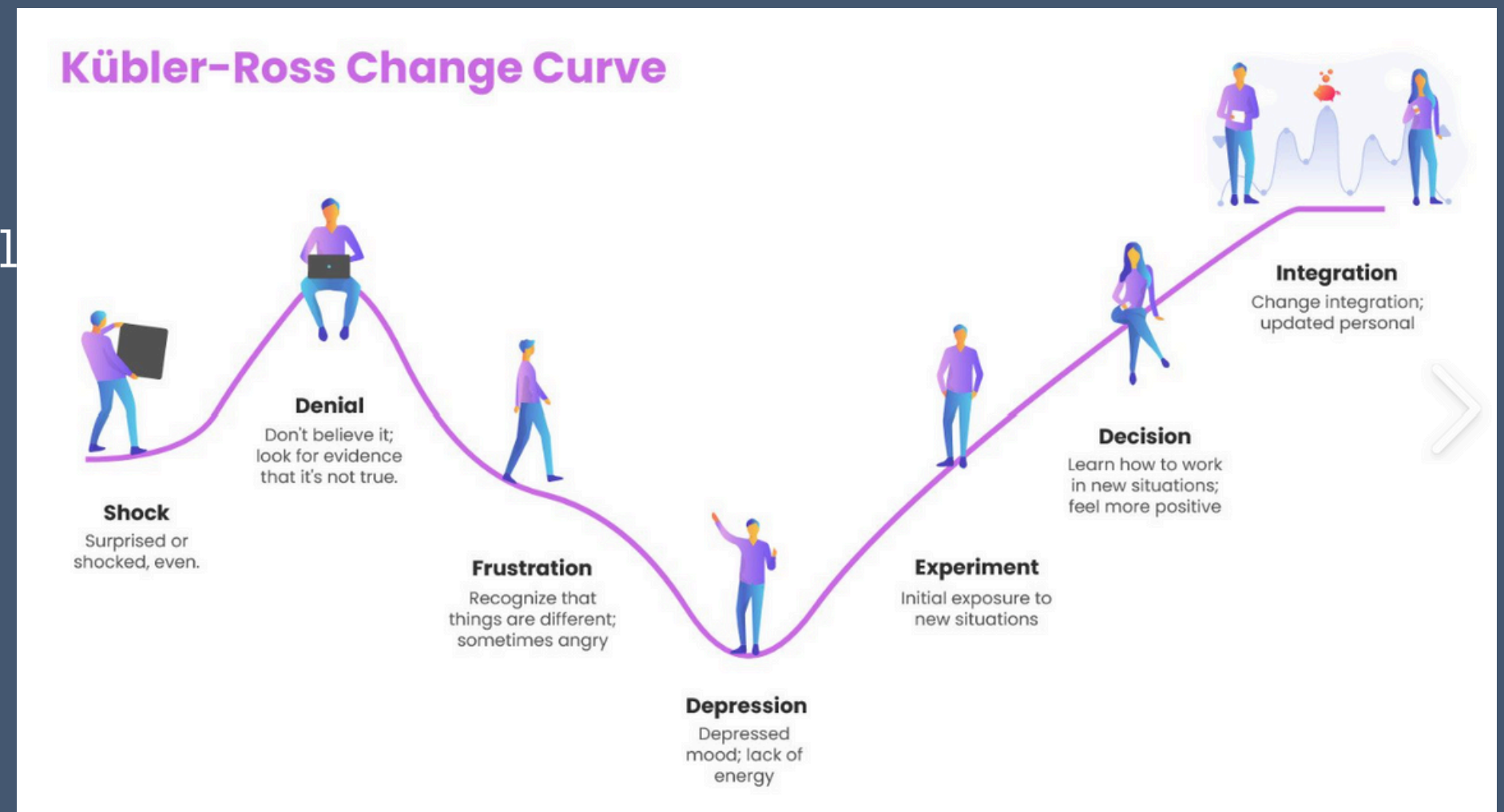
Train Line Managers on Effective Change Management

- Individuals or employee groups may obstruct or hinder efforts to implement change – resistance to change. This resistance is not always harmful; it can be a protective response designed to ensure safety (CIPD, 2023).
- Successful change transformation requires Bluestone to align its strategic and cultural goals. Starting with strategic objectives of the enhanced maternity / paternity scheme, the aim should be to build a supportive culture that reflects these goals.
- Leaders should support open discussion among teams and leaders should be encouraged to promote proactive changes to help phase out the obsolete Maternity / Paternity Leave policy (CIPD, 2024e).
- Bluestone should upskill its Line Managers to effectively lead their teams through the new policy and change process. Considering providing its line managers with knowledge of change models and how to respond, such as the model developed by Kubler–Ross (Chavan and Bhattacharya, 2022).

3

Train Line Managers on Effective Change Management

- It is recommended Bluestone upskill its Line Managers to effectively lead their teams through the new maternity / paternity policy and change process.
- Equipping Line Managers with tools and resources to identify employee behaviour during each stage of the curve is crucial the success of the policy launch.



(Chavan and Bhattacharya, 2022).



Costings

- The following training costs should be considered:
 - Training Materials: Budget for creating or purchasing training manuals, guides, and other materials.
 - Trainer Fees: Costs of hiring external consultants or trainers.
 - Software and Tools: Invest in learning management systems (LMS) or other software for delivering and tracking training.
 - Customisation: Costs for customising training content to fit Bluestone's needs.
 - Employee Time: Account for the time employees spend in training sessions, which can impact productivity.(Samoliu, Bilan and Mishchuk, 2021).
- These associated costs of upskilling a team of 60 Line Managers could cost between £12,000 and £15,000.



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