



NATIONAL QUALITY CENTER

Managing Resistance to Change

The Quality Academy

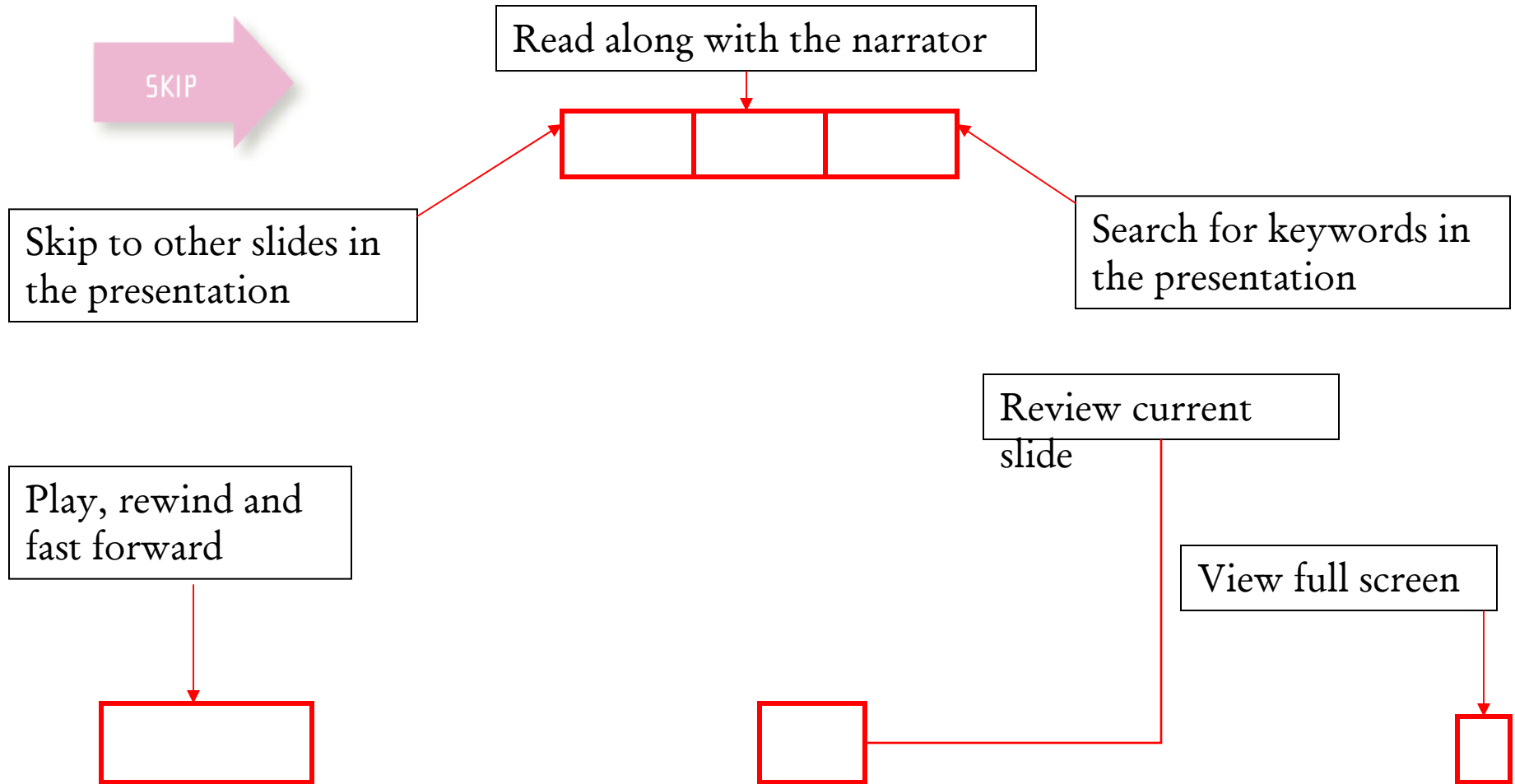
Tutorial 16



Learning Objectives: You Will Learn About...

- Reasons people resist change
- Approaches that support change management
- Strategies to address resistance to change

Tips for Viewing This Presentation



Managing Change



"Think of managing change as an adventure. It tests your skills and abilities. It brings forth talent that may have been dormant."

Charles E. Rice

Key Question



How can we help our organization make change, even in the face of resistance to it?

What is Resistance?



Resistance is the push-back one experiences when trying to change or improve a process or system.

What Does it Look/Feel/Sound Like?

- Refusals
 - Passive: “We didn’t have time to meet, test, measure”
 - Aggressive: “Absolutely not!” “You can’t tell me what to do”
- Sabotage
- Two steps forward; one step backward

What Does it Look/Feel/Sound Like?

- “My patients are sicker...”
- “That’s fine for them, but it won’t work here – we’re different”
- We don’t have the (you name it)
- Others?

What Causes It?

- Fear
 - The unknown
 - Change
 - Being overwhelmed
- Distrust
 - Administration
 - Opinion Leader/Change Agent



What Causes It? (Cont.)

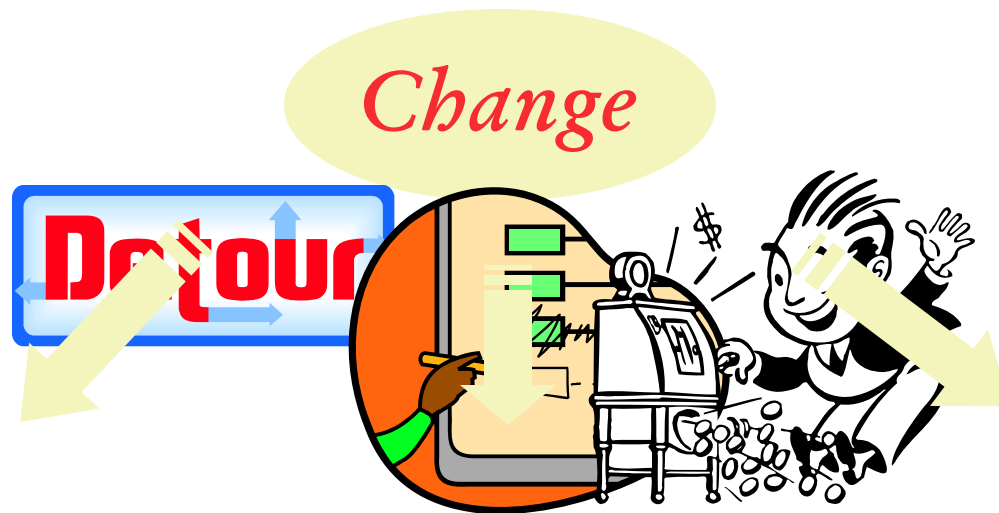
- Lack of information
 - “Not proven”
 - Not enough education
- Complacency
 - Can’t see the benefit of change
 - Not enough tension for change: the current situation is tolerable
- Lack of incentive
- Other (what do you think?)

Test Question

“The best way to deal with resistance to change is to ignore the resistors and work around them.”

- A) True
- B) False

What is the Core Issue Causing These Emotional Reactions?



Reaction to Change

- Denial – “No, it can’t be true”
- Anger - Why me?
- Bargaining – “Yes, me, ...but...”
- Depression – “Yes me, poor me”
- Acceptance – “It’s OK. What will I do?”

Source: Kubler-Ross 5 Stages of Grief

Ideas to Manage Resistance



Communicate

- Train/educate about the process, strategies
- Provide information about the need for change
- Change the message
- Change the messenger



Listen

- 1:1, and in groups
- Active listening
- Discuss hopes and fears
- Provide opportunities to vent

How to Manage Resistance

- Revel in the pushback
- Confront the resistance
- Respect the resistors; don't label them negatively
- Embrace and use their knowledge

Change vs. Transition

“CHANGE IS GOOD: YOU GO FIRST”

- Change is altering the external environment leading to....
- “Transition” is an internal psychological reorganization people go through in coming to terms with change

Wm Bridges, “Transition Management”

Continue

Stages of Transition



- Not accepting transition – denial
- Endings – depression
- Neutral – anxiety
- Beginnings – stress
- Finish – relief

Change and Information

Identifying Words in Transition

- Not yet there – denial
 - “They don’t know about us – we’re different”
 - “It’s just another fad”
 - “It will never work”
- Endings – depression
 - “I don’t care anymore”
 - “Just tell me what to do”
 - “They’ll be sorry”
 - “It doesn’t make sense”

Identifying Words in Transition (Cont.)

Neutral

- “We don’t have any clear direction”
- “What’s my job?”
- “I can’t get all this new work done”
- “We’re making 2 steps forward and one back”

Identifying Words in Transition

- Beginnings
 - “We had a good meeting”
 - “We’re not done yet”
 - “I’m exhausted”
 - “Some of these new things are working”
- Finish
 - “It took a while to get there, but it’s OK”
 - “Boy, it was harder than I thought”
 - “What can we do next?”

Test Question

Which of the following behaviors would not be expected of someone going through transition?

- A) Complaining to co-workers about the need to make a change
- B) Withdrawing from the change effort as much as possible
- C) Saying at a team meeting, "OK, we've gotten this far, but I think this is about as far as we can go."
- D) Documenting everything he or she did with the goal of protecting him/herself if something goes wrong
- E) Accepting the change and actively supporting it from the very beginning

Managing Complex Change

Vision	Skills	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan	Change
	Skills	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan	<i>Confusion</i>
Vision		Incentives	Resources	Action Plan	<i>Anxiety</i>
Vision	Skills		Resources	Action Plan	<i>Gradual Change</i>
Vision	Skills	Incentives		Action Plan	<i>Frustration</i>
Vision	Skills	Incentives	Resources		<i>False Starts</i>

Source: Villa, R.A. & Thousand, J.S. (eds.) (1995). Creating an Inclusive School. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Managing Complex Change

Change	Vision	Skills	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan
Confusion		Skills	Incentives	Resources	Action Plan
Anxiety	Vision		Incentives	Resources	Action Plan
Gradual Change	Vision	Skills		Resources	Action Plan
Frustration	Vision	Skills	Incentives		Action Plan
False Starts	Vision	Skills	Incentives	Resources	

Source: Villa, R.A. & Thousand, J.S. (eds.) (1995). Creating an Inclusive School. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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Achieving Change

See-Feel-Change

- Help people see:
Dramatic, compelling stories



- Hit emotions: Hit at deeper level



- Emotionally charged ideas change behavior

Analysis-Think-Change

- Give people analysis:
Information from reports



- Data and analysis influences how we think: Information changes thinking



- New thoughts change behavior

Source: *"The Heart of Change"* by John P. Kotter

Questions of Change for Leaders



- What changes are necessary?
- What do they mean to everybody?
- How do I feel about those changes?

-Tom Nolan

Test Question

Not providing people with the skills they need to make a change results in:

- A) Confusion
- B) Depression
- C) Anxiety
- D) False starts
- E) Gradual change
- F) None of the above

Key Points

- People resist change out of fear, lack of understanding or lack of trust
- People experiencing change go through a process of transition, with identifiable stages and needs
- In general, these needs can be met with facts, support and encouragement
- Specific strategies for managing resistance include communicating, listening, and understanding the inevitability of resistance (and how to use it to support the change)


Resources

- Kotter, John P., *Leading Change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996
- Scholtes, Peter R., *The Team Handbook*. For more information, see: www.orielinc.com
- NationalQualityCenter.org


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Related Tutorials

- To learn more about leadership, study Tutorial 17
- To learn more about selecting changes, study Tutorial 15



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