

8 Emotions to Change – How to Deal with Them

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Any leader attempting change needs to understand is the emotions of change. You cannot lead successfully if you do not understand every change has an emotion. Plus, if you don't empathise with those emotions – and, I'm not trying to sound dramatic here – you are either being cruel or ignorant as a leader.

So, how do you deal with the emotions of change. Well, let me share the emotion and offer a few suggestions.

8 common emotions to change:

Fear

Give information. People usually fear what they don't know more than what they do. During seasons of change it's important to increase the level of communication.

Grief

Allow time to adjust – even to heal. There's been a loss. The biggest objection people have to change is usually the sense of loss, which fuels the emotion. You don't get over this immediately.

Obviously, if a person can never get over it you may have to move forward without them. But, make sure you don't move without them because you stepped on their season of grief.

Enthusiasm

Temper celebration when change is still hurting some people. Don't slap those opposed in the face immediately. Of course, never say "I told you so". That screams arrogance. Celebrate yes, but do it with taste when feelings are involved.

Anger

Give it time to see if it calms. Extend forgiveness where necessary. Allow people to express their anger without retribution. Anger is usually the result of unmet expectations. Don't agitate even further by not following through on commitments made.

I've learned some people can't move forward once they've gotten angry. They don't know to move forward. But allow time to see if it's just an initial, reactionary outburst.

Confusion

During times of change attempt to be the king of clarity. Use various methods of communication. People hear things in different ways. Make sure everyone hears you or has an opportunity to it they are listening. (And some won't)

Loneliness

To address this one you have to somehow replace the loneliness people feel with something they can enjoy even more. It will take time. Again, some won't get there, but if the change is worthwhile, most people will eventual see some value in the change – especially as it relates to their personal values.

Bottom line here: Make good changes.

Sadness

Recognize and acknowledge that some people will have a genuine lack of happiness about the change. That's okay. Don't force it. Don't expect it. Give it time.

Sometimes giving them new roles within the change gives them relief from the sadness. But the best response here is to be patient with people. Sadness doesn't heal under pressure.

Numbness

Energize them with the vision. Let the vision drive their enthusiasm. That means you have to repeat the vision often. Sometimes daily.

And you celebrate the accomplishment of the vision more than anything else.

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