

**ENBIS Workshop:
Statistical Consulting and
Change Management**
Section 3
Resistance to Change
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3.1



*Resistance to Change:
How to recognize it!
and
How to deal with it!*

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Resistance to Change

- Resistance to change is natural – will exist in any organization
- Resistance to change may happen at all levels of an organization
- If pervasive or by key individuals, resistance to change will have detrimental effects for the whole program
- **MUST** not be ignored!!!

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Resistance to Change is Normal

- The positive side of resistance is that it leads to stability and predictability in an organization
- Resistance can stimulate a healthy discussion
- Resistance can come from the organization or from individuals

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Faces of Resistance

- **Overt**
 - Vocal complaints by employees
 - Engaging in a work slowdown
 - Threatening a strike
- **Covert**
 - Loss of loyalty to organization
 - Less motivation
 - Increased errors
 - Increased absenteeism
 - Dragging feet

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Causes of Individual Resistance

- **Habit**
 - Habits are behaviors we do without thinking about them
 - All humans are creatures of habit
 - To cope with life's complexity, we rely on habits
 - When confronted with change, the tendency to respond in known ways becomes resistance
- **Fear**
 - That change will lower income or job security
 - That change will involve new tasks that one cannot perform
 - Loss of power and influence

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Causes of Organizational Resistance

- Organizations actively resist change through structural mechanisms to provide stability
 - People are hired to “fit in”
 - Rules, job descriptions and training shape and direct people to perform in specific ways
 - Changes in organization threatens power relationships and expertise
 - History/culture

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What's really going on here?

- What we perceive as resistance is really a part of the system we do not understand
- We need to know what is causing a behavior and what is maintaining it
- You can only change behaviors. You cannot change attitudes, beliefs, cultures
- You can only change behaviors if you understand human behavior

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Participation Can Reduce Resistance

- Participation has little effect on productivity, motivation and job satisfaction
- Participation can reduce resistance to change, it's difficult to resist a change you helped design (cognitive dissonance)
- Examine conditions for participation
 - Is there adequate time?
 - Is the issues relevant to the person?
 - Does the organization support employee participation?

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Methods to Involve People

- Quality circles
- Teams
- Suggestion programs
- Six Sigma

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