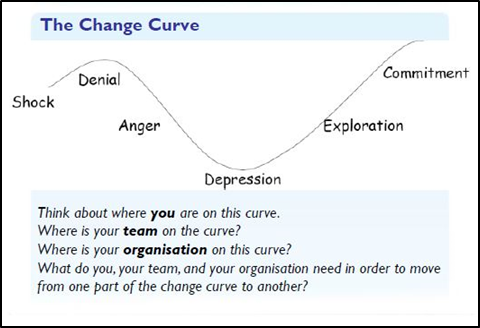
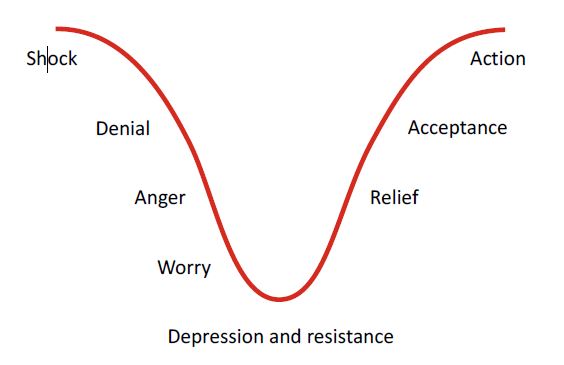
**Factsheet**

Managing Individual Reactions to Change

Change Curve: An Experiential Model

People dealing with personal loss and bereavement often experience a cycle ranging from initial shock, denial, anger and anxiety before moving to acceptance/action (commitment). It’s not unusual for people to experience a similar journey during major change. The speed and duration of the cycle varies depending on the individual, the degree of change and its impact. And it’s not always a one-way journey. People may feel they have come to terms with a change only to have something unexpectedly throw them off course and they find themselves back experiencing worry or anger. This sort of ‘flip-flopping’ is quite common.

Figure 1: Examples of change curves.

There are ways to help people through the change curve:

| Shock. | Denial/anger. | Worry/confusion. | Relief and acceptance. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * Get everything out in the open with as much information as possible and repeat it. * Be realistic with promises even if it means saying ‘I don’t know. I’ll have to get back to you’. * Be alert to how people are reacting. * Be available, patient and non-defensive. Don’t argue too much. * Accept there will be strong emotions – good and bad feelings – and don’t tell people how they should feel. * Allow time for people to absorb what’s happening. | * Offer clear instructions. * Check for understanding, challenge assumptions and deal with concerns and rumours. * Be specific about what is required. * Establish shorter time frames. * Follow up and keep checking in with people. * Empathise. | * Accept emotional displays. * Provide opportunities to sound off. * Listen and be supportive. * Keep people involved, motivated and build success experiences. * Continue direct control with clear expectations. * Tolerate mistakes and some inefficiency. * Communicate. | * Expect some setbacks. People will ‘flip back’ at times. * Allow for differences in recovery time. * Reinforce hopefulness and be optimistic. * Continue to build the team spirit. * Manage closely and provide constructive feedback. * Reward and emphasise achievements. * Highlight benefits and positive. |

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