

CHANGES

How would employees of the company react to the following changes?

1. 6-day working week
2. Using English during the whole working day
3. A camera monitor system to prevent time-wasting.

Imagine you have to present the last innovation to the employees. Make a short introduction and explain why the company decided to introduce such surveillance system.

Adapting to change – or resisting?

Getting any organization to change is a slow process, but it's the initial stage – when the change is first announced – that is by far the most important. That's when the people in an organization start thinking about how the change will **affect** them personally. They weigh up the pros and cons and ask questions about its usefulness. Reactions will range from enthusiastic support, to apathy, to rejection. The people affected by the change will typically fall into the following three groups.

The supporters

If they can see the advantages of the change, your supporters will try to persuade their colleagues to **accept** it. They'll take an active part in the process and will do their best to understand the new procedures and **adapt** to new programmes.

The ambivalent

They can see that the proposals have good and bad points, but they may be nervous about the idea of change and feel anxious about changes to their current situation. They may **oppose** some of the

ideas, but, given enough pressure, they'll eventually accept the changes as necessary. They won't be antagonistic, but they won't be committed either, so you'll need to lead them through the exercise – which they'd prefer not to do.

The opponents

These are going to be your biggest problem. They'll be difficult, rebellious and unwilling, and will try hard to **resist** the change. If they do eventually agree to it, they will still feel resentful and will be constantly watching for the slightest mistake. If they can't sabotage the new ways of working, they may **react** by becoming apathetic and doing as little work as possible.

Clearly, it's an advantage to have few 'opponents' in an organization, and the challenge is to create real enthusiasm and commitment, and get enough people 'on board' in support of the change. The key thing is to involve staff at the very beginning in the problem-solving phase. If you do, they're much more likely to be positive and enthusiastic about the solution.

Match the following words from the article with their meanings.

Affect; accept; adapt; oppose; resist react

3 Match the words in bold in the article to these definitions.

- 1 disagree with something and try to stop it from happening: _____
- 2 respond to something by showing feelings or taking action: _____
- 3 cause a change in someone or something: _____
- 4 agree to do something that's been suggested: _____
- 5 refuse to accept or comply with something: _____
- 6 become used to a different environment or new way of doing things: _____

Which group do you belong to? Why?

6 Match phrasal verbs 1–8 from audio 47▶ to verbs a–h with similar meanings.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1 <i>trying out</i> their language skills ____ | a handle |
| 2 they <i>put on</i> lots of courses ____ | b encounter |
| 3 we'll be able to <i>take on</i> more work ____ | c leave |
| 4 <i>working out</i> very well ____ | d accept |
| 5 they <i>brought</i> the policy <i>in</i> ____ | e have a (successful) result |
| 6 we <i>ran into</i> a few problems ____ | f arrange |
| 7 <i>deal with</i> support calls ____ | g practise |
| 8 <i>dropped out</i> of the courses ____ | h introduce |

Choose 3 phrasal verbs and make up sentences with them.

antagonistic concerned receptive resistant worried nervous committed
ambivalent hostile anxious in favour critical resentful
enthusiastic keen against positive apprehensive optimistic

Worry/uncertainty	hostility	Enthusiasm

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about	of	On	towards	To	No prep

Read the following changes and tell whether you agree with them or not. How would you react to such changes.

1. A rise in taxation to support environmental initiatives
2. Compulsory car-sharing

1 Replace the words in *italics* with the phrases from the list. Make any changes that are necessary.

1

bring in

work out

deal with

put on

run into

try out

take on

drop out of

- 1 I'll be able to *practise* _____ my Italian when I am seconded to our Rome office.
- 2 I have *accepted* _____ some extra work because I need the money.
- 3 Marketing is *arranging* _____ an exhibition to promote the company's work in Mexico.
- 4 We have *introduced* _____ a new dress code for workers in our reception area.
- 5 The project was delayed because we *encountered* _____ some unexpected problems.
- 6 Three people *left* _____ the computer course after the first week.
- 7 Who *handled* _____ all the complaints about the recent unavailability of our website?
- 8 The introduction of flexitime has *had a successful result* _____ for most people on the team.

ambivalent

receptive

optimistic

critical

concerned

antagonistic

nervous

enthusiastic

- 1 'It's very worrying. How will it affect me? I felt much safer with the old system.' He is nervous about the change.
- 2 'This is the most ridiculous idea I've ever heard, and I will not tolerate it.' She is _____ the idea.
- 3 'I think there are some problems with the idea. The finances haven't been worked out properly, and the implications for the staff haven't been examined fully.' He is _____ the idea.
- 4 'I'm not sure ... I like the idea of the extra free time at weekends but I don't like the idea of starting earlier in the morning.' She is _____ the change.
- 5 'This is quite an interesting idea – I'd like to hear more, because I think it has some good points.' He is _____ the idea.
- 6 'I think it'll work out well and will improve our working conditions.' She is _____ the change.
- 7 'Some of these proposals worry me – I'm not sure they've been properly thought through.' He is _____ the proposals.
- 8 'This is going to be absolutely fantastic – I just can't wait.' She is _____ the change.

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