

# *Leading the Human Side of Change: Leadership Playbook*



WASHINGTON STATE

# Leadership Playbook for Leading the Human Side of Change

## 1. Self-Awareness: Your Leadership Style and Response to Change

- Key Concept: Understanding your leadership self enhances your ability to guide others through change.
- Reflection Questions:
  - What leadership style do I embody (e.g., democratic, coaching, or visionary)?
  - How do I typically react to change, and how can I model resilience?
- Actions:
  - Use the MindTools Leadership Style Quiz or HBR Leadership Style Assessment to refine your self-awareness.
  - Identify your emotional triggers and create a plan for managing stress during periods of change.

## 2. Guiding Teams Through Transition

- Key Concept: Effective change leadership involves addressing both the situational (change) and emotional (transition) aspects.
  - Strategies:
    - Ending, Losing, Letting Go: Recognize and validate emotions like anxiety, loss, or resistance.
    - Action: Hold open forums for team members to express concerns.
  - Neutral Zone: Acknowledge the discomfort of the in-between period and provide clarity about progress.
    - Action: Share a visual timeline of the change process and celebrate small milestones.
  - New Beginning: Reinforce new behaviors and acknowledge team achievements.
    - Action: Recognize individual contributions through team meetings or shoutouts.

## 3. Communication Strategies

- Key Concept: Clear and transparent communication is essential to build trust.
- Best Practices:
  - Communicate early, often, and in multiple formats.
  - Be honest about uncertainties while emphasizing the team's strengths and resources.
- Actions:
  - Send weekly updates about the change, including FAQs.
  - Schedule Q&A sessions for team members to voice questions or concerns.

#### 4. Building Resilience and Collaboration

- Key Concept: Resilience is built through strong team relationships and individual adaptability.
- Strategies:
  - Provide stress management and resilience-building workshops (e.g., mindfulness or time management sessions).
- Foster a culture of psychological safety where team members feel valued and heard.
- Actions:
  - Use team-building exercises to strengthen relationships and encourage mutual support.
  - Provide resources like EAP services or resilience training tailored to your team's needs.

#### 5. Offering Support and Resources

- Key Concept: Empower your team with the tools they need to navigate change successfully.
- Resources to Share:
  - Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Confidential, free support for mental health, stress, and personal challenges.
  - Leadership-focused learning opportunities (e.g., LinkedIn Learning or MIT OpenCourseWare).
- Actions:
  - Compile a resource guide tailored to your team, including practical tools for managing stress and adjusting to change.

- Promote EAP services and ensure team members know how to access them.

## 6. Reflection and Adaptation

- Key Concept: Effective leadership requires continuous reflection and adaptability.
- Questions to Consider:
  - What feedback am I receiving about my leadership during this change?
  - Are my communication and support strategies meeting the team's needs?
- Actions:
  - Conduct post-change reflection sessions to gather insights from your team.
  - Use feedback to refine your leadership approach and prepare for future transitions.

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