Prifysgol Cymru
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Change Management

Resistance to Change

Today's objectives

- To consider **<u>resistance to change</u>**:

- reasons for
- types of
- responses to
- challenges arising from

Unlocking resistance to change

- https://youtu.be/vPhM8lxibSU

Activity 1:
Personal Reactions to Change

1. Think about times when you have been a recipient of change:
   a. What was the change and how was it introduced?
   b. What was the impact on you?
   c. What was your initial reaction?
   d. Did your attitudes change over time? Why or why not?

2. Was there a pattern to your response?
   a. Under what circumstances did you support the change?
   b. When did you resist? What can you generalise from your reactions?
   c. If you experienced ambivalence, how did you resolve it and what happened to your attitudes towards the change?

3. Have your experiences with change been largely positive, negative or mixed? Have they coloured your expectations about the future?

Today in summary…..

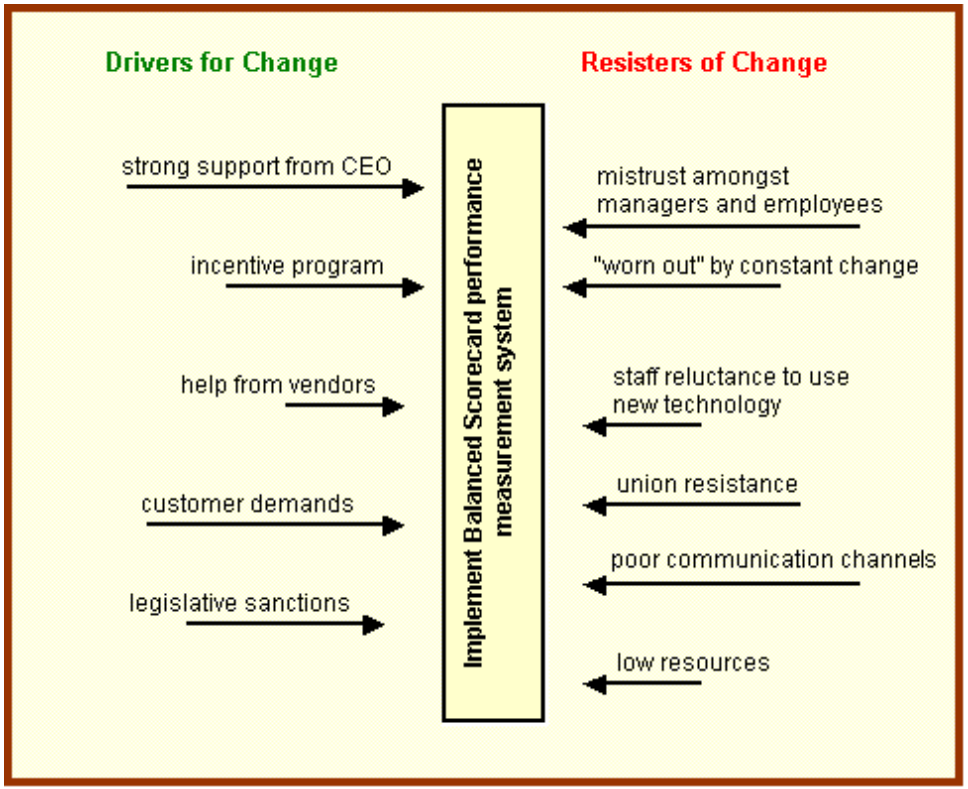
1. Time to revisit our assumptions about why resistance occurs?
2. When people experience ambivalence about change, influencing their perspective is more possible
3. Changes may alter the psychological contract
4. When disruptive change occurs, recipient stakeholders go through a predictable series of reactions to change
5. Recipients' views of change are influenced by their personalities, experiences, their peers and by the change leaders
6. To reduce negative reactions, make change the norm and encourage recipients to be change leaders and implementers

Resistance defined

"…. An unwillingness or inability to accept or to discuss changes that are perceived to be damaging or threatening to the individual."

(Buchanan & Huczynski, 2013:628)

Kurt Lewin's Force Field Analysis



Stakeholder Analysis

- A technique for addressing possible resistance to change as well as identifying and strengthening support for change

Why is change so difficult?

- Within organisations, the ultimate target of change is behaviour – whether the change itself involves a system, a process, or the company's structure.
- It moves people, their team, or their company from what is familiar and, in a very real sense, comfortable to that which is unfamiliar and uncomfortable.
- This discomfort leads people, teams, and organisations as a whole generally to resist rather than embrace change

Resistance?

…..is in the eye of the beholder

- Multiple perceptions
- Disloyal to heroic; villains question it (luddites)
- Managers impose, employees resist = caricature
- Employee engagement opportunity
- Rational behaviour? (supermarket aisles)
- Coping mechanism? Defence mechanism?
- **Course called Change Mgt not Stability Mgt – why?**

"resistance towards change encompasses behaviours that are acted out by change recipients in order to slow down or terminate an intended organisational change"

(Lines, 2004:198)

Resistance to change

- **Individual** resistance
- **Technical** resistance
- **Political** resistance
- **Cultural** resistance
- **Structural** resistance

- Viewed from a managerial perspective
- Why it occurs; how it manifests itself

People resist the imposition of change/bad change?

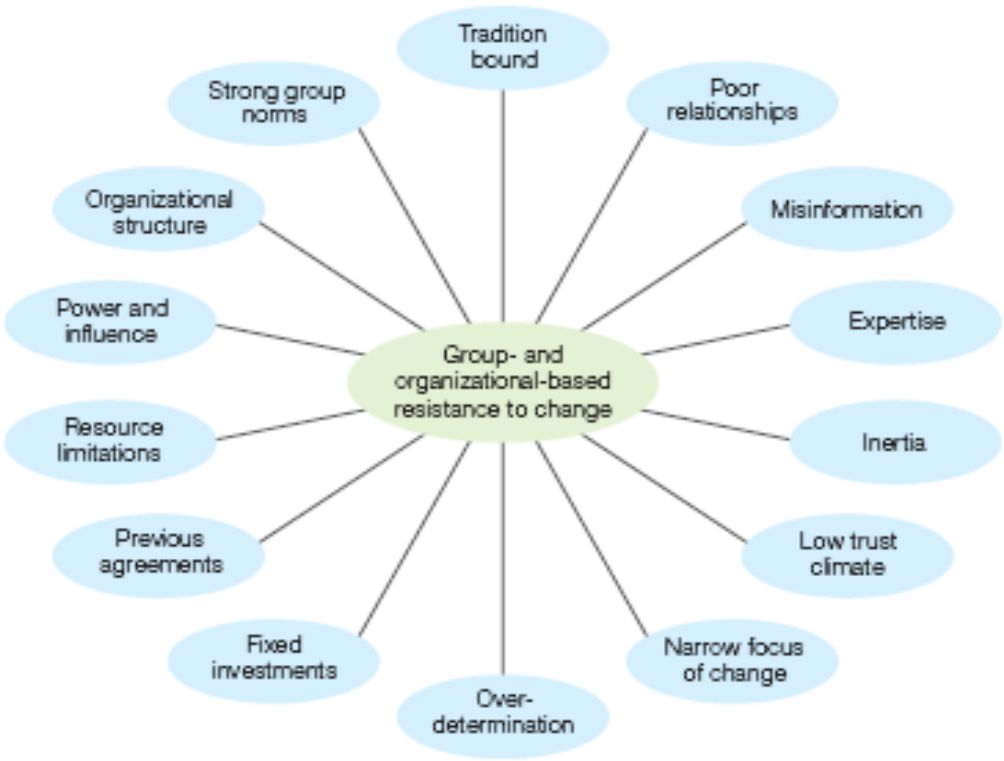
Or do they resist uncertainty rather than change?

(Burke,2008)

Negative responses to change instead include?

Resistance to change

Resistance to change



Resistance to Change

- An organisation's inability to change is due to organisational inertia that maintains the status quo

- Resistance to change lowers an organisation's effectiveness and reduces its chances of survival

Umble &
Umble (2014)

A CRY FOR CHANGE

Figure 1. Fundamental change often requires organizational leaders to peel away three broad layers of resistance just as they would peel away the layers of an onion.

Resistance to Change

- **Organisational Level**
  - Structure
  - Culture
  - Strategy
- **Functional Level**
  - Power and conflict
  - Differences in subunit orientation
- **Group Level**
  - Norms
  - Cohesiveness
  - Groupthink
- **Individual Level**
  - Cognitive biases
  - Uncertainty and Insecurity
  - Selective Perception and Retention
  - Habit

- Organisational level resistance to change stems from:
  - Power and conflict
    - When change causes power struggle and conflicts, there is resistance
  - Differences in functional orientation
  - Mechanistic structure
  - Organisational culture

Are mechanistic or organic structures more opposed to change? Why?

Structure

- **Mechanistic Structures** are resistant to change by design.
- People in a mechanistic structure are expected to act a certain way, and are not given the freedom to change.

- Mechanistic structures are more resistant to change because people behave a certain way and do not adjust their behaviour to changing conditions.
- Not maintaining the ability to act in an organic way results in inertia.
- Sometimes **revolutionary change** is needed to adapt the structure.

Structure

- **Organic structure**
  - Extensive use of mutual adjustment and decentralised authority fosters the development of skills that allow workers to be creative, responsive and able to find solutions for new problems.

Culture

- Values and norms in an organisation's culture can be another source of resistance to change
- If organisational change disrupts taken-for-granted values and norms and forces people to change what they do and how they do it, an organisation's culture will cause resistance to change

Organisational resistance

- Level of investment – change often requires large resources that may already be committed to investments in other areas or strategies.

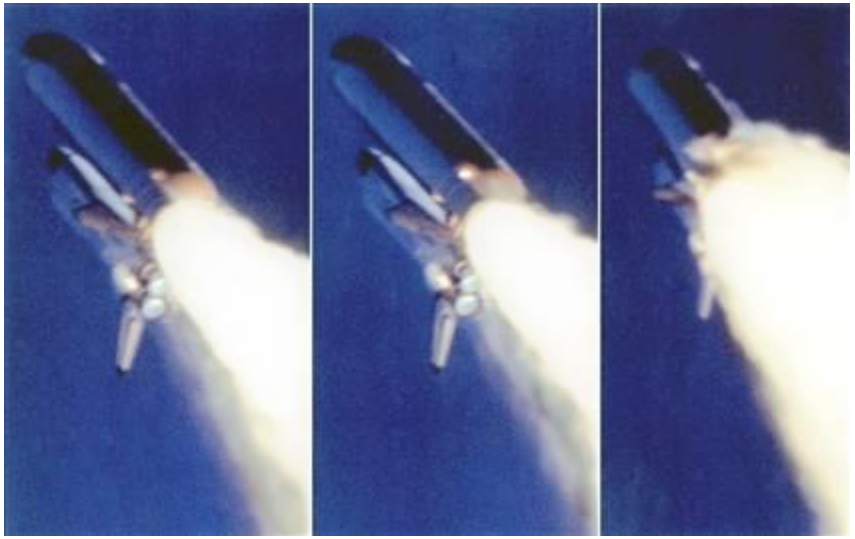
- Assets such as buildings, technology, equipment and people cannot be easily altered.

- Past contracts or agreements

Resistance to Change

- **Groupthink** - occurs when members ignore negative information to achieve harmony.

Challenger



Resistance to Change

- Individual-level resistance to change stems from:
  - Uncertainty and insecurity - resistance to the uncertainty and insecurity of change results in inertia
  - Selective perception and retention - suggests that people perceive information consistent with their views. If change doesn't benefit them, they do not endorse it
  - Habit - people prefer familiar tasks and tend to return to original behaviours, making change temporary

- Inconvenience or loss of freedom – if the change is seen as likely to prove inconvenient, make life more difficult, reduce freedom of action or result in increased control – there will be resistance.
- Economic implications – reduction directly/indirectly pay or rewards.
- Security in the past.
- Fear of the unknown.

Reasons for personal resistance

- belief that the change initiative is a temporary fad
- belief that fellow employees or managers are incompetent
- loss of authority or control
- loss of status or social standing
- lack of faith in their ability to learn new skills
- feeling of change overload (too much too soon)
- lack of trust in or dislike of managers
- loss of job security
- loss of family or personal time
- feeling that the organisation is not entitled to the extra effort

Reactions to Organisational Change: **Enthusiasts**

- change recipients are intrinsically wedded to the change idea.
- may agree dispassionately that the change will be of benefit to the organisation, or they may stand to receive some personal gain from the change, such as a guarantee of job security, more status or a higher salary.
- will use opportunities to broadcast approval for the change and will try to convince others of its merits.
- will also model the new behaviour early and will volunteer for membership of teams.
- These early adopters may also make good choices as trainers and coaches during the implementation process.

Followers

- Followers range from those that are generally compliant, wishing to take the path of least resistance, to those that are initially reticent to adapt, but eventually do so once they accept the inevitability of the change.
- These change recipients will do what is required, but no more.

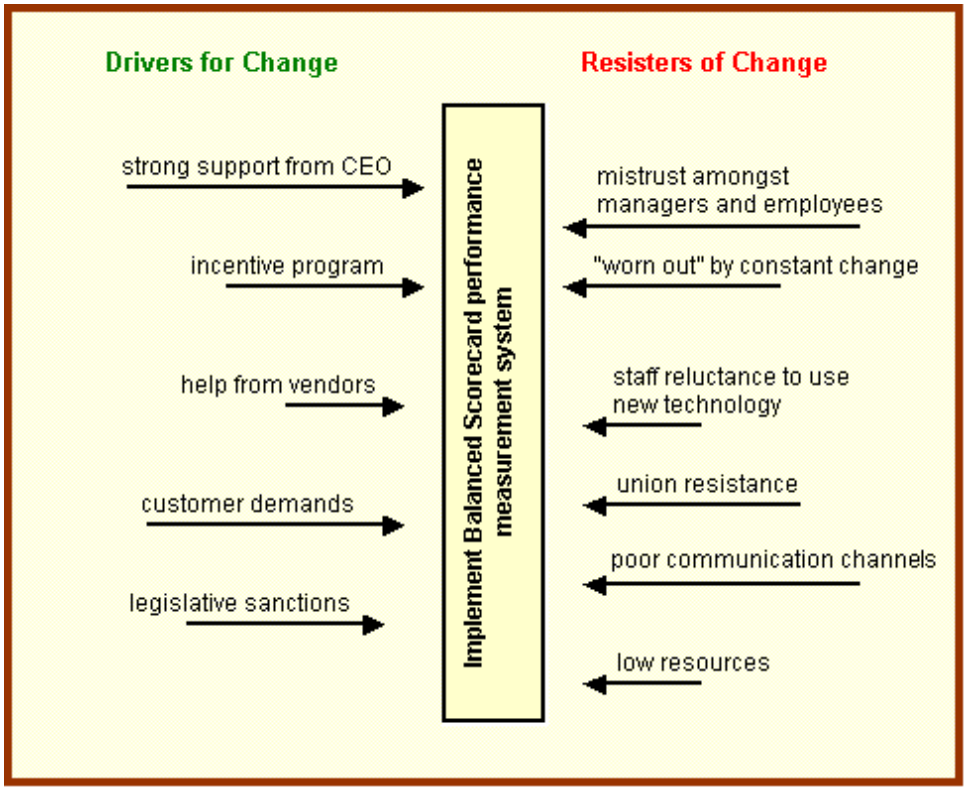
Objectors

- Objectors will display their resistance to change whenever the opportunity arises.
- They may disrupt meetings, not attend training, take unapproved leave and refuse to carry out instructions.
- Objectors will continue to use superseded systems and processes when others are taking up the new ways of doing things.
- They are not averse to arguing with managers and fellow workers and will try to convince others to continue with the old ways. In a unionised environment, resistance can take the form of strikes, lockouts, “work to rule”, legal challenges and boycotts.

Underground

- Change recipients working for the underground have solid motivations for not making their resistance public.
- They may fear direct punishment, such as termination or fines, or more personal costs, such as ridicule or loss of status and authority.
- Managers who are against the change but need to be seen to be in support of it are prime candidates for promoting underground resistance.
- This style of resistance is, by its nature, always covert and can take many forms. Common among these are falsifying reports, inputting incorrect data, stealing, damaging infrastructure and equipment, using sarcasm, spreading rumours, excessive absences, shoddy work and “go slow”.

Kurt Lewin's Force Field Analysis



Actions to secure effective change

1. Create a sense of urgency among relevant people
2. Build a guiding team which has credibility
3. Create visions that are sensible, clear and uplifting
4. Communicate the vision and strategy to induce understanding and commitment
5. Empower action and remove obstacles
6. Produce short term wins
7. Do not let up but maintain momentum
8. Make change stick by nurturing a new culture

Kotter and Cohen

People the key factor

‘ *Given that change has become such a factor of business life, it is worrying that so many change management programmes fail to fulfil their potential.*

The consensus among the experts is that it is often the people factor that derails the effort.

Put simply, organisations know where they want to go – but they are not taking their people with them.’

Lucas

Change leaders

Effective leadership of change may include the following key factors:

- Effective communication of the reasons for change
- Releasing the potential of all involved in the change
- Setting a good personal example
- Self-pacing to avoid unnecessary stress

Hooper and Potter

Recipients

- Reactions vary from positive to negative, and ambivalence often comes first
  - Recipients do not always react negatively: it depends on how they perceive the change
  - Recipients will have questions and concerns, as they attempt to make sense of the change

- Resistance is not inevitable - listen, work to understand and respond in ways that build understanding and support
  - Do this early and often – don't wait for ambivalence to become resistance

Channelling feelings for the Change

- Channel energy in positive ways, not letting enthusiasm overwhelm legitimate concerns
- Recognise mixed feelings and seek to understand them
- Use respected, positively-oriented individuals in positions of influence concerning the change
- Pace the change. Remember that going to slow can lose enthusiastic support and going to fast will choke those who are doubtful.

Ambivalence to change is no surprise

- Mixed feelings are common as recipients try to make sense of the change
- Ambivalence generates discomfort they seek to resolve
  - People find it easier to voice concerns about conflicting beliefs than about conflicting emotions
- Once they resolve their ambivalence, feelings solidify and subsequent change to attitudes become more difficult
  - Invest the time needed at the front end of the change to respond to ambivalence positively - or prepare to face a more difficult task later, when it turns to resistance

Responding to mixed feelings about the change

- Focus on helping people make sense of the proposed change
- Listen for information that may be helpful in achieving the change
- Constructively reconcile their ambivalence, and
- Sort out what actions are now needed

Common Causes of Negative Reactions

1. Negative consequences perceived to outweigh the benefits
2. Flawed communication process
3. Concern that the change has been ill conceived
4. Lack of experience with change or locked into old habits
5. Prior negative experience with a similar change
6. Prior negative experience with those advocating change
7. The negative reactions of others that recipients trust &/or with whom they will have to work in the future
8. The change process seen to lack procedural or distributive justice

Perceptions of Fairness & Justice

- Will influence how recipients view and react to the change

- **Procedural Justice**
  - Was the process managed in a fair and equitable way?

- **Distributive Justice**
  - Was the end decision a fair one?

Is it Resistance...
or is something else going on?

- We often misinterpret impediments to change as caused by resistant recipients

- Impediments are much more likely to come from problems related to the misalignment of structures and systems, than from individuals engaged in resistance

- Blaming individuals rather than addressing misaligned structures and systems will worsen the situation

Managers as Recipients

- Recipients of change are not just those in front-line roles
- Supervisors, middle & even senior managers are often change recipients
- They often try to manage up, down and laterally to cope with change, try to shape it, & deal with implementation
- Coping with change while trying to link, influence and implement is difficult
- If you are a change recipient in these middle roles, be aware of how this can affect your judgment

Psychological Contract

- Represents the sum of the implicit and explicit agreements we believe we have with our organisation
- It defines our perceptions of the terms of our employment relationship and includes our expectations for ourselves and for the organisation, including organisational norms, rights, rewards and obligations
- Changes often disrupt recipients' psychological contracts
- When unilateral changes are made to psychological contracts, negative reactions can be expected

INDIVIDUALS' EXPECTATIONS OF THE ORGANISATION

- Provide safe and hygienic working conditions.
- Make every reasonable effort to provide job security.
- Attempt to provide challenging and satisfying jobs, and reduce alienating aspects of work.
- Adopt equitable human resource management policies and procedures.
- Respect the role of trade union officials and staff representives.
- Consult fully with staff and allow genuine participation in decisions which affect them.
- Implement best practice in equal opportunity policies and procedures.
- Reward all staff fairly according to their contribution and performance.
- Provide reasonable opportunities for personal development and career progression.
- Treat members of staff with respect.
- Demonstrate an understanding and considerate attitude towards personal problems of staff.

ORGANISATIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

- Uphold the ideology of the organisation and the corporate image.
- Work diligently in pursuit of organisational objectives.
- Adhere to the rules, policies and procedures of the organisation.
- Respect the reasonable authority of senior members of staff.
- Not to take advantage of goodwill shown by management.
- Be responsive to leadership influence.
- Demonstrate loyalty, respect confidentiality and not betray positions of trust.
- Maintain harmonious relationships with work colleagues.
- Not to abuse organisational facilities such as email or Internet access.
- Observe reasonable and acceptable standards of dress and appearance.
- Show respect and consolidation to customers and suppliers.

Figure 1.6 The psychological contract: possible examples of individual and organisational expectations

Activity 2:
Disruption of the Psychological Contract

Think about a change initiative that you are aware of:

1. What was the psychological contract?
2. How did the change disrupt the psychological contract?
3. What were the reactions to these disruptions to the contract?
4. What steps could have reduced the negative effects stemming from the disruption?
5. How should a new psychological contract have been developed with affected individuals?
6. If you were a recipient, what steps could you take to better manage your way through the development of a new contract?

Stages of Reaction to Change

Before the Change	During the Change	After the Change
Anticipation & Anxiety Phase	Shock, Denial & Retreat Phase	Acceptance Phase
Issues: Coping with uncertainty and rumors **1. Pre-change Anxiety**	**Issues:** Coping with the announcement and associated fallout, reacting to the new "reality" **2.Shock** **3.Defensive Retreat** **4.Bargaining** **5.Depression and Guilt, Alienation**	**Issues:** Putting effects of change behind you, acknowledging the change, achieving closure and moving on to new beginnings – adaptation and change **6.Acknowledgment** **7.Adaptation & Change**

In the Midst of Change, it is about...

- Ambiguity
- Risk
- Denial
- Anger
- Fear
- Resentment
- Excitement
- Exploration

- Determination & Commitment
- Tension
- Satisfaction
- Pride
- Lots of other potentially conflicting emotions

Activity 3:
Your Normal Reaction to Innovation & Change

When you find yourself dealing with matters of innovation and change, how do you typically react?

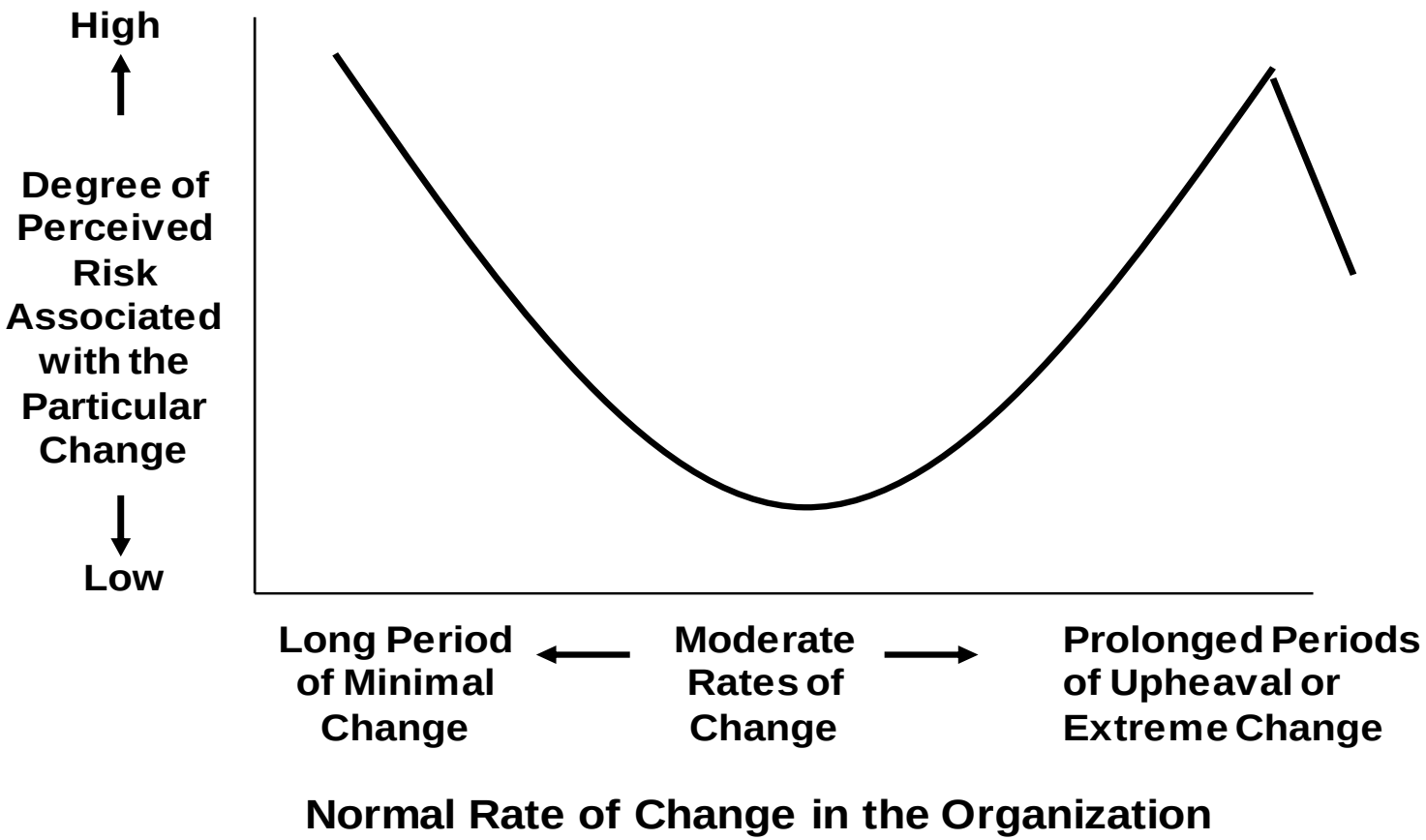
1. Do you fall into the category of innovator or early adopter?

2. Or do you generally fit into the early majority category? If the experiences of early adopters are positive, you take the risk.

3. Or are you in the category of the late majority? You wait until the innovation has been tried and tested by many before adopting.

4. Or do you avoid adopting until the vast majority have done so? In other words are you a late adopter or even a non-adopter, until forced to do so.

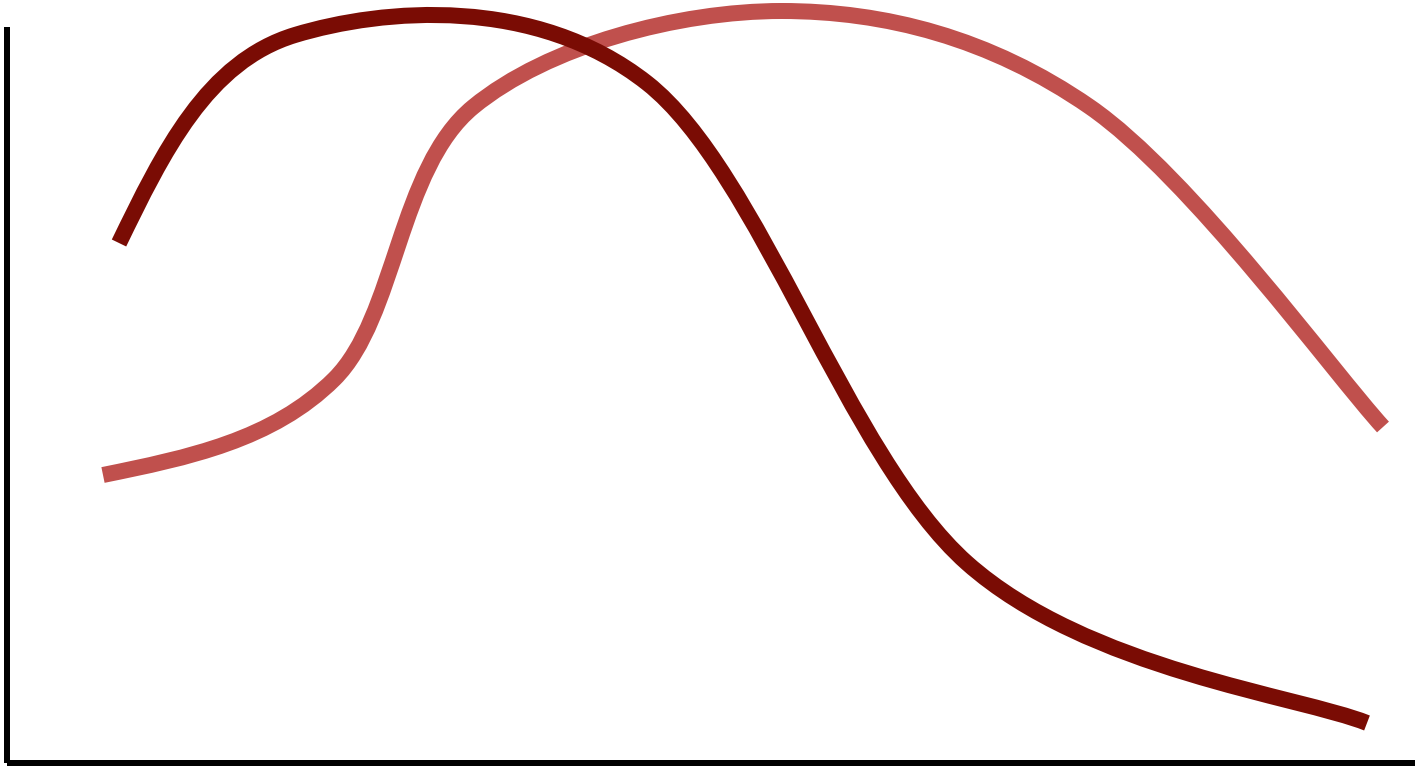
Recipient's Past Experience with Change & Perceived Risk



Personality & Your Change Experience

	Change Experience Little ← Some — Frequent → Chaos
Individuals with **High** Tolerance for Ambiguity and Change	Boredom ← Energised → Negative Stress Effects
Individuals with **Low** Tolerance for Ambiguity and Change	Comfort ← Stress Discomfort Rises → Severe Distress

Personality & Change



High Need for Change Individuals

Low Need for Change Individuals

Activity 4:
What is Your Tolerance for Change?

1. What is your tolerance for change? What level of turbulence and ambiguity at work do you find most stimulating and satisfying?

2. How do you react when the rate of change is likely to remain quite low?

3. How do you react when the rate of change is moderate? What constitutes a moderate for you? Are your tolerance levels lower or higher than others you know?

4. What price do you find you pay when the rate of turbulence and ambiguity exceed what you are comfortable with?

5. Have you had to cope with prolonged periods of serious upheaval? Have these affected your acceptance of change?

Influence of Co-workers on Change Recipients

- Co-workers and Work Teams will greatly influence Change Recipients views towards change.
- Co-workers who are trusted will have greater influence.
- Cohesive teams will tend to become more cohesive when threatened.
- Cohesive teams will be more influential.
- Context is therefore relevant

How Trusted Peers Influence Recipients

Opinions of those Trusted by Recipients*	Recipients' Initial Attitude to the Change	Possible Implication
Positive Towards the Change	Positive Towards the Change	Very motivated to support
	Negative Towards the Change	Initially opposed but may move to support due to new information from trusted others + peer pressure
Negative Towards the Change	Positive Towards the Change	Support of the change may weaken or silenced due to information offered by trusted peers + peer pressure
	Negative Towards the Change	Opposition to the change is reinforced by the views of trusted peers

Organisational / Individual Consequences & Support for Change

Perceived Impact of the Change on the Organisation	Perceived Impact of the Change on the Individual	Direction of Support of the Change
Positive	Positive	**Strong support for change**
Positive	Negative	Indeterminate, with possible resistance
Neutral	Positive	Support for change
Neutral	Negative	**Resistance to change**
Negative	Positive	Indeterminate support for change
Negative	Negative	**Strong resistance to change**

Feelings About Change Leaders Matter

- How people react to change is also influenced by their **perceptions of the change leader**

- They are more likely to respond positively to the change
  - If they trust and respect these leaders
  - If they believe their perspectives and interests are recognised

Minimising Cynicism Towards Change

1. Involve people in making decisions that affect them

2. Emphasise and reward supervisors who foster two-way communications, good working relationships, and show consideration and respect for employees

3. Keep people informed and include honest appraisals of risks, costs, benefits and consequences

4. Keep surprises to a minimum via regular communications about changes, anticipating questions and concerns

Minimising Cynicism Towards Change

5. Enhance credibility by :
   a. using credible spokespersons who are liked and trusted
   b. using positive messages that appeal to logic and consistency
   c. using multiple channels and repetition
6. Acknowledge mistakes and make amends
7. Publicise successful changes and progress
8. Use two-way communications to see change from employees' perspective - this will aid planning & future communications
9. Provide opportunities for employees to express feelings, receive validation and reassurance. Address their concerns

Steps to Minimise Negative Effects of Change

- Meaningful engagement of recipients
- Timeliness of communications / information & opportunities to vent concerns and frustrations
- Two-way communications

Strategies for Coping with Change

Recipients' Strategies	Change Leaders' Strategies
• Accepting Feelings as Natural ▪ Managing Stress ▪ Exercising Responsibility	• Rethinking Resistance ▪ Giving First Aid ▪ Creating Capability for Change

Strategies for Coping with Change

Recipients' Strategies	Change Leaders' Strategies
Accepting Feelings as Natural ▪ Self-permission to feel and mourn ▪ Taking time to work through feelings ▪ Tolerating ambiguity	**Rethinking Resistance** ▪ As natural as self-protection ▪ As a positive step toward change ▪ As energy to work with ▪ As information critical to the change process
Managing Stress ▪ Maintaining physical well-being ▪ Seeking information about the change ▪ Limiting extraneous stressors ▪ Taking regular breaks ▪ Seeking support	**Giving First Aid** ▪ Accepting emotions ▪ Listening ▪ Providing safety ▪ Marking endings ▪ Providing resources and support

Strategies for Coping with Change

Recipients' Strategies	Change Leaders' Strategies
Exercising Responsibility ▪ Identifying options and gains ▪ Learning from losses ▪ Participating in the change ▪ Inventorying strengths ▪ Learning new skills ▪ Diversifying emotional investing	**Creating Capability for Change** ▪ Making organisational support of risks clear ▪ Providing a continuing safety net ▪ Emphasising continuities, gains of change ▪ Helping employees explore risks, options ▪ Suspending judgment ▪ Involving people in decision making ▪ Teamwork ▪ Providing opportunities for individual growth

Roles for Middle Management

- Linking -- with Above, Bottom, Others
- Offering -- as a Top, Bottom, a Link
- Influence Up
  - Championing Strategic Alternatives
  - Synthesising Information
- Influence Down
  - Facilitating Adaptability
  - Implementing Strategy

Activity 5:
Working Through the Phases of Change

1. Consider a significant and disruptive change situation. Can you identify the different phases of change? What phases are you aware of?

2. Can you identify strategies that recipients used or could have used to help them work their way through the different phases?

3. Can you identify strategies that change leaders used or could have used to help recipients work their way through the different phases?

Activity 5: Working Through the Phases of Change

	Aware Yes/No	Strategies Recipients can use	Strategies change Leaders can use
Pre-change Anxiety			
Shock			
Defensive Retreat			
Bargaining			
Depression, Guilt and Alienation			
Acknowledgment			
Adaptation and Change			

Closing advice for Change Leaders thinking about Recipients

- Avoid coercion as a change strategy, if at all possible
- Align systems & processes with the change – when not aligned they can send conflicting signals
- Reduce the intensity of change by making change the norm
- Work to increase your tolerance for change, become a change agent yourself and avoid the recipient traps

Walking the Talk – Why?

- It's all about trust in the person's competence and character!
- Trust in change leaders creates confidence in the proposed path
- Trust provides an environment for others to take risks
- Remember -- *every change is a risk!*

Walking the Talk – How?

- Get out there – don't hide!
- Act as if you're always on display
  - Communicate clearly the why, what, how, when & who of the change
- Talk about your personal responses to the changes
  - It's ok to be excited, uncertain, determined, frustrated, relieved
  - Acknowledge missteps & mistakes – they will happen
- Be empathetic - actively support and coach others, show your willingness to listen and learn

Activity 6: Assessing Recipient Openness to Change

Think of change you know of or are involved with. How are the recipients likely to rate the following factors?		Score
1. Past experience with change, particularly changes similar to that advocated	Very -ve -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Very +ve	___
2. Normal rate of change that has been experienced by the organisation	Very Low -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Mod to High	___
3. Recipients' general predisposition to change as reflected in their personality	Late Adopter -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Early Adopter	___
4. Recipients believe they understand nature of the change and the reasons for it	Low -10 -5 0 +5 +10 High	___

	Score
5. Recipient's personal belief about the need for this particular change	Very -ve -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Very +ve ___
6. (a) Reactions of coworkers to the change (b) Strength of coworker relations (norms)	Very -ve -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Very +ve **Multiply #6a by #6b** Weak 0.1 0.3 0.5 0.7 1.0 Strong ___
7. Leader credibility	Low -10 -5 0 +5 +10 High ___
8. Leader gains compliance through fear versus gains commitment through understanding & empathy	Fear -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Support ___

	Score
9. Organisational credibility (i.e., will it follow through on commitments related to change)	Low -10 -5 0 +5 +10 High ___
10. Congruence of systems and processes with the proposed change (or confidence that they will be brought into congruence)	Very Incongruent -10 -5 0 +5 +10 Very Congruent ___
Predisposition to Change Index: Scores can range from -100 to +100	Overall Score ___

Summary

- Examined how recipients respond to change.
- Resistance isn't inevitable – don't assume as much
- Ambivalence often precedes resistance & influence is easier at this point
- Understand reasons for resistance & put knowledge to work (e.g., the impact of change on the psychological contract)
- Factors affecting how recipients view change & their change reaction phases to disruptive change are discussed
- Considered how recipients & change leaders can better manage the process & minimize the negative effects

Recap

Resistance to change: individual

Individual resistance can arise from:

- Selective perception
- Habit
- Inconvenience or loss of freedom
- Economic implications
- Security in the past
- Fear of the unknown

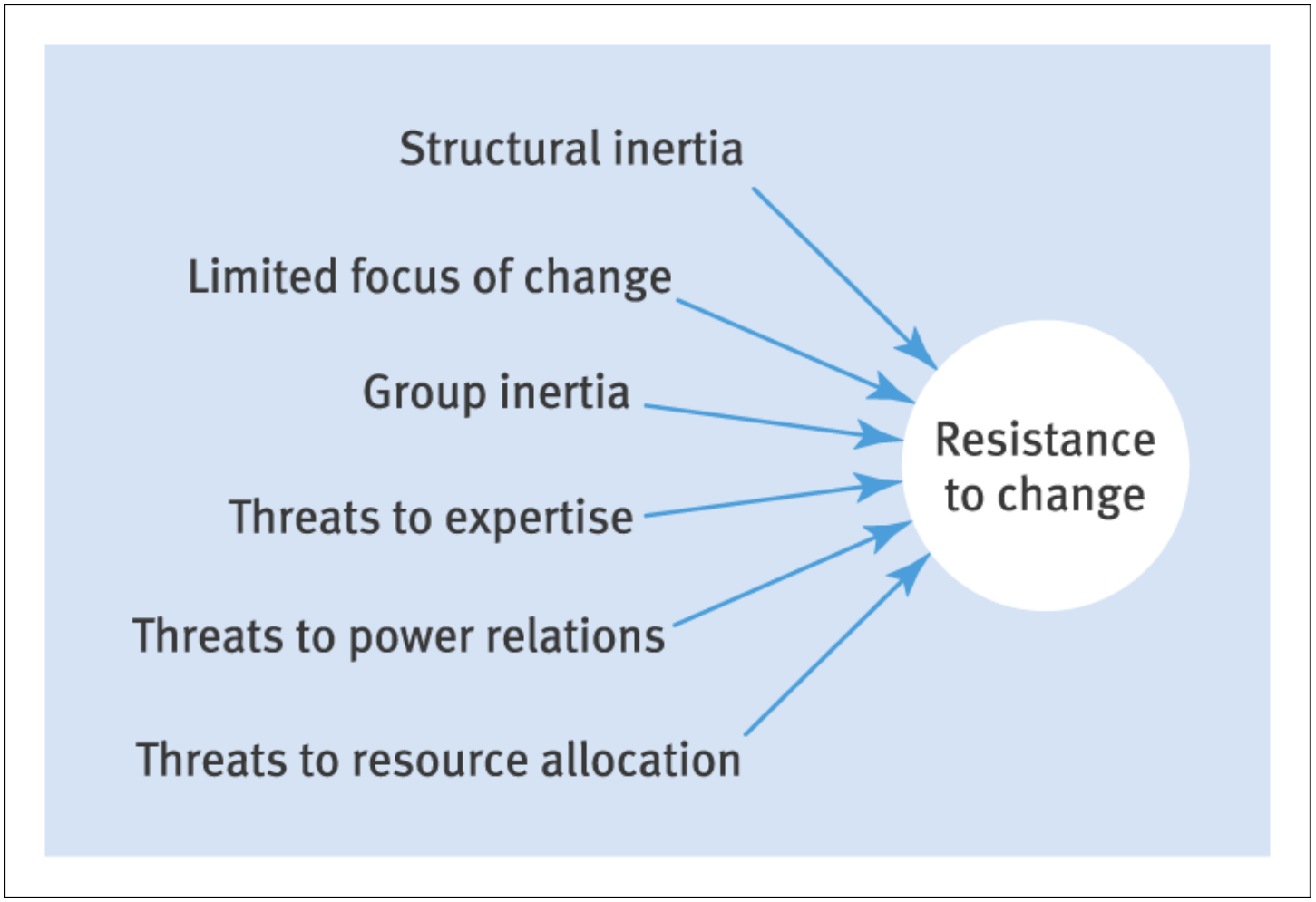


Figure 21.3 Organisational sources of resistance to change

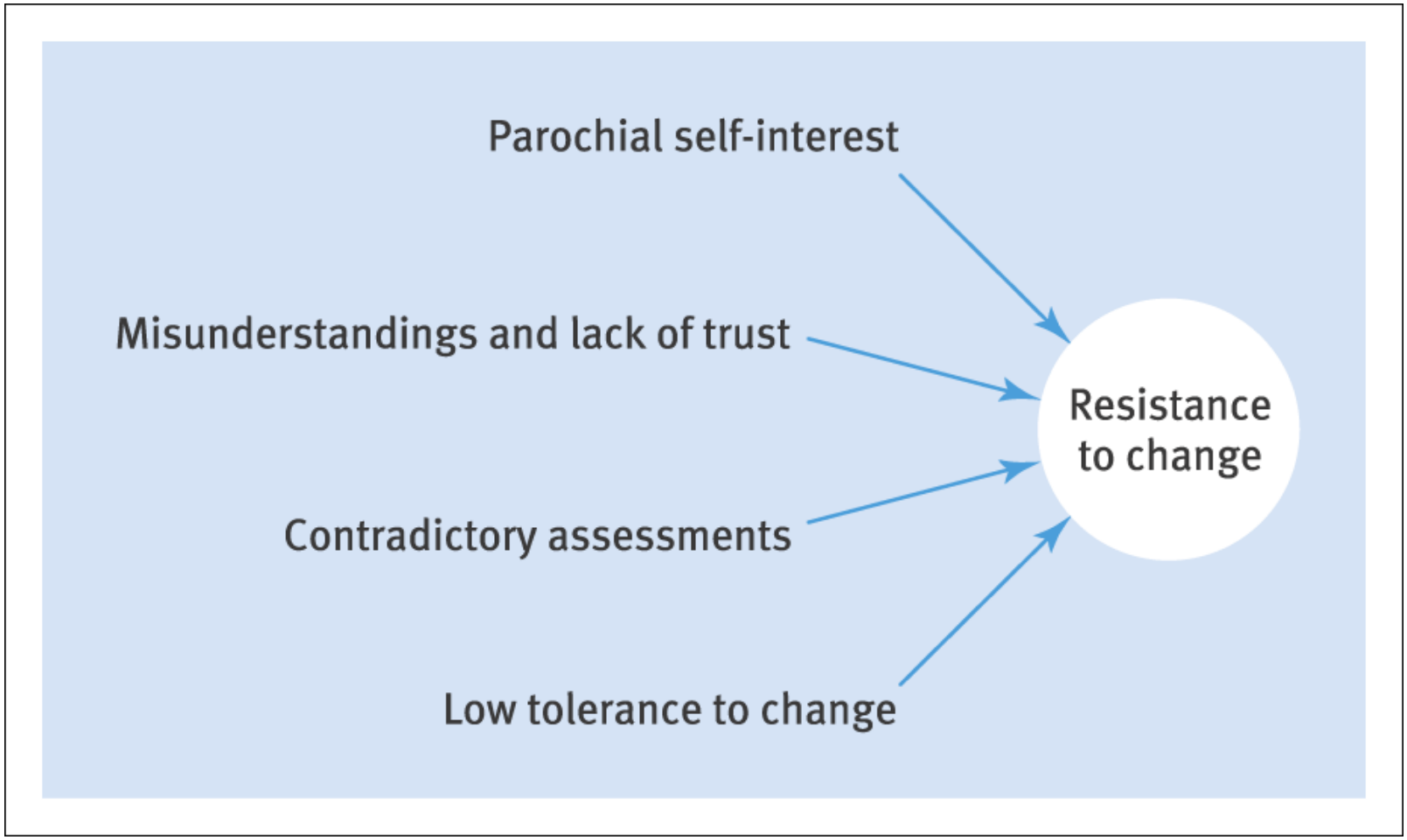


Figure 21.4 Individual sources of resistance to change

Resistance to change: organisational

Organisational resistance can arise from:

- Organisational culture
- Maintaining stability
- Investment in resources
- Past contracts or agreements
- Threats to power or influence

Organisational responses to change

Three factors affect organisational responses to change:

- Resources
- Processes
- Values

Christiansen and Overdorf

Minimising the problems of change

- Create an environment of trust and shared commitment
- Genuine participation of all staff concerned as early as possible
- Team management and co-operation between staff and unions
- A carefully designed human resource management action programme
- Incentives such as payment schemes
- Maintenance of the socio-technical balance
- Careful attention to job design, methods of work organisation, relations between jobs and task design

Next –

Leading Change
The Role of the Change Agent