



Managing Resistance

A Hidden Skill for Every Professional

November 12, 2025



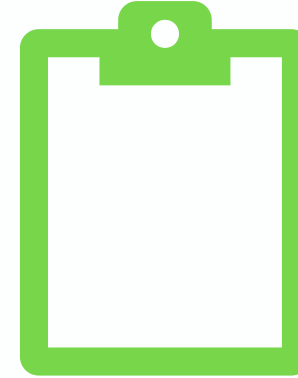
Qualifying for CPE



Remain in session
for **50 minutes**



Respond to 3 **polling**
questions



Complete post-session
survey



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Beth McLaughlin

Director – Organizational Change Management

UHY Consulting

Beth McLaughlin is a Director at UHY leading the Organizational Change Management practice team. With over 7 years of Organizational Change Management experience, Beth is passionate about the transformative power of effective organizational change management and is dedicated to sharing her expertise to help drive successful change initiatives.

Beth's broad range of experience includes implementing large scale transformational change for software solutions including process and organizational changes.

Beth is a University of Massachusetts MBA graduate, a Certified Change Management Professional (CCMP) and a Project Management Professional (PMP).



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Session Objectives & Agenda



Change and Resistance: The Everyday Reality



Why People Resist Change



Strategies and Tips to Managing Resistance Effectively

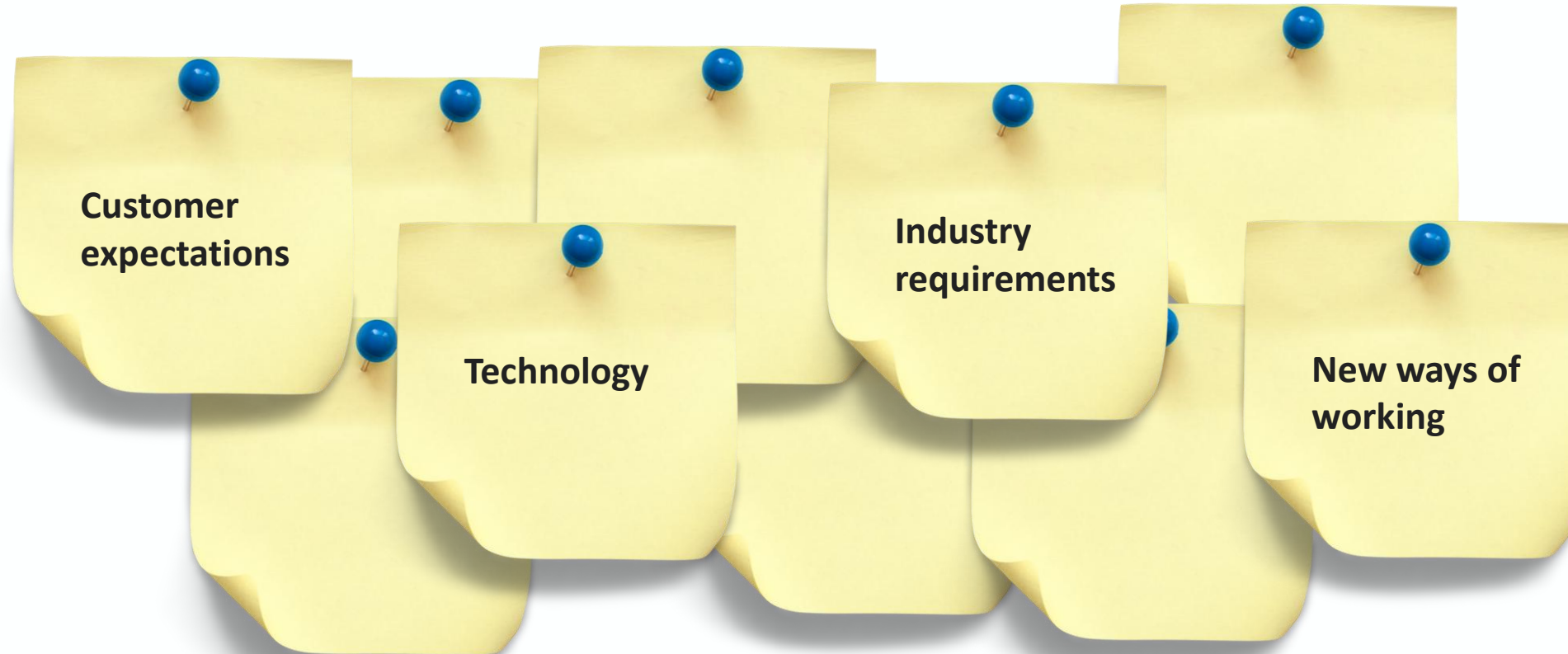


Using Resistance to Get Ready



Change and Resistance: The Everyday Reality

Today's employees are navigating many changes, all happening simultaneously:



When change is constant, even the most adaptable teams experience some resistance.



The Hidden Costs of Unmanaged Resistance



**Project
Delays**



Productivity



Accuracy



**Business
Performance**



**Employee
Turnover**



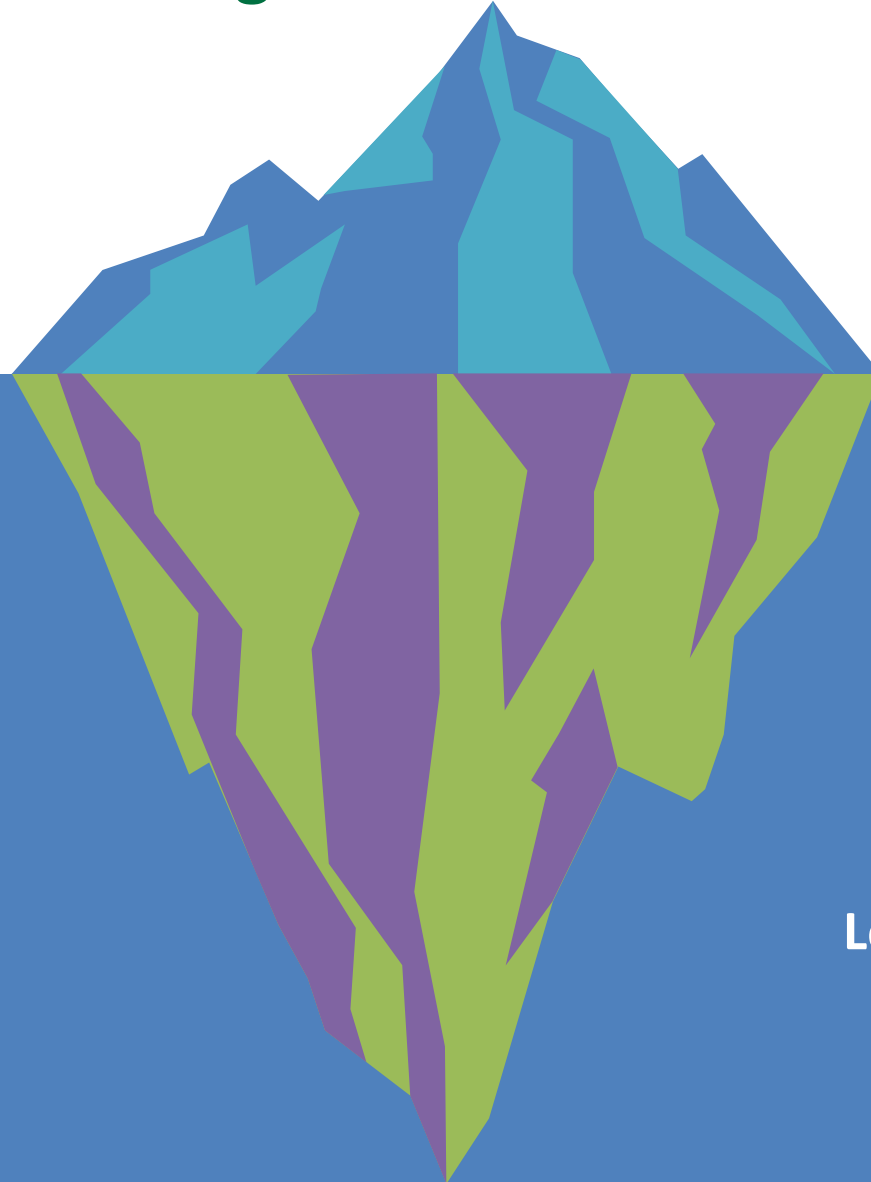
**Loss of
Competitive
Advantage**



**Trust in
Leadership**



Morale



Managing Resistance vs. Unmanaged Resistance

Managing resistance isn't a soft skill; it's operational risk management.

Without Resistance Management	With Resistance Management
Rework	Clear expectations
Delay	Faster adoption
Frustrated Teams	Fewer errors



You Have Experience With Resistance Management

Professionals manage resistance every day.

- Calming a client who resists a new process
- Coaching someone on how to use a new tool
- Adapting to new regulations, customer expectations, or technology updates under pressure



Polling Question #1

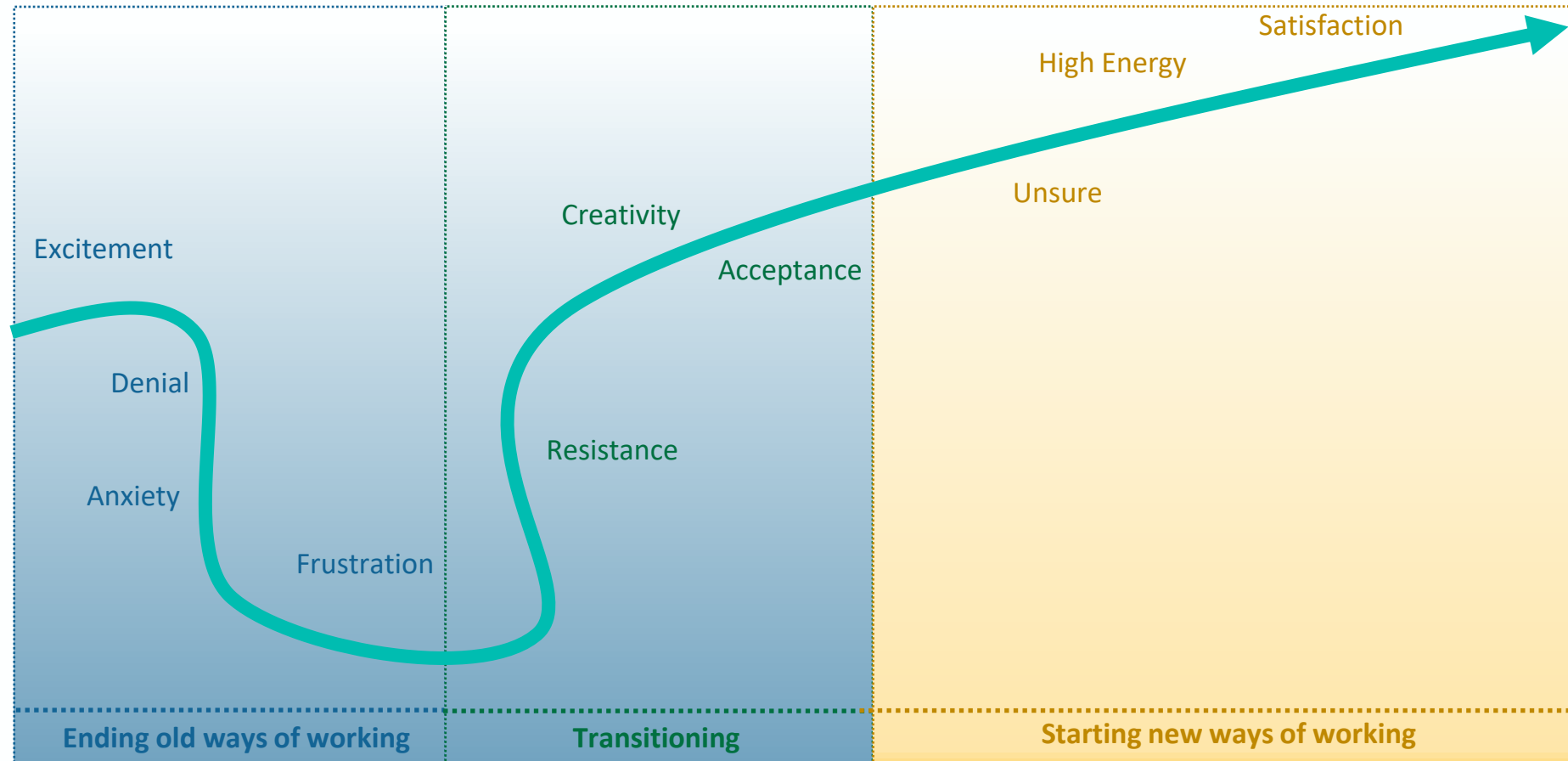
Resistance Management:

- A. Is a soft, fluffy skill
- B. Should only be done by change managers
- C. Prevents operational risks
- D. Is not something accountants do



Resistance Psychology: Why do people resist change?

Change is Emotional



Source: William Bridges Transitions (adapted).

It's Complicated

There are many reasons why people resist change.

- Don't know the reason for the change
- Past changes not handled well
- Loss of prestige/status
- Concerns about competence/fear of failure



Fear of the Unknown

The number one reason people resist change is fear of the unknown future.



- How will this change impact my job or my role?
- What is my new workday going to look like?
- What if I can't figure out the new technology?
- What if this change is worse than what we have today?



Polling Question #2

What is the number one reason people resist change?

- A. Fear of the unknown
- B. Fear of going over budget
- C. Fear of not passing their CPA exam
- D. Fear of their favorite football team not winning



Three Strategies to Reduce Resistance

Goal: Reduce Fear of the Unknown

If the #1 reason people resist change is the fear of the unknown, managing resistance means reducing that fear.



Strategy 1: Create a Variety of Ways to Communicate about the Change

1

Communicate Early, Empathetically, Clearly & Often

2

Use multiple mediums

3

Ensure 2-way communication



TIP: Always explain the purpose and benefits of the change



Strategy 2: Provide Ways for People to Engage with the Transformation

1

Include critical stakeholders

2

Engage leaders regularly

3

Create a 'change champion' or 'super user' group



Strategy 3: Demystify the New World

1

"Day in the Life" scenarios

2

Solid Training

3

Strong Support



Polling Question #3

When communicating about a change, what should you ensure to minimize resistance?

- A. Communicate only once all change details are confirmed
- B. Establish a two-way communication plan with clear feedback
- C. Communicate the same way to all audiences
- D. Use email messages as much as possible



Turning Resistance Into Readiness

Using Resistance to Get Ready

Resistance Can Show Program Gaps

**Don't Assume You
Know the Why**



**Earn Trust,
Get the Facts**



Key Take-Aways



Employees resist change for many reasons, but the #1 reason is **fear of the unknown.**



Reduce resistance by creating a variety of ways to **communicate** about the change; providing ways for people to **engage with the transformation**, and by **demystifying the new world**



Build trust and listen to learn why people are resisting the change; they may highlight gaps and deficiencies in your program. Addressing and mitigating these weak points means better readiness.



Polling Question #4

Resistance can show you:

- A. The challenging people in your organization.
- B. Why some people will never change.
- C. Where program gaps may exist.
- D. Nothing. All resistance is bad.



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