



# Coping with change in the workplace

Change in the workplace can bring about exciting opportunities, but it can also trigger a range of emotional reactions. If not addressed, these emotions can significantly impact you and the organization. Learn about types of emotional reactions and explore strategies for handling change.

## Common emotional reactions

**Shock and denial**—It can be challenging to comprehend or accept the reality of the change as a legitimate or necessary course of action.

**Anxiety and fear**—These emotions arise from concerns about job security, the impact of change on your role or the fear of the unknown. You may experience a sense of restlessness, difficulty concentrating or increased stress.

**Resistance and anger**—Resistance to change can stem from disruption of established routines or the perception that the change is poorly executed. Anger may arise from a perceived lack of communication, consultation or involvement in decision-making.

**Sadness and grief**—It's common to feel a deep sadness, longing or loss as you adjust to the new circumstances. It could be due to the loss of a familiar physical workspace or changes in team structure. The grieving process is individual and may vary in intensity and duration.

**Excitement and anticipation**—Excitement can stem from new possibilities, such as learning new skills, taking on new responsibilities or being part of innovative projects. Anticipation can create a sense of motivation and drive.

## 8 tips to handle change gracefully

1. Accept that change will happen and avoid assuming the worst, even if it isn't what you had planned.
2. Look at the bigger picture, ask yourself why change is occurring, and gain insight on how to cope with it.
3. Trust your instincts to help you comprehend what is happening without causing stress or concern.
4. Speak up if something feels wrong, if you think information is being withheld or if something unprofessional or unethical is occurring.
5. Work together as a team, whether that is a couple of people in your department or the whole company, to successfully implement any change in the workplace.
6. Treat people equally to avoid any feelings of resentment or more anxiety about the change.
7. Communicate with your manager to get help with navigating new job tasks or work routines and ensure you incorporate changes correctly.
8. Confide in family and friends as your safe space to vent and reduce your stress.

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**Are you a manager or supervisor?** Consider these tips to help your team as they navigate change.

**Listen and legitimize.**

Provide safe opportunities for people to vent, one-on-one and in small groups.

**Create hope for the future.**

Conversations about possibilities can inspire excitement, confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

**Understand diverse perspectives.**

Empathizing with others helps us to understand different points of view and demonstrate caring.



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