

# Resistance Buster: Fight or Flight

## Challenge

Meet your Reptilian Brain: It controls your body's basic survival needs, including your "Fight-or-flight" response (think: "knee-jerk"). This was good when we were running from lions, but it's not so good during enterprise-wide IT implementations! While the Reptilian Brain is reliable, it also tends to be rigid and compulsive.

Says Shameema Sarker, PhD, "When the fight-or-flight response is triggered, everything surrounding us is perceived as a threat, and we cannot think or act rationally." It unleashes root emotions, along with adrenaline that can make us "impulsive, apprehensive, jittery or bad-tempered."

Behaviors you've seen in your employees lately?

It's OK! New, enterprise-wide technology often prompts hasty or "knee-jerk" reactions and responses from employees. So be on the look out: This is the immediate response you're likely to receive at key milestones of your organization's tech implementation.

Successful Project Leaders don't get hooked.

First, don't fight the Fight-or-flight reaction: it's perfectly natural! However, if you're aware of how the stress-response affects your employee perceptions (and your own!), you can use those insights to your advantage. The trick is to not get hooked or avoid "biting" on Reptilian employee reactions. Instead, anticipate them, listen to them, then use the insights learned in this tool to help you respond in the most effective way possible.

## How to Use This Tool

As a leader of your organization's business transformation, you need to understand the Reptilian or emotional reactions employees will have at each Phase in the change journey. The chart below outlines typical "Emotional Flight Reactions" or threats that employees will express + "Rational Responses" leaders can have prepared in advance: fine-tune those to reflect your business situation. The more you can leverage your Limbic brain (demonstrating consistency) and your Neocortex (increasing creativity), the more effectively you will accelerate employee engagement and user adoption of your new technology and overall business transformation. Good luck... and don't forget to keep

your own Reptilian responses in check!

IT PROJECT PHASE	EMOTIONAL “FIGHT OR FLIGHT” REACTIONS YOU MAY HEAR...	RATIONAL RESPONSES TO HAVE AT THE READY...
<b>Project Kick-off</b>	“I can’t handle all this extra work.” “This will be so complicated.” “This means downsizing, right?”	Share the facts! Deliver quantifiable business data to rationalize system changes and future business benefits.
<b>Change Agent Recruitment</b>	“I’m not in senior management.” “I’ve never done this before.” “My boss isn’t on board with the change.”	Explain how their peers selected them and how their natural energy is the only thing expected of them.
<b>Testing</b>	“We’ve never done it that way before.” “This is bigger than I thought.” “Is this even the right system?”	Illustrate which business processes will be / have been refined to optimize the new tech platform.
<b>Training</b>	“I’m too busy to learn a new system.” “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” “I don’t need to participate; others will.”	Demonstrate the business value of the new system and how important their personal role is in the overall business transformation success.
<b>Countdown</b>	“Do I really want to stick this out?” “So many are still resisting this change.” “Now we’re screwed: more delays.”	Celebrate wins along the way: videos, townhalls, posters... bring them to life to build confidence and acknowledge change fatigue.
<b>Go Live</b>	“So many integrations are not complete.” “If they only knew about...” “Senior leaders still seem misaligned.”	Reward, recognize – and acknowledge the path ahead... one on which everyone will be on together sooner or later!
<b>Sustaining Change</b>	“It’ll take a long time for everyone to use this.” “Many Managers are still working the old way.” “This is great, but can we keep it going?”	Reinforce language, business themes that reflect the new current state. Visualize this reality to make it so!

