

Unit 8: Interpretation Guide for Attitude toward Change Self-Assessment

The lecture for this topic discussed the fact that, among the many attitudes that people have, they carry with them a general attitude about change. As is true for all attitudes, attitude toward change is developed (learned) through a combination of personal experiences and social learning that usually includes observations of events that impact other people. Research shows that, as a person's experiences change, their attitudes can change (be re-learned). Thus, no matter what your current attitude toward change is, it might change over time as you have new organizational experiences.

Attitude toward organizational change has three components as described below:

Cognitive Component: The cognitive component of attitude towards organizational change focuses on the degree to which a person believes that organizational change tends to produce positive effects for the organization, for co-workers, and for him/herself. Those with the highest scores on this aspect of attitude toward organizational change generally believe that organizational change produces positive results.

Affective Component: The affective component of attitude towards organizational change focuses on the personal feelings that a person has about organizational change. A person with a high score on this aspect of attitude toward organizational change is a person who looks forward to change and who tends to enjoy change more than others do. This is a person who, when faced with significant change in an organization, expects a positive experience even if it is a challenging one.

Behavioral Tendency Component: This component of attitude towards organizational change is often referred to as the "change agency" component of the attitude. This is the degree to which a person is likely to support change when given the opportunity to do so and/or to initiate change when possible. A person with a high score on this aspect of attitude toward organizational change is the kind of person often referred to as a change agent. Those with low scores prefer to avoid being involved in organizational change when it is possible to do so.

The purpose of this self-assessment is to identify your current attitude toward change on each of the three components of the attitude. This is not a measure of your strengths or weaknesses but rather a reflection of the experiences you have had with organizational change either on your own or through observation of others' experiences and how that has formed your attitudes about organizational change.

As you look at your self-assessment results, think about how your pattern of results will likely impact the way you react to change as you encounter it in organizations. Research shows that people with consistently high scores on the three dimensions, show a common response when change is introduced to them. They look first for: the positive potential impacts of the change; the ways in which the change could be a positive experience for them personally; and they look for opportunities to participate in the change process. On the other hand, research shows that

people with consistently low scores on the three dimensions show a very different common response to organizational change. They look first for: the negative potential impacts of the change; the ways in which the change could be a negative experience for them personally; and they look for ways to avoid participation in the change process. Those with mixed or mid-range scores on this self-assessment are less likely to have either a positive or negative “first reaction” bias as they evaluate an impending organizational change.

As you look at your scores consider the following information. The feedback below is based on comparisons to the responses of over 100,000 organizational members in North America who have completed this assessment either as a self-assessment or as part of an organizational survey. It is interesting to note that, for this large group of respondents, scores on the Cognitive dimension averaged lower than on the other two dimensions.

Cognitive Attitude Toward Organizational Change

Score of 1.0--2.7	=	Lower than average Cognitive Attitude
Score of 2.8--3.7	=	Mid-Range Cognitive Attitude
Score of 3.8--5.0	=	Higher than average Cognitive Attitude

Affective Attitude Toward Organizational Change

Score of 1.0--3.0	=	Lower than average Affective Attitude
Score of 3.1--4.0	=	Mid-Range Affective Attitude
Score of 4.1--5.0	=	Higher than average Affective Attitude

Behavioral Tendency Toward Organizational Change

Score of 1.0--3.0	=	Lower than average Behavioral Tendency Attitude
Score of 3.1--4.0	=	Mid-Range Behavioral Tendency Attitude
Score of 4.1--5.0	=	Higher than average Behavioral Tendency Attitude