

# A changing perspective

New research findings confirm:

People don't resist change. It's the way they're experiencing it that's eroding their willingness to engage.

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FIELD GUIDES

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**1** PEOPLE START OFF FEELING OPTIMISTIC, AND CAPABLE OF ADAPTING

**77%** of employees said they have an optimistic outlook on life and change

**77%** of employees said they adapted to change very well. Only 4% said they didn't adapt well

**CHANGE AHEAD**

**80%** of employees agree 'I am very or quite well-equipped to respond to change.'

**71%** of employees agree 'It's important for me to keep busy.'

**58%** of employees agree 'I see change mostly as an opportunity for progress.'

Only **18%** of employees stayed optimistic during change

**3** BUT ALTHOUGH 77% OF PEOPLE START OUT OPTIMISTIC, IT SOON TURNS TO PESSIMISM

**3x** more likely to see constant change as exciting

**2.5x** more likely to see the improvements that change could make for the organisation

**2** OPTIMISM IS GREAT NEWS FOR CHANGE

Those predisposed towards optimism showed a much healthier attitude to change. **They are:**

**4x** MORE LIKELY TO FEEL A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION

**3x** more likely to see the opportunities that change offers them

**SO WHAT'S GOING ON THEN?**

**50%** felt mostly pessimistic during change

**4** PEOPLE'S RESPONSES TO CHANGE ARE MORE CONNECTED TO THE WAY THEY PERCEIVE AND EXPERIENCE CHANGE.

(Nakola & Nikolaou 2005, Chreim 2006)

**5** HERE'S WHAT THEY'RE EXPERIENCING...

**21%** feel they were kept in the dark

**47%** felt unimportant and undervalued

ONLY **4%** BELIEVE THEY WERE TRUSTED TO MAKE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS\*

\*In organisations of 2000+

**31%** say the focus is more on the process than the people

**10%** felt they could make a difference to how change is implemented

**TOP 3 EMOTIONAL RESPONSES DURING CHANGE**

in organisations of 2,000+ employees

**20%** DEMORALISATION

**24%** FRUSTRATION

**20%** APPREHENSION

Only **12%** said that it was easy to see the improvements that change would make

**7** SO, IN FACT...

It's not change that people are resisting.

**It's the experience of change.**

So, it's time for a major re-think about how we engage people with change.

**When planning your next big change programme, ask yourself, does the programme:**

- Allow people the autonomy to make a valuable contribution?
- Help people to grow and learn?
- Make people feel they are doing something important and meaningful?
- Allow people to tap into their natural desire to adapt?
- Give them enough time to respond?

**...HERE'S HOW THEY'RE RESPONDING**

when asked: What's your typical response to change initiatives.

**13%** 'I just keep doing things the way I've always done.'

**And... only 20%** regularly volunteer ideas and thoughts

**10%** 'I don't do anything different until someone tells me that I have to.'

**43%\*** in organisations of 5000+

'I keep my head down and just get on with my job.'

\*Fieldwork conducted, May 2017.

### And the results speak for themselves...

Based on research with 200 employees in many different organisations. All had experienced major change at work in last 12 months.\*  
We asked them how they typically thought about change, and how they acted during times of change.

**REFERENCES:**  
Vakola, M. & Nikolaou, I. (2005). Attitudes towards organisational change: What is the role of employees' stress and commitment? *Employee Relations*, **27** (2), 160-174.  
Chreim, S. (2006). Postscript to change: Survivors' retrospective views of organisational changes. *Personnel Review*, **35** (3), 315.

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Giving them the skills and autonomy to make change happen, and enough time to learn and adapt fully to new ways of working.

This means really getting people involved. Talking with them, not at them. Listening and acting on what people are saying.

To consider how change programmes can be designed to build enduring capability amongst the people to deal effectively with change.

The data from this field guide can be used to encourage your colleagues to put employees, and their experiences, in the spotlight when planning change initiatives.

### HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR FIELD GUIDE



Produced by

**h&h**

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Edition 1 (2017)

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## CHANGING PERSPECTIVES OF CHANGE

