

Resistance to change

In the management of change efficiency, the manager faces the problem of resistance to change. People tend to resist many types of changes because new habits and sacrifices are required. Similarly, social systems tend to resist change because of homeostasis. Homeostasis is the self-correcting characteristics of an organism to maintain equilibrium as a result of change, that is, people act to establish a steady state of need fulfillment and to secure themselves from disturbance of that balance. When change is minor and within the scope of correcting program adjustment is fairly routine but when a change is major or unusual more serious upsets may occur. This leads to the general proposition that people and their social system will often resist change in an organisation. In fact, fear of change can be significantly disruptive as change itself, because it produces identical symptoms.

Resistance as a cost – since all changes have some costs so if there is resistance to change. If people resist to change, the organisation cannot be able to introduce new phenomena in order to adopt environmental requirements, and its basic survival may be in danger. In fact many organisations have been forced to abandon change programs because of resistance to such programs, they have been forced to adopt alternative strategies, like shifting of manufacturing plant at new location. Many companies have been forced to do so in past. One example of Bajaj Auto Limited is relevant here. In order to increase its manufacturing capacity of two wheelers, the company procured land near its old plant site but later shifted the new plant site away from the old plant because of the existing work culture of the old plant which was expected to percolate to new plant also. On this phenomena, Madhur Bajaj, managing director of Bajaj Auto, committed that, "the Pune plant is fully saturated. We wanted a new culture and new layout. Visa resistance to change at existing plant. We shall take new workers at new place".

Resistance as a benefit - on the other hand, resistance to change is a costly affair, it provides a benefit to the organisation and its change agent.

resistance by some members of organisation provide an opportunity to change agent to weigh the pros and cons of introducing change more carefully. While introducing a change emphasis only is positive side, the reality lies in between resistance to change emphasis on negative side also. Resistance to change forces management to find out this reality which helps in managing change more effectively. Thus, resistance to change provide help in managing change into ways:

- It may signal the need for more effective communication about the meaning and purpose of change or need to rethink precisely how a propose change will affect the organisation and its member.
- It also highlights real inadequacies In the proposed change and suggest better way for developing and introducing change.

Factors in resistance to change

People tend to evaluate the effect of change individually but they express it through group in collective form. Therefore, the reason underlying resistance to change may be identified at these two levels:

- **Individual resistance**

There are many factors operating at the individual level which are responsible for resistance. Degree of force in resistance depends on how people feel about change. This feelings may be based either on reality or maybe emotional feeling towards the change. This feelings, either real or emotional, may be seen in context of three type of factors: **economic, psychological and social**

Economic factors- people feel attached the organisation for satisfying and economic – psychological, job security, etc. People may perceive that they will be adversely affected by the change in terms of their need satisfaction in the following ways:

- 1) Skill obsolescence** – a change is generally meant for better method of working which may involve new techniques, technology etc. Whenever people sense that new machinery causes a treat of replacing or degrading them, they simply resist such a change. When computer was

introduced in the business sector of India, it attracted lot of resistance because of this reason.

- 2) **Fear of economic loss** – change may create fear of economic loss in the sense that it may affect economic compensation adversely, reduce job option, and turn into technological unemployment. This feeling is created because people feel that those who can match the new requirement will be better off than those who cannot match.
- 3) **Reduced opportunity for incentives** - employees are generally offered incentives link to their output in the form of incentive schemes, bonus etc. All these are well established in the old system. Whenever there is a change, people may feel that in the new system, they will have lower opportunity to earn incentive and bonus as the new system requires additional skills.

Psychological factors - Psychological factors are there in people's emotion, Sentiments and attitude toward change. These are quantitative and therefore, maybe logical from people's point of view but maybe illogical from the change agent's point of view. Major psychological factors responsible for resistance are: ego defensiveness, status quo, lack of trust in change agent, low tolerance for change and fear of unknown.

- 1) **Ego defensiveness**- change may affect the ego of the people affected by change and in order to defend their ego, people resist change. A change in itself suggest that every thing is not right at particular level. Thus, the change may be perceived as an instrument of exposing the weakness of the people.
- 2) **Status Quo** – people want status quo, that is they do not want any disturbance in their existing equilibrium of life and work pattern. The change initiated by the organisation disturb such an equilibrium and people have to obtain another equilibrium which is painful exercise. Therefore everyone tries to avoid it.
- 3) **Low tolerance for change** - in the context of maintaining status quo, people may differ. some people have very low level of tolerance for change and ambiguity as compared to others. Therefore these people resist any new idea.

- 4) **Lack of trust in change agent-** the effect of change is perceived in the context of change agent, that is, the person who is initiated change. If people have low degree of confidence in the change agent, they show resistance to change efforts. this is the reason why labour union resist change initiated by management because of the feeling that labour and management are two different interest group in the organisation.
- 5) **Fear of unknown** - change may be perceived as entering into an chartered area which is unknown. The change will bring result in future which is always not certain. This lack of uncertainty create anxiety and stress in the mind of people and they want to avoid it. the lack of adequate information about the likely impact of change further complicates the problem.

Social factors- people drive need satisfaction, particularly social need through which their mutual compatible interaction. They form their own social group at the workplace for the satisfaction of their social needs. The major factor causing resistance to change are: desire to retain existing social interaction add feeling of outside interference.

- 1) **Desire to maintain existing social interaction-** people desire to maintain existing social interactions since it is a satisfying. When there is a change, their existing social interaction is likely to be changed which people do not want. Therefore they resist change.
- 2) **Feeling of outside interference-** a change brought by the change agent is considered to be an interference in the working of people. Is phenomena is heightened if the change agent belongs to another social class e.g change initiated by managers effective workers. The later may feel that manager try to make worker and instrument for higher productivity but the outcome of this productivity will be written by them.