



COACHING  
**CULTURE**  
*Partner*



IS YOUR  
ORGANISATION  
READY FOR  
CHANGE?

*Are you assessing change readiness  
throughout your organisation?*

*By Coaching Culture*



## IS YOUR ORGANISATION READY FOR CHANGE?

**At any point in time, organisations are going through some kind of change. It could be an organisational restructure, change of leadership or even the launch of new products. And while most people will feel the impact of the change, don't assume that means they will all feel the same way towards it (why does Brexit suddenly pop into our mind?).**

No matter what, change is a given. What isn't a given is the organisational response - and this comes down to culture.

At the individual level some people embrace change. They thrive on the new set of challenges it presents and see opportunities even when they recognise the change might not be easy to achieve. Some people are more cautious. They aren't anti-change in itself but will sit on

the fence, biding their time before they decide what they think. Others, however, will feel vulnerable from the outset. Over time, they've become comfortable with their knowledge of the ins and outs of their jobs. They fear change. Fear of failure, fear of the unknown, fear of loss; those fears can be complex but ultimately they present some of the biggest barriers to successfully achieving change at work. If that's happening in one individual's mind, it could be happening in several individuals' minds. They start whispering about their fears to others in their team. That starts to shift the collective team mindset. In some instances, it could start to tip over into active resistance with change management plans that are being actively sabotaged. The whole culture of change readiness in your organisation could be vulnerable.

# Does your company genuinely have a culture that is ready for change?

Organisations with a growth mindset appreciate successful change management, no matter what its scale, is determined by the ability of every affected employee to accept the vision and move towards it. An employee's response to change relates to whether they perceive it as good or bad and how severe they anticipate the impact will be on them.

But if you think change needs to be managed only at the individual level, you're missing a trick. There are no hard and fast rules about how people will react to it. They'll respond according to what's going on, but so will different teams and even different departments too. One colours the other. Past experiences may mean some teams relish the challenge and the positive opportunities it could introduce. Some teams might be ambivalent and others might well be downright obstructive. Some teams might be completely fragmented in their approach and that could have all kinds of implications.

How well set up is your company to manage those responses? Do you still trot out the same old tired formulaic approach to change management? Or do you welcome and work with the myriad of different perspectives within your organisation? What kind of insights are you able to get into what is going on at the team level and ultimately even at the organisational level to help you manage both individual and collective mindsets? Do you need to change your current thinking and approach?

## 4 SIGNS OF FEAR OF CHANGE

- 1.** Change reluctance: a tendency to want to cling to the past can be heard in team conversations along the lines of, "We've done that before...it didn't work then...we've always done it this way...".
- 2.** Organisational-doubt: comments like "We could never do something like that".
- 3.** Hesitant and apathetic behaviour, particularly when it comes to taking any action connected to the change.
- 4.** Active opposition by individuals and teams: some behaviour is obviously obstructive but it may be more subtle than you'd think.

## TIPS AND TRICKS

- ✓ Psychometrics, change readiness assessments, surveys - whichever way you decide to do it, get insights at every level throughout your organisation to know where you are at.
- ✓ Emphasise the positives. What is it about the changes that could help the organisation to grow?  
  
Coach change leaders to develop their emotional intelligence and to help them understand why individuals and teams react in certain ways.
- ✓ Managers and leaders often take on the role of supporting others. Yet the changes might be challenging for them too. Provide positive outlets for them to share how they're feeling.

## Avoiding the 'us and them' culture

Are you assessing change readiness throughout your organisation? What kinds of tools and techniques are you using to gain perspectives to inform your leaders? These insights allow you to shape a culture where the focus is on solutions, and that ultimately makes the change process achievable.

It's easy to get emotionally caught up in change. It can quickly become an 'us versus them' scenario. To stop that from happening, and sabotaging your change efforts, you need to understand the dynamics at play at all levels. You can then use techniques like coaching to facilitate a new perspective. Accepting change means seeing what's desirable about it, so reframe perceptions. Teams recognise the opportunities the change presents.

People often fear change because they don't know if they'll perform as well in the future. Acknowledge their fears. Reassure them if the fears are not valid. If they are valid, help individuals, teams and even whole departments to take action to address them. That way, you'll be building a genuine culture of change readiness throughout an organisation - rather than simply creating a few pockets of supportive employees.



LRMG is a strategic Coaching Culture Partner in Africa

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