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Helping Your Acorn Business Grow Into A Solid Oak sm

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On The Shoulders Of Giants

Social Status And Resistance To Change

Why do people resist change? "After all, what I'm planning to do", thinks the owner, "will save the company a lot of money and make life easier for my employees. So, why are they resisting or even sabotaging this change?"

This is a problem most owners encounter at some time in their businesses. While there are many aspects to this resistance to change, I encountered one particular aspect in a client engagement some time back.

My team was in the process of implementing the automation of what had been a totally manual and very laborious process when I got word the implementation had ground to a halt. After some investigation, I found the supervisor of the department involved was the source of the resistance and the stoppage.

Through discussion, it became clear she was not in favor of the change we were implementing because it was going to change her status within the group she managed. Up to now, she was the acknowledged expert in the business processes of the group, but when we automated the many processes, she would be "just another worker".

We were able to resolve this issue by insuring we trained the supervisor first to allow her to maintain her status as the group's expert. We also spent extra time to make sure she became the expert and we established her as the person for her teammates to go to when they had problems, even if the supervisor had to come to us for problem resolution. The team saw her not us as the expert.

Social status isn't the source of all resistance, but it is important to consider when planning and implementing an organizational change.

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Accredited By The Institute For Independent Business