

# How to Handle Change and Upheaval

## Signals of Change-Related Stress

- Gossip and rumors increase
- People call in sick more often
- People take more vacation time
- Productivity drops
- Angry outbursts occur regularly at meetings
- Finger pointing is common
- Policies and procedures are unclear, inconsistent, and not implemented consistently
- There is no clear leadership
- Communication is minimal and inconsistent
- People quit or find jobs on impulse
- Good people are recruited away

## The Four Stages of Change

- Denial
- Resistance and anger
- Bargaining
- Acceptance and support

## Three Typical Attitudes Toward Change

### Advocate

Look for people who:	Apply these approaches:
Bring energy to the group	Capitalize on positive energy
Volunteer	Assign to mentoring and training positions
Support new ways of thinking	Use as informal power brokers and put in charge
Understand the sense of urgency	Capitalize on leadership skills

### Ambivalent

Look for people who:	Apply these approaches:
Swing between positive and negative	Validate desired behavior-catch them doing something right
Voice support but don't follow through with actions	Assign responsibility for tasks related to the change
Participate then pull back	Foster development into a leadership role
Often just exist	Invite them to assist

### Critic

Look for people who:	Apply these approaches:
Immediately criticize	Provide a nonthreatening forum to validate feelings
Are in denial or confused	Educate on the realities of the situation
Quickly agree without asking questions	Assign tasks related to the change process
Support discord or bad mouthing	Reward any glimmer of a positive attitude

## Uncover Hidden Issues

- Recognize the "dead elephant" on the table
- Create an environment where people feel free to talk
- Invite criticism
- Follow up

## Involve People in the Change Process

- Ask for input
- Acknowledge opinions and ideas
- Act on feedback received
  - Warning: Asking for feedback and ignoring it will damage your credibility and sabotage your change efforts

## The FLOW Model for Remaining Flexible

Use the FLOW model to identify your own reaction to a major change going on in your life right now.

Figure out the pros and cons

List concerns

Observe your attitude

Weed out what you can and cannot control

## Positive Strategies for Coping with Change

- Take control
- Build resilience
- Seek support
- Maintain balance

