Resistance Management Plan Guide

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective and Benefits** | The purpose of this document is to help the programme or project teams manage resistance throughout the project life cycle. This document should be used as a guide to help **the project or programme** successfully plan and execute resistance management activities and help prepare and encourage acceptance of the changes expected from the transformation.  The guide details processes for tracking and reporting issues that are common and recurrent across the MDAs | | |
| **When to use this tool** | Resistance Management is an ongoing effort through the programme or project lifecycle. As such, resistance management planning needs to start early in project and monitored and refined as the project progresses. | | |
| **Document Owner** |  | **Intended Audience** |  |
| **Version** | 0.0 | **Last Updated** | INSERT DATE |

# 1 Introduction

Resistance Management is a methodology to acknowledge and respond to resistance during a time of change by identifying types of resistors and effectively mitigate risks that arise from resistance. Resistors can emerge at any level of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), from the executive sponsors to the frontline resources in the company. Resistance arises primarily due to fear of the unknown and/or a reluctance to change. Resistance management helps address these factors in a systematic manner and leverages other change activities (e.g. change agents, engagement and communication, training, etc.) throughout the process.

A Resistance Management Plan is developed to utilise outputs and indicators from previous change deliverables and feed into upcoming change activities over the phases of transition within a programme or project. Outputs leveraged from previous change management deliverables include:

1. Change Management Strategy
2. Organisational Change Strategy
3. Stakeholder Management Plan
4. Leadership Alignment and Engagement Plan
5. Change Agent Network Plan
6. Change Readiness Assessment
7. Change Impacts Assessment

Identifying resistance and planning mitigation strategies early in the transition provide numerous benefits, such as:

* Building a culture of openness and transparency within the MDAs
* Establishing trust with all impacted stakeholders
* Allowing stakeholders sufficient time for adjustment to promote deeper commitment to the change when it matters
* Empowering impacted stakeholders with helpful information to reduce fear of the unknown
* Increasing rate of adoption and learning for initial resistors of change
* Decreasing issue resolution time due to higher buy-in and commitment to the change
* Attaining higher proficiency with new processes with minimum resistance to the change

As a high-level summary, the main activities in Resistance Management across the programme are listed below. Resistance observations throughout the programme or project should be logged and addressed on a Resistance Log (defined in Section 4). Tracking of resistance issue resolution should be captured based on the type of response (e.g. communications, training).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Design – Build – Validate Outcomes** | **Test**  **Outcomes** | **Deploy**  **Outcomes** | **Stabilise**  **Outcome** |
| **Focus**: Create awareness around the upcoming change; proactively identify resistors/pockets of resistance  Create change action plans for resistors (e.g., additional touch points, knowledge transfer sessions) | **Focus**: Leverage Sponsors, Managers and Change Agents to drive commitment to change  **Ongoing identification of resistance and management/resolution of issues** | **Focus**: Address pockets of resistance by leveraging Sponsors, Change Agents and Managers and stakeholder groups to address resistance | **Focus**: Utilise established feedback loops to identify post go-live resistance murmurs/activities |

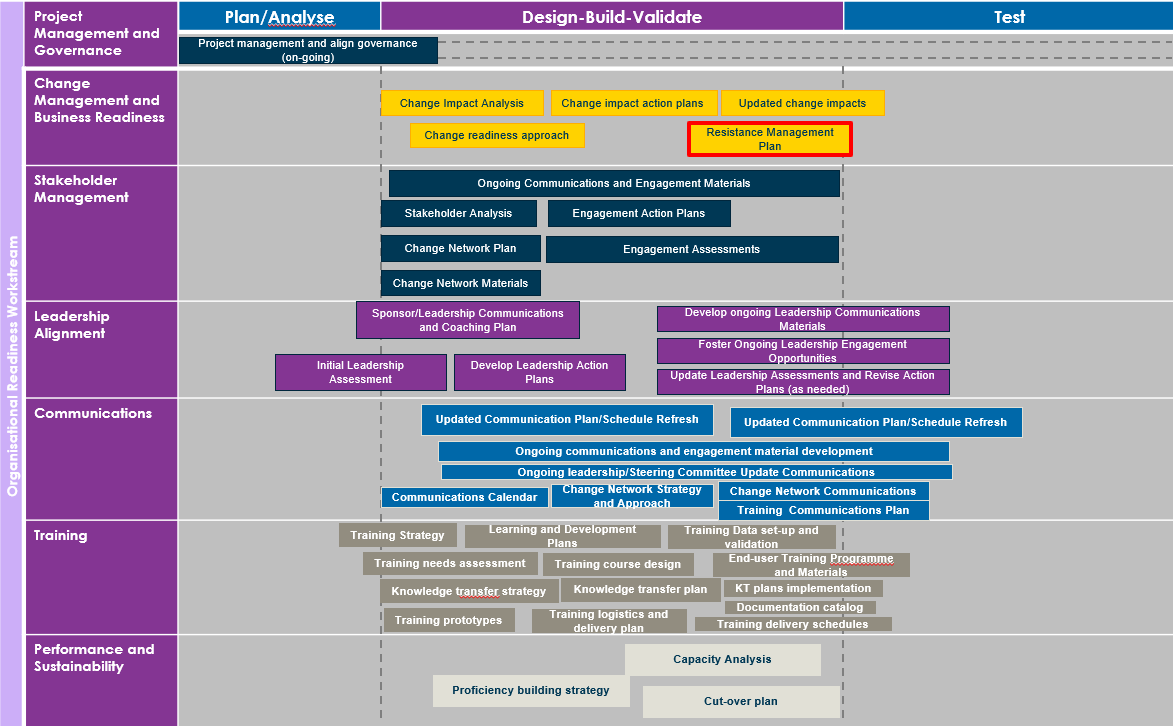
# 2 Document Background

**Programme or Project Background**

Just as the MDAs guiding principles steer the overall programme or project, they will also be at the forefront of any engagement activities and serve as the bedrock for the Organisational Change Management (OCM) team’s approach across the board. An example of guiding principles is listed below.

1. **Vision to value** – “design for outcomes, not processes”
2. **Empower and enable** – “Create a culture of empowerment”
3. **Customer at centre** – “Create effortless customer experiences and service delivery”
4. **Transform and sustain** – “Enable the use of new technology while shifting mindsets”

The workstreams shown in the timeline below indicate typical change management activities planned across the Design-Build-Validate phase. Collectively, all change activities should have outcomes of aligning stakeholder expectations for the upcoming change and mitigating any risks that arise due to the upcoming changes to people and processes in the future. This document specifically focuses on the Resistance Management Plan and is highlighted below to provide context in relation to the overall activities in this phase.



## Alignment with Other Plans

While the Resistance Management Plan is slated to be designed and implemented from the Design-Build-Validate (DBV), the foundation of the plan should be laid from the onset of the Plan/Analyse phase with the start of the Change Impacts Assessment activity.

The Stakeholder Management Plan helps to identify stakeholders and group them according to the level of impact and level within the MDAs (table attached below). This grouping has been subsequently used to conduct the change impact assessments. The Resistance Management Plan should leverage the findings from the Stakeholder Management and the network set up by the Change Agent Network Approach Plans to drive toward continued engagement and pre-emptively address resistance through this process, respectively.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Classifications of Stakeholder Groups: EXAMPLE** | |
| **Application name** | **Module name** |
| **Direct** | Will be directly impacted by the implementation and will require extensive engagement, communication, and training leading up to the transition. |
| **Indirect** | Will need to understand how others they work with are being impacted through the programme. |
| **General** | Employees/contractors across MDAs that are not directly or indirectly involved with the project or programme. |
| **Executive Steering Committee** | Predetermined group that provides direction on the overall programme and programme progress, making critical decisions around phase transitions, enterprise impacts and regulatory impacts. |
| **Directors** | Key leaders involved with the programme, primarily consisting of key Directors. |
| **Managers** | Managers, supervisors, or direct leads of the "direct stakeholders" who will be directly impacted by the implementation. |

The Change Readiness Assessment provides a good foundation framework of the preparedness for change today. The findings may suggest that more engagement and empowerment is desired, especially for the directly impacted stakeholders. The next iteration of the Change Readiness Assessment is usually scheduled for a later date and should provide a refreshed set of results on how each stakeholder group is tracking to the change journey. Based on this, proactive and reactive resistance management techniques can be administered to leverage sponsors, managers and change agents to socialise the necessary information and address top-of-mind concerns.

The Resistance Management Plan should also feed into other plans scheduled throughout the duration of the programme.

## Roles and Responsibilities for delivery of business readiness

Each member of the MDA has a role to play in achieving the programme outcomes. The following tables outlines roles and responsibilities for key players across key outcomes, communications, resistance management, the change agent network and training.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Exec Sponsors** | **Key Stakeholders / Directors** | **Managers / Supervisors** | **Employees** | **OCM team** |
| **Achieving programme outcomes** | Support definition of critical KPIs and understand role in helping to achieve targets | Assess impacts of the project or programme and set priorities/strategy to align business and employees | Understand impact to employees and advocate for programme and employee needs | Participate, actively engage, and share learnings/ insight with peers. Managers, programme team | Provide methods, data, and tools to support transformation and adoption |
| **Communications** | Support and reinforce value and priority of overall programme and create understanding of why engagement at all levels is critical | Tailor communications for MDAs, set tone of transparency, one team and support priority for engagement activities | Tailor communications for teams and ensure timely delivery and review of critical messages | Take personal responsibility for understanding and adopting the programme or project changes and bringing forward questions, concerns, and opportunity for improvement | Design and execute tailored communication plan to all stakeholders |
| **Resistance Management** | Be aware of resistance behaviours, be open to concerns and work with the team to show visible sponsorship | Be aware of resistance behaviours, be open to concerns and work with the project team to proactively resolve with managers | Be aware of resistance behaviours, be open to concerns and work with the team to proactively resolve with employees | Be aware of changes, be open about concerns with managers and participate and engage in resolution | Provide ongoing support for identification, tracking and resolution of concerns and/or resistant behaviour across business |
| **Change Agent Network** | Support and champion change agent efforts through commitment to resourcing and prioritisation of change agent action plans | Commitment to resourcing and prioritisation of change agent action plans as well as active participation in events/communications as needed | Fully support change agents in their role and ensure prioritisation and team participation in change agent action and engagement plans | Fully support change agents in their role and participate/engage in activities as requested | Design and execute tailored change agent network plan |
| **Training** | Support and champion training plan through commitment to resourcing and prioritisation of training activities | Support and champion training plan through helping managers to balance training effort and operational day-day challenges | Support employees in getting quality time to invest in training | Fully commit to and engage in training plans for role and provide feedback on opportunities to improve | Design and execute tailored training plan for all end users |

# 3 Resistance Management

Resistance to change is the action taken by individuals and groups when they perceive that a change that is occurring is a threat to them. The key aspect of this definition is that individuals/groups may consider the upcoming change to be a threat to their role and/or day-to-day activities. Thus, managing resistance and addressing it in a timely manner becomes crucial to the overall health and success of the project.

## What is Resistance Management?

“Resistance is natural, not negative”. Resistance is an indicator of the health of the change, in a positive manner. The more resistance one observes to the change, the more it showcases that the people undergoing the change are aware and care about its outcomes. Managing that resistance effectively and pre-emptively is a good practice to channel uncertainty in a positive and impactful direction. Resistance that is not successfully managed can lead to the project going off-track, distrust among employees and an unsuccessful product launch. Ideally, resistance should never be prevented, only managed effectively and pro-actively addressed.

There are three main strategies for resistance management:

1. **Prevention of Resistance**: effective change management may lead to a *prevention* of any type of resistance along the change journey. This is very rare, as most individuals undergoing change tend to exhibit some form of resistance to the change.
2. **Proactive Resistance Management**: this type of resistance management *anticipates* resistance during a change. This methodology helps in the early identification of likely resistance such that it can be planned for and addressed throughout the duration of the change. This is the best form of resistance management because it allows the people undergoing the change to viscerally react to the change while putting in place guardrails to effectively plan and address resistance upfront.
3. **Reactive Resistance Management**: this resistance management strategy is used *in response* to enduring and persistent resistance that is not addressed in the beginning. Typically, by the time reactive resistance tactics need to be put in place, it may already be ‘too late’. This avenue calls for more stringent activities such as setting strict examples (such as layoffs) and creating a strong alignment between participation to change and incentives. This is the most difficult and coercive type of tactic to implement. Especially for programmes with longer durations and lead times, it is best to implement a more proactive approach to resistance management.

This guides highlight a combination of the proactive and reactive techniques to resistance management by effectively identifying and addressing resistance upfront and ensuring a more successful go-live in the project or programme. The programme or project resistance management plan usually focuses more on proactive tactics but should monitor and have communication and engagement capabilities in place to quickly respond to early indicators of resistance as they arise.

Examples of Opportunities to identify resistance include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Opportunities to Identify Resistance (Bottom-up)** | **Type of Resistance Management** | **Channel of Socialisation/Escalation** |
| Manager Follow-up Meetings | Proactive | Meetings with managers of all impacted groups |
| Meetings as outlined in Coaching Plan | Proactive | Coaching activities with managers and supervisors |
| Change Agent Network Meetings | Proactive or reactive | Meetings/monthly newsletter correspondence with Change Agents |
| Other non-change activities (e.g., design sessions, knowledge transfer sessions) | Reactive | Weekly status meetings with the project team and other stakeholder groups |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Opportunities to Identify Resistance (Top-down)** | **Type of Resistance Management** | **Channel of Socialisation/Escalation** |
| Executive Steering Committee Meetings | Reactive | Monthly meetings to discuss resistance patterns and mitigation activities |
| Director 1:1 Meeting | Proactive or reactive | Meetings with all impacted Directors |
| Sponsor Roadmap Meetings | Proactive or reactive | Sponsor activities to coach them on resistance management |
| Biweekly Change and Functional Team Lead Meetings | Proactive or reactive |  |

## Why Does Resistance Arise?

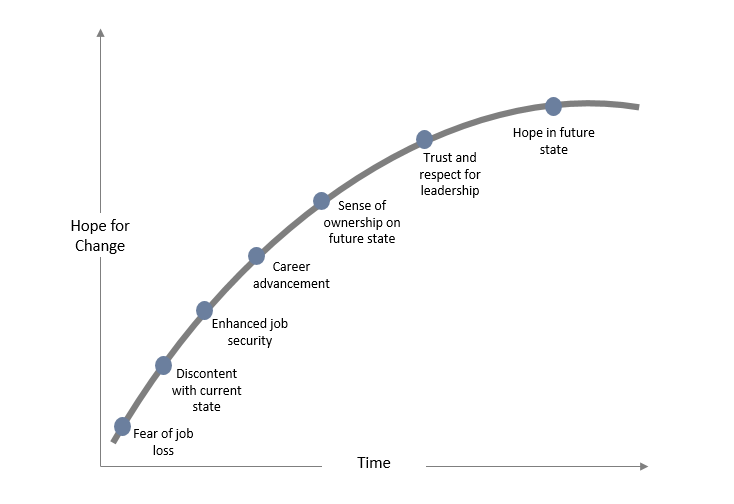
Resistance typically arises due to a host of reasons, but in most cases can be attributed to one of the five reasons below:

1. **Lack of awareness**: employees may not realise and understand the *why* behind the change.
   1. **Mitigation strategy:** create communications and/or effective meetings to drive the understanding of the change
2. **Resistance to a specific change**: typically, most employees may believe that the existing situation does not require a change (inertia to change) or it does not address their current needs. In the latter scenario, employees may design their own ad-hoc solutions to cater to their needs.
   1. **Mitigation strategy:** understand the why behind the resistance before identifying the how. Often this should lead to an in-depth understanding of the aspect of change employees are most averse to and should drive the resistance management strategy.
3. **Resistance due to change saturation**: in situations where multiple initiatives are rolling out concurrently, employees may be inundated with information and mentally exhausted from processing everything that is changing around them.
   1. **Mitigation strategy:** allow employees to communicate their exhaustion and concerns around the change. Address their biggest fears around this change without dismissing fears as immaterial. If employees feel heard and understood, they are able to commit faster to the change.
4. **Fear of the change**:this can translate into ‘fear of the unknown’ or the fear generated around anything new that needs to be learned.
   1. **Mitigation strategy:** empower employees to speak their mind in interactive working sessions, surveys, town hall and one-on-one meetings to express their primary concerns around the change. Develop mitigation activities based on the why behind the fear, versus the actual behaviours the fear creates. Ensure training is effective and efficient.
5. **Lack of support from management/leadership**: when employees see management/leadership inadequately support the change, it creates a momentum for them to follow suit.
   1. **Mitigation strategy:** engaging sponsors throughout the programme and ensuring their visible sponsorship is key to mitigating resistance arisen from a lack of support from leadership. This is one of the main reasons to collaborate with sponsors and leaders of a programme to drive change.

## Who are the typical resistors and what are the natural stages of resistance?

Resistance can arise at any level within the MDAs. It is imperative for sponsors, managers and change agents to understand the *why* prior to providing answers to the *how* behind the resistance to change.

Some of the natural stages of resistance to change are highlighted in the figure below. Effective change management, which includes a proactive plan for resistance management, is one of the proven ways to bring all employees along this curve to facilitate a higher support for change. For major transformation programmes.



*Figure X: Natural stages of Resistance [EXAMPLE]*

## Benefits of Resistance Management

Administering a robust proactive resistance management plan has several benefits over the span of the programme. Some of these benefits include:

1. **Building a culture of openness** and transparency within the MDAs: more awareness generated around a change leads to a faster adoption and acceptance of the change. Resistance management ensures all outstanding questions and fears are addressed in a timely manner
2. **Establishing a sense of trust** with all impacted stakeholders: alleviating the fear of change and providing required answers helps instil a sense of trust among all impacted employees. This in turn creates a sense of goodwill toward the change and enables adoption of new processes
3. **Allowing stakeholders sufficient time for adjustment** to the idea of the change: proactive resistance management with adequate lead time ensures more commitment to the change when it matters most
4. **Empowering impacted leaders** with the required information to reduce *fear of the unknown*: enables leaders to create a top-down culture of change adoption
5. **Ensuring a successful launch** of the programme/product: effective resistance management eventually leads to a timely and successful launch with fewer obstacles and resentment to change
6. **Enhancing performance and the adoption rate of the change**: Decreasing the time to issue resolution due to higher buy-in and commitment to the change. Moreover, higher proficiency is attained with lower resistance to change.

# 4 Typical approach to resistance management

## Approach to identifying resistors

Resistors can be identified across multiple levels, leveraging various touchpoints and techniques throughout the programme or project lifecycle. Avenues for identifying resistance include:

1. Observe/soft measurement
   1. During meetings (calls, face-face)
   2. Around the office, hallway conversations
   3. From speaking 1:1
   4. Anticipated/known from other programmes and previous team experiences
   5. Collaborating with other peer utilities to learn for their experiences
2. Specific measurement tools
   1. Surveys/assessments
   2. Conduct interviews (if needed)

The Programme’s or project’s OCM team should be proactive with resistance management and should monitor for resistance behaviours during all change management engagement touchpoints. The OCM team should also work with the rest of the team to encourage proactive identification of areas of resistance and escalate any observations or concerns to the OCM team. Communication of resistance should be done as a regular course of interaction with the workstream leads (bi-weekly OCM meetings, status meeting, stakeholder meetings, etc) and resistance areas should be logged, and actions documented throughout the programme or project.

## Behaviours that resistors exhibit:

While there may not be a comprehensive list of behaviours resistors exhibit, there are a few telling signs of upcoming resistance based on a person’s behaviour. These behaviours should be specifically kept in mind when programme or project teams are engaging with internal stakeholders.

Some of these behaviours include:

1. **Complete disengagement** during meetings/discussions around the programme
2. **Constant nay-saying** – using phrases such as “this will not work”, “we don’t need to be doing this right now”
3. **Missing in action** – avoiding meetings related to the programme, not showing up to coaching sessions, not replying to emails with asks from the team

Other more implicit behaviours could also exist such as creating a façade of support and faking alignment with direct managers. It is imperative for all programme members and internal stakeholders to be on the lookout for traces of such behaviours. Some direct stakeholders should specifically be coached on observing and escalating such issues – this process is covered in detail below.

## Approach to Addressing Resistance

The primary approach to resistance management entails leveraging various engagement touchpoints throughout the programme. These levers should include the sponsor networks, coaching networks and change networks. Specific plans and workplans supporting this include:

* Sponsor roadmap
* Coaching plan
* Change agent network communications and plan
* Communications schedule and plan

There are several techniques to tackle resistance leaders and employees. These should be customised to the respective programme or project as needed and timing should be determined by the prioritisation matrix (listed in the resistance log summary table below).

**Techniques for engaging resistant leaders:**

* Clearly articulate the benefits and risk of not changing
* Ask Executive Sponsor to help with alignment, communicate expectations and set priorities
* Engage them early on
* Identify the root cause
* Provide on-going communication

**Techniques for engaging resistant employees:**

* Identify the root cause
* Provide coaching
* Provide opportunities for feedback and listen to what they say
* Remove barriers
* Communicate the benefits, risks and consequences of not changing

The OCM team should confirm a systematic and consistent approach across the MDAs for resistance management. Additionally, all observations of resistance should be logged in a Resistance Log, reviewed weekly and escalated as needed based on priority. The log should be presented in a prioritised order (based on matrix below) along with mitigation plans for the high and medium priority items. OCM leadership should define action as needed and escalate to the programme or project Leadership level if appropriate.

The OCM team should be working with the programme or project team to identify and mitigate resistance. The result should encourage ad-hoc types of engagement strategies such as communication, training, assessments and one-on-ones follow a predetermined ad-hoc approval and action plan. The OCM team should encourage a more holistic approach to resistance management by assimilating information across all pockets of resistance in the MDAs and if necessary, initiate a larger response (e.g. all-hands, escalation to executive leadership, etc.) to proactively and consistently increase awareness, understanding, engagement and commitment.

Examples of responses to resistance include:

* Additional communications required (audience, timing, etc.)
* Additional training required (audience, timing, etc.)
* One on one meetings/focus group meetings required
* Sponsor intervention/engagement required to confirm commitment/decisions
* Programme-wide all-hands/town hall required to ensure one message is heard by all
* Type of collaboration with other teams required (e.g. Core, Design) to drive change

## Resistance Log Summary

Observations of resistance should be logged into the **Resistance Log**. The OCM team should be responsible to:

1. Add observations in the log based on personal experiences/hearsay from stakeholders
2. Complete details in the log and prioritise based on the matrix below
3. Confirm actions are identified and executed to address resistance issue

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Type of resistance** | **Influence/Level of resistor(s)** | **Number of people showing resistance** |
| **Description of Criterion** | *Degree to which a person/group of people are resistant to the change* | *Degree to which a person/group of people have formal/informal influence within the group/ MDAs* | *% of team members that exhibit resistance behaviours.* |
| **High** | Actively fight the cause and/or constantly bring up negatives of the change | At a senior position in the group/MDAs and has several direct reports and/or position is an influential member in the group/MDAs | More than 45% of the group |
| **Medium** | Not aware of upcoming changes and/or do not want to dedicate time and efforts to learn | At a middle-management position and has direct reports who rely on him/her for direction and/or is well respected in the group/MDAs and has a strong influence over his/her network | 25-45% of the group |
| **Low** | Has a fear of the unknown but is willing to learn | At a relatively lower level and does not directly influence a lot of people or at a relatively high position in the MDAs but does not have a strong influence over his/her network | <25% of the group |

Guidelines of Ratings:

* 2-3 criterion with High designation: **High** Priority Resistance Issue
* 1 criterion with High designation: **Medium** Priority Resistance Issue
* No criterion with High designation: **Low** Priority Resistance Issue

All resistance observations should be reviewed during the OCM meetings, in prioritised order. It is also imperative that the OCM team continues to monitor items marked as *Resolved* to ensure that the same kind of resistance within that group/individual does not arise again.

## Example of the Resistance Log

 Double click on the icon

## Current State Snapshot (Design/Build/Validate

Based on the interactions, ongoing meetings and change concerns that would have escalated thus far, the OCM team should put together an initial point of view on the types of resistance that can be anticipated from each of the directly impacted MDA and some of their groups (table below- EXAMPLE). This provides an illustration on an initial take on the types of resistance the team may encounter. The risks once identified should be validated and managed through the resistance log.

| **Impacted department** | **Groups within department**  **(that may showcase resistance)** | **Type of resistance** | **Additional comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Department A | Group A | Resistance to a specific change | Timing does not align with current business needs |
| Customer Care | Business Services | Resistance to a specific change | Potential change of responsibilities for certain groups such as Planned Outage Coordination |
| Customer Care Centres | Change fatigue | This is specifically for Customer Care Centre |
| Electric Research and Analysis | Fear of the unknown/change | Concern around how data should be structured in future state |
| Manager - Customer A |
| Department B | Workload Management Ops | Resistance to a specific change; Fear of the change | Concern around how application booking training should be handled for the new system |
| Centralised Operations | Fear of the unknown/change | Previous bad experience with an implementation like this project |

# 5 Engagement Opportunities for Resistance Management

In the proactive approach to resistance management, multiple engagement opportunities should be leveraged to create awareness around the upcoming change and drive commitment to adoption of the change. Listed below are the different avenues that can be contributed to/leveraged to manage change and ensure a more *pre-emptive* approach to managing resistance.

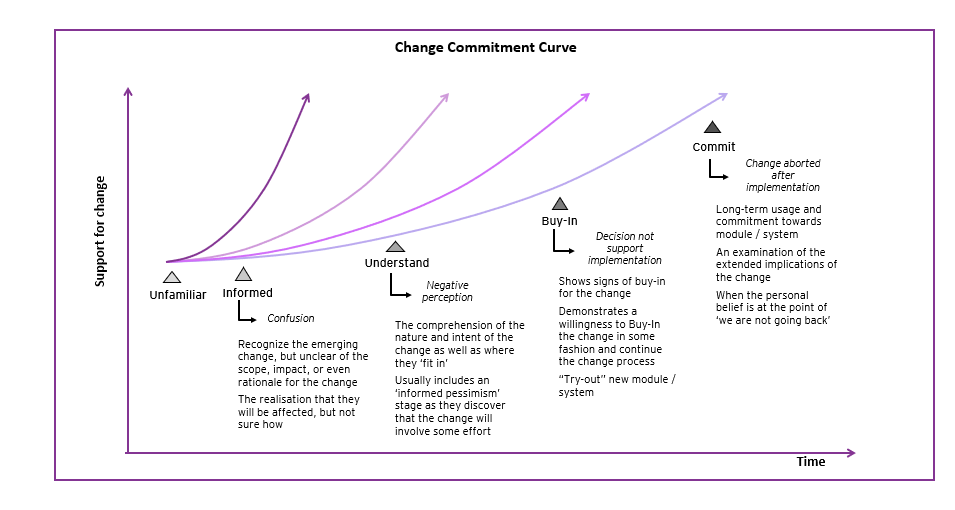
## Engage Sponsors

Some of the primary responsibilities of programme or project sponsors are to:

1. Participate actively and visibly throughout the programme or project
2. Build a coalition of sponsorship with fellow peers and managers
3. Communicate effectively with their employees

## Change Commitment Curve

The “Change Commitment Curve” (Figure below) highlights the different stages stakeholders may go through in relation to their support for the programme or project. As the programme or project progress, the stakeholder group should become increasingly committed to change and this should helped lay the foundation of the Sponsor Roadmap.



Resistance may appear/reappear at any stage during the programme or project lifecycle and needs to be both proactively addressed and identified as soon as signs exist. If a stakeholder decides to disengage from a change and/or shows engagement only at the beginning of the programme or project, the momentum and support for the programme or project may diminish over time. This in turn may result in more resistance throughout their team and in some cases failure of adoption. To mitigate this, touch points with these sponsors should be leveraged to continue engagement and relevant communications and identify resistant behaviour.

As stakeholder groups become more engaged, there may be stakeholder concerns that conflict with the programme or project objectives. If left unaddressed, this conflict may undermine the changes required for the programme or project to be successful. Consistent and intentional engagement minimises risk by proactively addressing key concerns and issues with the aim of generating support for the change and moving them along the curve.

## Leverage Coaching Plan

The Coaching Plan states that certain roles within directly impacted groups should be ‘coached’ on the upcoming changes and become change drivers themselves. The OCM team recommends that the programme or project leverage this ongoing touchpoint with the supervisors and managers to coach them on resistance management activities. When direct managers and supervisors don’t exhibit certain kinds of behaviours, the momentum in the programme or project is rapidly lost and the change might not be as widely adopted.

Some of the common errors that managers may make are:

1. **Fail to personally engage as the main proponent of the change**: failure to stay involved and track the progress of the change
2. **Provide confusing (and conflicting) directives**: create competing priorities that may confuse employees at the base levels of the MDAs
3. **Underestimate resistance**: assume that everyone should come along on the change because they have to and not provide adequate coaching to individual players on the team

## 

## Engage change agent network

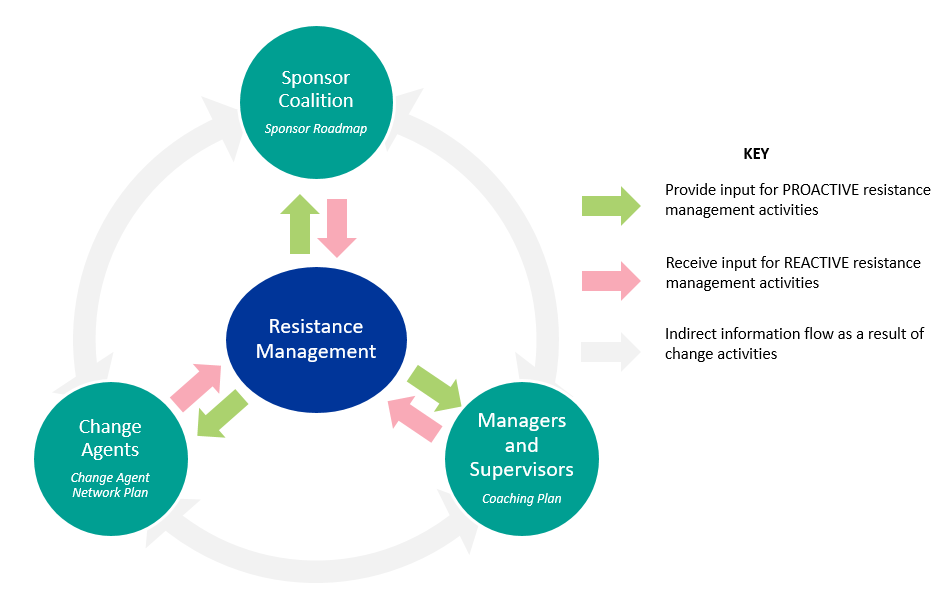
The timing to stand up the change agent network is closely tied to the programme timeline, the availability of change inputs, and stakeholders’ progress on the Change Commitment Curve (page 20). With Design-Build-Validate phase underway, the commitment focus now shifts to the key stakeholder group. If left unengaged, these individuals and their teams should feel alienated from the programme or project and the *why* behind the change. In addition, with timelines drawing closer, these stakeholders are becoming more aware of the programme and are seeking understanding.

With the change-engaged population growing, the change agent network provides structured engagement opportunities and a forum for these stakeholder groups to receive communication, ask questions, and provide two-way feedback. In turn, the feedback the OCM team receive from the change agents should be more granular and at the grassroots level compared to the feedback received from a senior or manager level stakeholders.

During the period, the change agent network is kicked off, the change agents should be actively engaged by the programme or project team to socialise key communications and escalate resistance behaviours to the OCM team in a timely manner. The OCM team should help change agents understand resistance management techniques to circulate proactive resistance and change management.

Once change agents are selected from each impacted MDA, the OCM team should organise a formal initial touchpoint with all members of the new change agent network and representatives from the programme or project leadership. Subsequent touchpoints should assist change agents in observing and addressing resistance behaviours, along with socialising the relevant programme or project details and know-how. Regular pulse-checks through the change agent network should monitor ongoing sentiment and provide input for sustainment activities.

Utilising the strategies detailed in the Sponsor roadmap, change agent network plan and coaching plan, when feedback on resistance behaviours and observations are received from the sponsor coalition and the change agent network, the identified managers/supervisors should be immediately contacted and coached to mitigate the risk of further development of resistance. In turn, information should flow between the three sub-categories of stakeholder groups (as shown below in Figure ), ensuring a holistic approach to the change journey.



*Diagram - Information Flow Leveraging Resistance Management*

## Leverage Communications

Through the sponsor roadmap, change agent network and coaching plan, a common thread may exist – that of constant engagement and intervention as needed. Proactive communications should already be an existing part of the Communication Schedule for the programme or project. The schedule should be continually updated every phase to ensure it continues to serve the purpose of proactive engagement and socialisation of the right type of information. However, the OCM team should continue to receive real time feedback from the different levels of engagement at the Director+ level, the managers/supervisors level and the change agent level.

Based on patterns of resistance that the OCM team observes over time, there may be a requirement for ad-hoc communications to targeted/all groups within the MDAs. This could be a written form of communication or something more engaging such as town halls and road shows.

## Provide Input for Training

As the Training Plan is rolled out, all change activities should ideally provide input: in the form of observations that have been made and issues that have been raised. From a resistance management standpoint, the OCM team should identify requirements that should feed into training as a direct way to address upcoming resistance to the change. For example, if a pocket within a specific group is showcasing resistance to change primarily because of fear of the unknown, an additional training or communication module may be one way to alleviate their fears. Another approach would be to specifically coach the change agent to showcase a simulation of the change and in turn empower him/her to showcase that to the group. This should provide the necessary alleviations from a training standpoint and allow for a pre-emptive way to address resistance.

Because training activities are much harder to craft and socialise on an ad-hoc basis, the OCM team anticipates keeping ad-hoc training requests to a bare minimum. Overall, the goal is to provide the Training Team with as much additional information as possible, from engagements with the Directors, Managers/Supervisors and change agents and enable the subsequent training to be as holistic and comprehensive as possible.

# 6 Sustaining Resistance Management

## Timeline and Cadence

While the Resistance Management Plan is being formalised in the Design-Build-Validate phase, proactive resistance management should be occurring since the onset of the programme or project. As issues are raised across the varying levels of stakeholders, the OCM team should be addressing these issues by either ramping up communications or meeting one-on-one with the identified stakeholders. The Resistance Management Plan aims to put a more systematic approach in place to prioritise resistance instances and address them in a more consistent manner over the length of the programme or project. Moreover, the plan also helps to identify the outputs that can be leveraged from other change activities as well as the inputs this plan can provide into other change activities.

From a timing perspective, the Resistance Management Plan should be underway in the DBV phase. The Resistance Log should be populated and be leveraged starting at an agreed date. The Sponsor Roadmap, Coaching Plan, Change Agent Network and Communications Plan have also been mapped to the programme timeline based on frequency of engagement throughout the duration of the programme. The chart below depicts typical resistance management activities, as they feed into the remaining change activities designed for the project or programme. The Resistance Management Plan should be aligned to the timing and delivery of the Sponsor Roadmap and Coaching Plan, while informing the communications and training plans throughout.



## Continued Leadership Involvement

As the programme or project progresses, insights from the resistance management activities should be shared with leadership during project-wide updates (e.g., Phase kick-off, Executive Steering Committee Meeting, etc.). If a situation arises where urgent action is required, the OCM team should consult with the business lead directly. Only engaged and active leaders should be leveraged to proactively address resistance.