

## The LEAD Forward April Brief

### **Resilience Over Resistance: Mobilizing People to Transform in Turbulent Times**

In the rapidly evolving landscape of today's business world, change isn't just inevitable—it's essential for staying ahead. Yet, even with the most robust strategies and systems, one invisible force remains our greatest challenge: human resistance to change. It's the silent saboteur of progress, often overlooked, yet capable of derailing even the most well-intentioned initiatives. The cost of unresolved resistance is not just a short-term obstacle; it threatens a company's long-term viability and competitiveness. This month's brief aims to normalize human resistance to change and empower leaders to proactively address and overcome it, so your organizations can fully realize the benefits of transformation.

### **Expect resistance to change, keep a pulse on it, & understand what is underneath it**

Over the past decade, LEAD Forward has assisted numerous leaders in implementing change, where encountering resistance has been a common frustration. We recommend that leaders expect resistance (it is a completely typical human response) and think of it as a signal; much like pain indicates health issues, resistance can alert you to underlying issues with the organizational change process. We also recommend proactively keeping a 'pulse' on how the change is landing in the organization and where resistance to it might be surfacing. You can monitor resistance actively through employee surveys, change groups, informal polls, and anonymous feedback. Identifying resistance is only the beginning; understanding the roots of resistance is the real key to unlocking progress. By delving beneath the surface reactions, we unearth the fears, the unspoken challenges, and the unacknowledged losses that people experience with change.

### **Go below the surface and get people unstuck so they can perform!**

The traditional models of managing change, focusing primarily on structures, processes, and systems, are increasingly proving insufficient. We know that if resistance and ways of working don't shift, transformation efforts will fail and the status quo will remain. LEAD Forward partners with companies to identify and shake up those beliefs, practices, and fears that are blocking people from performing their best. We want you to feel less bogged down by resistance, openhearted to explore what's beneath it, and empowered to playfully transform it so you can unlock your company's potential! Below we share some examples of how we've seen resistance to change happen on the surface in organizations, what was really causing it, and the specific actions we took together with our clients to get to the root cause and effect transformative change.



**Dissolve resistance: Proven LEAD Forward practices from our clients**

<b>Resistance seen on the surface in organizations</b> 	<b>What we don't see beneath the surface</b> 	<b>Activities that address what's beneath the surface and get people unstuck</b> 
<p>Managers are not communicating the new strategy to the next level in the organization and people start to create misaligned stories about the change.</p>	<p>"I am uncertain about the future and scared of how it will affect my own role and day-to-day."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define future vision, current state, and gap with compelling storytelling &amp; a gallery walk</li> <li>▪ Host a storytelling slam where next-level leaders write the change story for their role and team's day-to-day</li> <li>▪ Invite employees to small 'Ask me anything' sessions with leaders</li> <li>▪ Provide clear targets and support departments to create aligned, localized priorities and targets</li> <li>▪ Acknowledge what you may be losing and highlight what the organization and individuals are also gaining</li> </ul>
<p>People push off implementing new projects to a later date, often citing technical reasons (budget, IT, capacity, workload).</p>	<p>"I will lose the security that I am comfortable with and I don't want to lose my sense of control, expertise, or status."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make new behavioral norms tangible with leadership principles and recognition awards</li> <li>▪ Role model new ways of working and share your learnings and mistakes</li> <li>▪ Infuse fun into practicing high performance behaviors with energetic, gamified challenges</li> <li>▪ Incorporate the transformation into individual and company performance success measures</li> </ul>
<p>People disengage and look toward authority instead of taking ownership of the change themselves.</p>	<p>"I have no control over this change and it is happening to me, not with me."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tap into 'change agents' with strong opinions se a good sense of others' to give feedback</li> <li>▪ Empower individuals to own or join change projects and let go of micromanagement</li> <li>▪ Utilize workforce expertise in design sprints or hackathons</li> <li>▪ Create cross-functional joint problem solving or decision making spaces so people are working toward shared goal</li> </ul>

**Ready to unlock progress and truly transform your organization?**

To learn or exchange about overcoming resistance, motivating your organization to embrace change, or enhancing performance to meet transformation goals, reach out to [alexandra.saba@lead.berlin](mailto:alexandra.saba@lead.berlin), [vic.perez@lead.berlin](mailto:vic.perez@lead.berlin), or [maj.seider@lead.berlin](mailto:maj.seider@lead.berlin).

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