

The Resistant Team



Last week I wrote about the [Seriously Dysfunctional team](#) and this week we're looking at the Resistant Team.

Resistant teams are not yet in the seriously dysfunctional bracket but are coming close to it. These teams resent what they often see as forced change. The reasons differ: sometimes a new leader is appointed who might have a different leadership style or vision from his or her predecessor; sometimes the context in which they are asked to operate changes or sometimes a crisis in the organisation perpetuates change.

Whatever the reason, resistant teams are on a slide which if not arrested can easily tip into [seriously dysfunctional](#). Resistant teams often comprise individuals who have been in the organisation for a long time and quite like the status quo – it's easy for them. The 'day job' is still getting done but less and less effectively and for a new leader or team member it can feel like pushing water up hill.

Often the leader(s) will be the ones trying to implement change (or the team will try to implement the change 'because of' the leader) and the energy gets focused on resisting the leader or team members personally – this can have the impact that a high potential leader or team members will either leave or mentally abdicate – which of course makes things worse.

Behaviours That Characterise a Resistant Team

- Harking back to the past "it always worked well when we did..."
- Resentment that is often personally focused on those trying to implement change
- Backbiting
- *Extreme* passive aggression
- Denial of the need for change even when facts are very obvious
- Trying to protect personal interests
- One up manship or 'bury the head in the sand so it'll go away'
- Focus purely on personal tasks and refusal to accept team accountability
- Blame shifting
- Increased sickness absence (particularly stress related)
- Emotional outbursts

- Lack of flexibility
- Less effectiveness in the task
- High levels of frustration around small things
- Lack of awareness of the 'big picture'

Resistant teams are in the early stages of dysfunction and there is often still energy and momentum in the team – it just needs turning into *positive* energy. It's important to catch these teams early BEFORE the resistance takes too much hold – then they can be ripe for turnaround.

The resistant team needs a compelling vision of improvement, a clear understanding that things WILL change and sometimes they need to make some tough choices (or the leader or organisation does) about whether they are right for the brave new world!

If you'd like a copy of our free Transforming Teams Model or Questionnaire please contact **pat@lynnscottcoaching.co.uk** and we'll happily send them to you.

STOP PRESS:if you're an experienced and qualified coach and want to find out more about coaching leadership teams, [CLICK HERE for more information](#)