Preparing for productivity intervention initiatives

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to cite resistance to change as a significant reason why productivity initiatives fail. Therefore, effectively managing and overcoming resistance to change is a critical factor for the successful outcome of any intervention. This paper explores current knowledge of resistance to change and seeks to review the literature and so understand what methods can be used to manage change initiatives.

Design/methodology/approach – An extensive literature review has identified theories, frameworks and methodologies to successfully manage and overcome resistance to organisational change.

Findings – Managing and overcoming opposition to change starts by assessing the types of resistance; and this classification will form the basis for the development of an implementation strategy to reduce resistance. This includes creating readiness and urgency for change, creating a vision for change, having employees participate in the change effort, training and coaching employees, effectively communicating the change, creating and planning for quick wins and refreezing the organisation.

Research limitations/implications – The tools and techniques presented in this paper need to be adapted to the organisation's specificities as well as to the contextual situation.

Practical implications – The work has developed materials to-date that could be used by practitioners that are engaged with productivity improvement interventions.

Social implications – Resistance and its wider implications to any change intervention has organisational and social impacts. Therefore this work brings insightful information to support change in its wider application.

Originality/value – Today’s competitive, uncertain and fast-paced economic environment requires organisations to change in order to maintain or develop their competitive advantage. This paper combines numerous theories, frameworks and methodologies to successfully manage and overcome resistance in order gain acceptance and meet the desired needs.

Keywords Change management, Organizational change, Resistance to change, Managing change, Leading change

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The needs for undertaking interventions and initiatives to improve productivity are numerous: pressure of global competition (Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998), new regulations, updating products, technological developments (Kotter, 1995), mergers and acquisitions, exit strategy or to introduce productivity improvements (Edmonds, 2011). These forces for change require enterprises to seek new forms of organisation, new ways to manage people, new ways to conduct business, new processes and a new organisational culture (Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998). Indeed, the objective for the firm is to preserve and develop their competitive advantage (Parry et al., 1998). In other words, organisations need transformational efforts to adapt to an increasingly challenging, competitive and fast paced external market environment (Armenakis et al., 1993). However, despite this need for change,
it appears that most companies fail to effectively manage and implement change. It is recognised that 30-60 per cent of change efforts fail (Gilley et al., 2009a, b), and one of the major reasons is that organisational change processes encountered significant workforce resistance. The causes of resistance include: change is threatening and individuals believe they will not cope, that it disturbs the status quo and that it brings uncertainty (Atkinson, 2005; Kotter, 1995).

This paper progresses as follows: first we review the various tools, theories, frameworks and methodologies to support and drive change initiatives. The initial literature review has been built around the overarching framework developed by Lewin (1951) – that emphasises that effective change is achieved by following three steps. The first step consists of unfreezing the organisation by creating strong driving forces and minimising restraining forces. The second step encourages the company to move to the desired state. Finally, when the desired state is reached, the organisation has to be refrozen (see Figure 1). Finally, we propose a conceptual framework that supports a research programme to test hypotheses that will allow exploration of strategies to effectively manage and diminish human resistance (that will undoubtedly arise during the change process).

**Resistance assessment**
Organisations do not conduct a sufficiently rigorous assessment of the current internal environment in terms of its sensitivity to change. Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) argue that four situational factors must be assessed:

- Who might resist the change and for what reasons: various groups of people can react in very different ways to the same change initiative (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). Fiedler (2010) identifies two types of resistance: active and passive. Various forms and levels of resistance are invariably passive, covert and not publicly displayed (Atkinson, 2005). For these reasons, the assessment requires detailed consideration (see Appendix 1 for reasons for resistance).
- A clear understanding is required of the change agent’s power vis-à-vis the resistors.
- Who has access to relevant information for designing, managing and implementing the change initiative.
- There needs to be a clear understanding of the risks involved for the organisation if the change initiative does not meet all its objectives.

![Figure 1. Lewin's force field analysis model](source: Mcshane et al. (2003))
Whatever the reason for people resisting change, change agents should not fall into two traps: assume that everybody will resist the change; consider resistance as a negative reaction. The second point is particularly important: resistance should be considered as a resource and an asset that adds value and new perspectives to the change process (Ford et al., 2008). Thus resistance is an indicator for the change-team that something may not be working. Speed of response to resistance is therefore critical and it is the responsibility of the change agents to investigate what is going wrong and take speedy action (Lawrence, 1969).

While the situational factors give the basis for developing a change strategy, the change agent needs to decide on the pace of change, the communication plan, the level of employee involvement, the monitoring processes, the strategy to overcome resistance and specific requirements to ensure resources are available. (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979).

Creating a readiness and an urgency for change
Often underestimated by executives, or even skipped due to impatience for results is, “creating a readiness and urgency for change” – this is of paramount importance as it unfreezes the organisation – as depicted in Lewin's (1951) model. Organisations place in jeopardy the change initiative by failing at this initial step (Schein, 1979). It has been advocated that readiness for change is, “the cognitive precursor to the behaviours of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort”, and it involves proactively acting to influence the, “beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and ultimately the behaviour of a change target” (Armenakis et al., 1993, p. 681). We argue, therefore, that creating the appropriate setting consist of convincing people that the status quo is dangerous and unsustainable in the longer term and that the way business is currently done is limited and needs to be changed for everyone’s benefit. In other words this step enables people’s awareness, motivation and cooperation for the change effort to be developed (Kotter, 1995).

Change agents must be cognizant that people will react heterogeneously to the same message (Newman, 2007). Thus, it is fundamental to adapt to the individual’s cultural and subcultural background (Armenakis et al., 1993). Moreover, beyond the individual readiness, the change agent also needs to consider the collective readiness which consists of all the social interactions between employees and along networks (Bateh et al., 2013). Indeed, each person’s readiness is influenced by the readiness of others. For this reason, it is essential to identify the organisation’s opinion leaders who have power in influencing others’ readiness for change through their network of relationships (Kotter and Cohen, 2002). This power influences the design and implementation of the readiness intervention (Armenakis et al., 1993).

The readiness message has two components (Weiner, 2009): the need for change and the organisation’s perceived capacity to change. Justifying the need for change involves communicating the discrepancy between the firm’s current situation (current state) and the situation the firm requires (desired state) (Armenakis et al., 1993). In other words, the message should create a vision (this is discussed below). In order to gain commitment and avoid defensive reactions, such as flight, denial or withdrawal, the message has to be supported by compelling evidence (Armenakis et al., 1993). For example, the change agent can highlight the organisation’s failures and poor performance, financial difficulties, market/competitor threat and so forth. The second component of the readiness message aims at reassuring those affected by showing them that they have the ability to overcome the discrepancy (Armenakis et al., 1993).
Also, it is critical to assure everyone will be treated fairly and that the decisions will be made transparently (Bateh et al., 2013). This is necessary to build the persons (change target) coping capabilities in order to make sure that they consider themselves as capable of performing the new activities (Bandura, 1986). The main strategies used to deliver the two components of the change readiness message are detailed in Appendix 2.

However, solely creating a readiness for change is not enough. In order to further unfreeze the organisation, Kotter (1995) explains that a need for urgency also has to be created to effectively overcome resistance. For this purpose, dramatisation is a commonly used method to create urgency even though it could undermine the change agent’s credibility (Coch and French, 1948). Additionally, leadership need to communicate why “now” is the right time to change (Edmonds, 2011).

In order to assess and monitor whether the readiness communication plan is effective and enables target readiness level to be met, a readiness assessment must be completed. This can take the form of surveys, interviews, questionnaires and through direct observations (Armenakis et al., 1993).

To support the testing of these concepts a research programme has commenced to quantitatively measure the following hypothesis:

_**H1.** The perceived measure of resistance to an intervention is directly correlated to the extent of readiness and urgency._

**Vision and leadership**

Excellent management skills are not enough to successfully manage and implement change initiatives (Geller, 2003). Indeed, change is about creating a new order of things and thus demands leadership, not management (Kotter, 1995); and it has been shown that (perceived) excellent leadership significantly increases the chances of success of an improvement initiative (Battilana et al., 2010; Mabin et al., 2001). Strong leadership is needed to overcome corporate inertia, encourage people to change their behaviour and make the change stick (Kotter, 1996).

In terms of the sequence of events, or steps, first, the leader has to define a clear and simple vision of what the future will look like. The vision must clearly shows the direction in which the organisation needs to move (Kotter, 1995). It also involves setting attainable long-term objectives (Geller, 2003). This vision must align with the organisation’s strategy as it is essential to give a sense of cohesion and meaning (to the numerous projects launched as part of the change initiative) (Kotter, 1996). The vision must include new growth perspectives and insure that everyone will be treated fairly (Kotter, 1995). Interestingly, Roberto and Levesque (2005) found that the use of metaphors in the vision is very helpful in allying concerns and explaining why the intervention is important.

Second, through the vision, the leader needs to motivate, energise and inspire people to make this change happen. To promote a collective mind, it is important to maintain strong ethics, values and accountability during the change intervention. The professional behaviour of the change leader is therefore of crucial importance (By et al., 2012). In particular, a transparent and fair decision process has to be put in place to underpin discussions around conflict and their resolution (Bateh et al., 2013). There needs to be continual two-way dialogue that is inspiring, motivational; and which confirms what value the change will bring in terms of productivity, effectiveness and efficiency (Lundy and Morin, 2013).
Third, the change agent needs to create a strong coalition that has the power, information, expertise and relationships to support the change (Lundy and Morin, 2013). This coalition has to involve senior management, middle managers, supervisors and workers representatives. In particular the senior person of the organisation must be an active and visible supporter of the change initiative (Parker, 2012). Moreover, the coalition will act as a supportive force for the change initiative (Lundy and Morin, 2013). However, successful change interventions have been found to operate outside the normal hierarchy of an organisation (Kotter, 1995). Indeed, the coalition can, for example, include suppliers, local community, customers, etc. An important feature of any coalition is the need to provide continuous and steady support until completion of the intervention. Empirical evidence shows that many projects are abandoned because support weakens as the project progresses (Curtin and Jones, 2001).

Lastly, the change agent needs to have strong leadership skills to successfully manage and implement the productivity improvement intervention. In addition to exceptional intellect and cognitive skills, change leaders need to display (soft) people skills, good communication skills, positive commitment and involvement, flexible attitude, change expertise, empowerment, strategic vision and a high level of emotional intelligence (Lundy and Morin, 2013; Goleman, 2004; Clarke, 2010; Kotter, 1995). These traits will support trust and commitment, encourage information exchange, inspire and motivate people and successfully manage conflicts (Clarke, 2010).

To support the testing of these concepts the following hypothesis is developed for subsequent investigation:

\[ H2. \text{ The perceived measure of resistance to an intervention is directly correlated to the quality and skills of the leadership.} \]

**Participation**

The extent of participation affects the organisational resistance to any change initiative (Lines, 2004). The first notable study on participation was carried out by Coch and French (1948), with an experiment in a clothing factory. They found that when people are not involved in the change process, it immediately creates conflict, hostility, lack of cooperation and a reduction in productivity. Conversely, when people are involved in the change initiative, there are reduced signs of hostility and there is a collective-mind that encourages extra effort. Moreover, after a slight initial drop at the start of the intervention, the estimated productivity gains are invariably exceeded. Thus Coch and French (1948) concluded that resistance to change could be overcome by getting people to actively participate in the change intervention. Dunphy and Stace (1988) even suggest not only involving employees but also other stakeholders such as customers and suppliers. However, participation is effective only if it starts at commencement of the intervention (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979).

Numerous reasons might explain why wider participation of stakeholders reduces resistance to change. First, involving people whose lives will be affected by the change initiative makes sense (Dunphy and Stace, 1988). Usually, employees (especially front line employees) know the day-to-day issues that need to be resolved (Lawrence, 1969). They will have suggestions and ideas to avoid unnecessary mistakes. Their social network will also be useful to the change agent for communicating the implementation details (Kotter and Cohen, 2002). Second, greater participation legitimises further the planned change. Indeed, the participation process is the opportunity for the change agent to further present and explain in-depth the arguments reinforcing the change
Employees should react positively to the participation process if they are given the opportunity to analyse and evaluate the implications for them of the change, voice their concerns, propose counter arguments and suggest new ideas (Ford et al., 2008; Lines, 2004). It is essential to quickly acknowledge employees’ feedback and contribution and endeavour whenever possible incorporate their suggestions. The objective is twofold: build trust with employees by making them feel heard and valued; and make the employees identify themselves with the change by showing them that their feedback influenced the change (Lawrence, 1969). This sense of ownership reduces stress created by the fear of the change and enables employees to “save face” by contributing to the change. It also builds psychological commitment towards the change effort and increases its chances of success (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). By this process, change is not considered as a large threat and those potential resisters should be supporters. Finally, participation is beneficial as it enables bringing together a wide range of competencies, skills, knowledge and information (Lines, 2004). Thus, this democratic approach, where new ideas are accepted on their merits, enhances the quality of the decisions made during the change process (Kim and Mauborgne, 1998).

The participation process is difficult and cannot be created artificially (Lawrence, 1969). Getting people involved into the change process is time consuming and the results from this participation can be disappointing if the process is not effectively managed (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). Furthermore, it should not be assumed that the level of involvement is inversely correlated to resistance to change. Indeed, participation exists under many forms: informal participation, consultative participation, direct participation, employee ownership, etc. and the appropriate form of participation depends on the context of the change as well the desired outcomes (Lines, 2004). These factors along with the firm’s culture will determine the formalisation, directness, depth and degree of influence of the participation process (Lines, 2004).

Finally, participation is not the solution to every problem faced during the intervention. Indeed, Sagie et al. (1990) make the distinction between strategic change and tactical change. They argue that participation is not needed for corporate-strategic decisions. Conversely, tactical decisions will require participation to ensure engagement. Moreover, empirical evidence suggests that when the respective parties have incompatible interests, participation is not the right way to proceed: only a directive approach can work (Dunphy and Stace, 1988).

To support the testing of these concepts the following hypothesis is developed for subsequent investigation:

\[ H3. \] The perceived measure of intervention success is correlated with scope and reach of participation of stakeholders.

Communication

Empirical research suggests that the quality, frequency and intensity of communication are paramount to the success of the intervention (Mabin et al., 2001; Lundy and Morin, 2013; Kotter, 1995). Sirkin et al. (2005) highlight the fact that both internal and external communication is critical to the success of the change effort. As Fiedler (2010) concedes, communication requires a lot of time and effort but is essential to overcome misinformation.

Various levels of information are needed (Kotter, 1995); and communication needs to start as early as possible (Ford et al., 2008). The objective of the communication is to educate about the reasons why the organisation has to change, what changes need to
be implemented, how these changes will impact day-to-day business and people’s job, what benefits this change will bring (Atkinson, 2005; Lundy and Morin, 2013). Explaining the approach and the methodology to implement change as well as answering employees concerns and fears are also part of the communication strategy (Atkinson, 2005; Fiedler, 2010). In particular, executives and senior managers need to communicate the vision in their day-to-day business. However, research suggests that using non-positional power to communicate is also very effective (Kotter, 1995).

Effective communication requires two-way trust and respectful relationship between all parties (Fiedler, 2010). Therefore, it is essential for the change agent to be seen as trustworthy, credible and as an expert in change management (Armenakis et al., 1993). In addition, it is essential to communicate by using phrasing that everyone understands (Lawrence, 1969). Moreover, it is important to adopt an open communication strategy that is transparent – and not to hold back any bad news (Atkinson, 2005; Lundy and Morin, 2013). For example, McKinsey consultants (Meaney and Pung, 2008) conducted a survey of more than 3,000 executives and identified that the most successful communication strategy is an (equal) mix of problems and successes encountered by the change initiative. The communication plan can be negatively influenced by external factors, such as rumours, bad press and ill-informed media communication (Armenakis et al., 1993). Today, social media, the internet (web sites) and other mobile technologies are alternative channels of communication that must be adopted as sources of information (Parker, 2012).

Thus, to effectively communicate the change, stakeholders need to be segmented (Atkinson, 2005). For each segment, a communication plan has to be developed in order to “deliver the appropriate message in the right way to the right people” (Atkinson, 2005, p. 18).

It is critical to use all the available communication channels to send the correct message (Kotter, 1996). However, the choice of communication media is influenced by the need to establish a two-way communication (Waddell and Sohal, 1998). Armenakis et al. (1993) suggest that non-routine communication requires rich media as it enables immediate feedback as well as multiple information cues. Thus for non-routine information, face-to-face communication is preferred (Atkinson, 2005). It includes presentation, management meetings, one on one discussions, group workshops and Q&A meeting. The communication of routine, simple or straightforward information can be done through written media such as newsletters, memos, reports, etc. (Bandura, 1977); but the need for two-way communication is still required – possibly through anonymous feedback (Fiedler, 2010).

Those responsible for implementing the change intervention must communicate through their own actions and behaviour. If their behaviour is inconsistent with their message, it will undermine the change effort (Kotter, 1995). Therefore, senior executives and managers need to be “champions” of the change (Lundy and Morin, 2013).

New learning
Timely learning is a key element in the change process (Edmonds, 2011). This usually requires employees to acquire new skills and knowledge as job descriptions are modified (Lawrence, 1969). For example, there may be a need to develop skills to use new machineries, new equipment, new methods, different processes, etc. This organisational learning process will need new knowledge; and securing this knowledge and providing the new knowledge to the employees, will require unlearning old methods and not relevant knowledge. “This will lead to stabilizing the new knowledge” (Gareis, 2010, p. 320).
Involving the HR function in order to train employees at their new job flags that the senior management supports its employees through this change process. Indeed, it helps ease concerns and reduce stress (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). This stress and fear can also be minimised by effectively matching the employees to the new positions (Roberto and Levesque, 2005). Training is a costly and time consuming process, as learning new methods is time consuming (Mabin et al., 2001). However, it will result in three positive outcomes: a better acceptance of the change effort; an increased commitment to the change effort; and increased chances to successfully implement and control the change (Edmonds, 2011). Finally, the learning process will also be the opportunity to initiate the firm’s culture change (Fiedler, 2010) and reinforce the readiness for change by explaining why the organisation needs to change (Roberto and Levesque, 2005).

Short-term wins
Creating and planning short-term wins is critical to the success of an improvement intervention. Quick wins enable change agents to reassure senior executives as well as employees (Argyris, 1991). Indeed, these early achievements reinforce the transition’s capabilities of the change management team in the employees’ eyes (Kotter and Cohen, 2002). In particular, it enhances the firm’s confidence in the team leader and increases the credibility of the company’s executives who made the right choice launching this renewal process (Van Buren and Safferstone, 2009).

There is compelling evidence that the transformational effort will be more likely to succeed with quick, small wins as they maintain momentum as well the required urgency (Kotter, 1995). This is crucial as change efforts usually take a long time and people may give up if no goal is met after some time (Kotter, 1995). In creating and planning for short-term wins, a proactive approach has to be adopted by transformation leaders (Kotter, 1995). The opportunities for quick wins need to be first identified; next they need to be analysed. For this purpose, Van Buren and Safferstone (2009) identified five features that quick wins should have in order to achieve the desired effects (see Appendix 3).

However, even though quick wins are very useful, they need to be considered with a level of caution. According to Van Buren and Safferstone (2009) common traps to avoid with quick wins include:

• When planning a quick win, leaders should remember that their focus shall remain on the big picture at all times. It is counterproductive to spend too much time planning for short-term wins and lose focus of the long-term objectives.
• When achieving a quick win, leaders should be careful not to become over confident or declare victory too soon. Indeed, this early achievement must not be used as a justification for overlooking criticism.
• In the process of going after a quick wins, transformation leaders must not skip steps in the change process.

To support the testing of these concepts the following hypothesis is developed for subsequent investigation:

H4. The perceived success of the improvement intervention is directly correlated to the quality of communication, learning and quick-win steps.
Resisting resistance
It is very likely that some people will always resist change. In this instance, failing to “resist the resistance” will jeopardise the change effort. There has been limited research on this issue and quality information is limited (Parry et al., 1998; Dunphy and Stace, 1988; Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998).

Negotiation
Kotter and Schlesinger (1979), advocate a negotiation strategy when an individual or a group will be clearly disadvantaged but have an important power base to resist. Negotiation has the ability to smooth out discrepancies of opinion, tensions or perceived opposition (Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998). However, it is argued that negotiation brings compliance but not commitment (McShane et al., 2003). The focus of the negotiations can be the objectives of the improvement intervention or how it will be organised, managed and implemented (Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998).

Manipulation
If negotiation and other tactics fail, the change agent can attempt to covertly influence an individual or a group resisting the change effort (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979); but this has inherent risks (McShane et al., 2003). Indeed, if people realise they are being manipulated or misled, their reaction is likely to be extremely disruptive to the process (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). The change effort can then be imperilled if the change agent is seen as an untrustworthy manipulator (Kreitner, 1992). Manipulation involves withholding information, controlling the procedure, setting the agenda (Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998) or offering one or more of the resisters a key role in the change intervention or using other types of reward (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979).

Coercion
Implicit or explicit coercion should not be used (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). It involves closely monitoring people’s behaviour, reminding them of their obligations (McShane et al., 2003) and threatening to sanction them if they do not honour these obligations (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). Firing or transferring powerful resisters is also a common practice (McShane et al., 2003) but leaves a legacy that will undermine any future intervention.

Refreezing the organisation
Once the desired state is reached, the firm needs to refreeze the systems and processes in order to make the changes sustainable (Lewin, 1951). The new behaviours learned though the training process need to be frozen for ongoing activities (McShane et al., 2003). It is essential not to create victory too soon (Kotter, 1995) as there is a serious risk for people reverting to their previous methods (McShane et al., 2003).

At the closing of the intervention it is important to communicate how the change effort has helped the firm improve its performance and productivity (Kotter, 1995). There is a grounding-in period where there is a realignment of the team dynamics (McShane et al., 2003). It is necessary to ensure that people do not face inconsistent sets of demands (Roberto and Levesque, 2005). The refreezing process involves redefining roles and undertaking the promotion of new practices, and establishing team norms (Kotter, 1995), giving feedback and revising reward systems, and developing a revised
culture (Beer and Nohria, 2000), revising monitoring and performance measurement systems and development programs (Roberto and Levesque, 2005). These finalising processes are very important and may well be a unique change initiative or project (Beer and Nohria, 2000). Of critical importance is that senior management are seen to be committed to and embody the new improved way of operating (Kotter, 1995).

To support the testing of these concepts the following hypothesis is developed for subsequent investigation:

\[ H5. \] The perceived medium to long-term success of the improvement intervention is directly correlated to the quality of refreezing the organisation norms.

**Conclusion**

Resistance to change is both positive and negative attributes. While resistance can add value to the change process, it is very challenging to manage it. Indeed, if resistance is poorly managed, it will jeopardise the intervention process. This proposed research agenda will provide leaders undertaking improvement interventions with strategies that are underpinned by appropriate theories and frameworks. Clearly, of importance, is undertaking an initial resistance assessment in order to determine the type and extent of possible conflict. The results of this assessment will determine how to apply the tools to overcome and delay any concerns. Also of importance is the creation of a clear vision of what the end looks like. There must also be a sense of urgency. The change process has to be effectively communicated internally and externally – to all stakeholders. Moreover, it is critical for the change leader to communicate, inspire and motivate people through good leadership. Furthermore, encouraging employees' participation helps build commitment and ownership of the change initiative. It is of paramount importance to coach and train people so that they can adapt to the new way of doing business. It is possible to resist resistance through negotiation, manipulation or coercion, but these could have longer-term ramifications. Finally, the refreezing process embeds the new process in the organisation culture.

**References**


(The appendix follows overleaf.)
Appendix 1
The number of reasons why people resist change is probably infinite. However, in our research, we were able to identify eight major ones (Table AI).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason to resist change</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct cost</td>
<td>Change may decrease employees’ benefits or increase their costs – or both. This kind of political behaviour emerges when change removes career opportunities, resources, personal status or anything else of value to the change target (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). Thus, even though the change is in the best organisation as a whole, one individual or group of people may oppose the change because it is not in their best interest (McShane et al., 2003)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saving face</td>
<td>It is a political strategy aiming at proving that the decision to change is wrong or that the change agent is incompetent (Newman, 2007; Lawrence, 1969). These people undermine the change by purposely assessing differently the situation from the change agent, exaggerating the costs and minimizing the benefits (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear of the unknown</td>
<td>Some people have low tolerance for change. They are scared of not being able to adjust to the new work requirements. They lack confidence and fear that they will not have the right knowledge and skills to achieve the new tasks assigned to them (Mabin et al., 2001). People do not know how to learn (Argyris, 1991)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breaking routines</td>
<td>Change takes people out of their comfort zone and brings uncertainty (Mabin et al., 2001). Indeed, when you lead change in an organisation, you disrupt the routines and ask for new behaviour, new skills and new priorities. Thus, learning their roles may seem time consuming or too complicated from the employees’ point of view (McShane et al., 2003). They think that this change will cost more than they will gain (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979). Usually, a lack of trust or misunderstanding between the change agent and the change targets is the underlying reason provoking this situation</td>
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<td>Loss of control</td>
<td>Feeling that you do not have any control on the change process (Mabin et al., 2001)</td>
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<td>Incongruent team dynamics</td>
<td>Each team develops and enforces a set of norms and processes that guide behaviour. Conformity these existing norms and processes may prevent change targets from embracing organisational change (McShane et al., 2003)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incongruent organisational systems</td>
<td>Organisational systems refer to information systems, patterns of authority, rewards, selection criteria, career paths, etc. When misaligned, these organisational systems pull people back into their old behaviours and attitudes (Kotter, 1995)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lingering resentment</td>
<td>Refers to the people opposing change because they are unhappy the way they were treated during past change initiatives (Mabin et al., 2001)</td>
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Table AI.
Reasons for resisting change
Appendix 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral or written persuasive communication</td>
<td>See the communication section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active participation</td>
<td>It consists in involving change targets in activities where they can realise by themselves the discrepancy between the current state and the desired state (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). For example, according to Armenakis et al. (1993), having change targets answering customer complaints is very effective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management of external sources of information</td>
<td>This strategy consists in using a third party such as a reputable consulting firm in order to confirm and reinforce the need for change component of the message (Armenakis et al., 1993)</td>
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</table>

Table AII. Readiness for change communication plan

Appendix 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Quick wins must be visible, tangible, unambiguous so that no one – not even the opponents – can discount them (Kotter, 1995). A cut in costs, an increase in revenues or any other clear performance improvement are good examples of successful quick wins (Van Buren and Safferstone, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost and feasibility</td>
<td>Quick wins should not draw resources or distract people from the day-to-day activities (Van Buren and Safferstone, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective impact</td>
<td>It is probably the most important feature of good quick wins. Members need to be able to identify to the win and take pride in it. It also sends a great message to all the employees. It shows that you are humble and that you define achievement as a team effort. Not only going after a quick win is a team building exercise but it also gives the opportunity to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the team (Van Buren and Safferstone, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity to learn</td>
<td>The quick win should give the change leader the opportunity to learn about the dynamics of his team and in particular, its strengths, weaknesses, motivation and aspirations (Van Buren and Safferstone, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity to engage</td>
<td>The quick win needs to involve as much as possible the change leader’s reports, peers and managers (Van Buren and Safferstone, 2009)</td>
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</table>

Table AIII. Features of successful quick wins

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