

Staff successfully manage change with considered communication and the resulting transition through 5 adjustment stages before they can consistently embrace the change.

The 5 phases are awareness, understanding, acceptance, commitment and participation.

The time it takes to go through this process will vary from person to person and between organisations.

There are varying communication techniques required to enhance the attainment of each stage of the change process.

At the awareness stage, impersonal communication tactics are sufficient. For example, a notice on a pin-up board can generate awareness. Awareness does not equate with understanding.

Passive, impersonal but more engaging methods can be used to support the second change stage, understanding. These methods may include regular newsletters and updates. Understanding does not equate with acceptance.

To achieve the next stage of acceptance, a company should utilise more specific techniques such as workplace meetings or online information that allow staff to adapt the information to their particular circumstance.

Acceptance facilitates commitment and team meetings allow staff to discuss the changes including how the change will help them individually.

Participation, the final stage of change, utilises intimate interpersonal communication to aid employee involvement. Small groups working towards process improvement with richer, deeper communication is an example of this stage at work.