



DIGITALISING PUBLIC SERVICES  
Making it work for citizens,  
business and workers



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# **Digitalising Public Services: Making it work for citizens, business and workers.**

## **Change Management: critical success factor**

This reader is created as a companion to the [final research report](#) of the [DiWork study](#). It is written and compiled for [CESI](#) by DiWork project consultant [Dirk Anton van Mulligen MSc](#) from Better Leadership.

## Better Leadership.

The DiWork project is co-funded by the European Union.

The incorporated links are to publicly available studies, articles and videos.

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# CONTENTS

- Introduction ..... 4
- How to use this reader ..... 5
- Digitalisation ..... 6
- Digitalisation of Public Services ..... 8
- Change Management.....10
- Change Management for Digital Transformation.....12
- Change Management Models .....14
  - ADKAR Model .....15
  - Technology Adoption Curve .....19
  - Bridges Transition Model.....22
- DiWork sessions: observations and recommendations .....24
- Articles and Videos .....26
  - Articles .....26
    - Is your Change Management approach keeping pace with the digital? .....26
    - All change is personal: Why most change efforts fail and what to do about it ....26
    - Change Management and Digital Age Training.....26
    - Competencies necessary for eGovernment.....26
    - Five things we need to know about technological change .....26
  - Videos.....26
    - Why people are crucial in digital transformation.....26
    - The Adkar Model.....26
    - The Technology Adoption Curve.....26
    - Managing Transitions .....26
    - Empowering Internal Change Agents .....26
    - Technopoly, the surrender of culture to technology .....26
- Appendix: Applying the ADKAR model to remote working .....27

# Introduction

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In February 2020, the European Commission has launched the strategy: “A Europe fit for the digital age, empowering people with a new generation of technologies”. The EU's digital strategy aiming to make this transformation work for people and businesses, while helping to achieve its target of a climate-neutral Europe by 2050. Throughout the strategy, the EC will focus its attention on three key objectives: a technology that works for people, a fair and competitive economy and an open, democratic and sustainable society. It aims at a European society powered by digital solutions that put people first, opens up new opportunities for businesses, and boosts the development of trustworthy technology to foster an open and democratic society and a vibrant and sustainable economy.

Over the last years, many programmatic interventions have gone in the direction of technology-driven public services. However, the actual realization of this transformation has proceeded slowly, often due lack of resources and insufficient consideration of workers' experience and point of view.

The advent of Covid early 2020 has been a game changer in the whole process, compelling and speeding up the digitalisation of public services. The momentum to make public services fit for the digital age has therefore definitely arrived. However, sustainable change is rarely achieved as a justified response to a sudden outward impulse (such as Covid). Or in other words: by necessity alone. Digitalisation is one of the defining societal developments of our lifetime. The 4th Industrial Revolution promises to have an even greater impact than the previous ones on each and everyone of us. But if we, erroneously, equate human progress with technological progress, this impact will not be unequivocally beneficial.

To make digitalisation of public services a sustainable success, active employee involvement will be crucial. As will be the embedding of digitalisation into an overall human-centered strategy with a corresponding cultural change. The best way to structure and achieve this, is by employing a change management approach to digitalisation.

This reader aims to provide workers and trade unionists with a working knowledge on the subject, so they can more effectively protect and improve workers' interests. Knowledge of change management helps trade unions to capitalise on the positive effects of digitalisation and to minimise the negative ones. This way trade unions can contribute to make the digitalisation of public services a substantial improvement for the way we work and live in the European Union.

Brussels, October 2022.  
European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI)

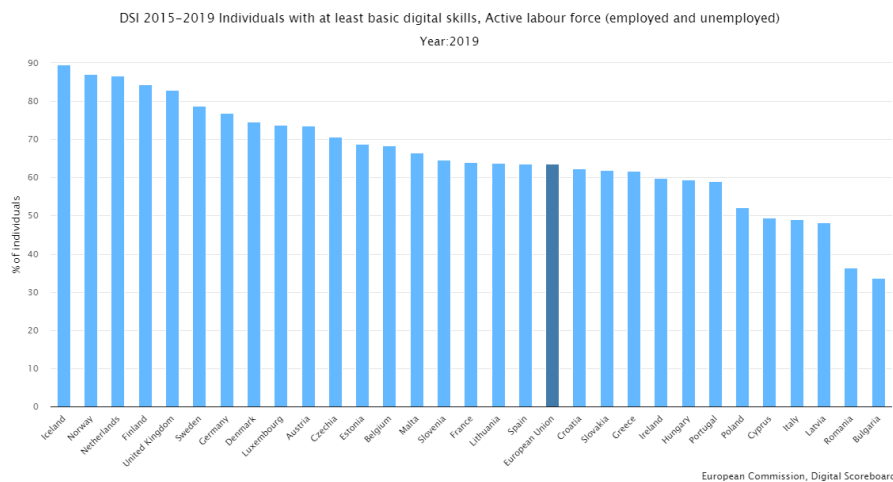
## How to use this reader

Change management offers you a framework that helps you keep oversight and make your actions and interventions regarding the digitalisation of public services more effective. The DiWork Change Management reader has been created to help you with that and to help you as a trade unionist operationalise the many valuable insights from the DiWork Study. To that end, it is meant to be used in conjunction with report and appendices of that study.

This reader provides you with:

- A basic working knowledge of change management,
- Research outcomes underlining the importance of engaging workers and of having a change management strategy in place when digitalizing public services,
- Knowledge that helps you partner as equal with administrations and organisational leadership, and
- Insights and tools to improve trade union interventions and better protect worker's interests regarding the digitalisation of their work.

As the DiWork sessions in the various member states have shown there are many differences between countries, sectors and organisations regarding digitalisation. The distribution of basic digital skills being just one example. In a similar vein when it comes to change management for digitalisation, one size will not fit all.



Use this reader to find out what aspects and approaches of change management suit your situation, and work your way from there. You can only pick up the people from where they currently are, including yourself.

There are many change management articles, courses and books that can help you further. To that end, this reader comprises a small selection of articles and videos on specific elements of change management and the impact of technological change on the way we work and live. Do check them out if you want to know more.

# Digitalisation

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*Digitalisation is the generic term for the digital transformation of society and the economy. It describes the transition from an industrial age characterized by analogue technologies to an age of knowledge and information characterized by digital technologies and digital (business and organisational) models.*

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In the 21st century we are experiencing a complete transformation of the way we work and live. The origins of this transformation can be traced back to the development of the computer. By digitizing information, or converting analogue source material into a numerical format, computers could perform calculations with a speed and accuracy that opened up a world of possibilities. Existing processes could be carried out more efficiently and with greater reliability than ever before. Just compare writing a letter on a type writer and sending it by post, to typing and sending an email or direct message, helped by the autocorrect function. The effort, energy and time it takes, could hardly be greater.

But more importantly, especially since digital technologies became affordable and widespread, a new way of interacting with each other and with reality as such became possible. Just think of social media, 'on demand tv' or platform services as Uber or Spotify which all fully depend on digital technology. New business models were invented, new services delivered.



## Workers must be included in the Digital Transformation

**Digitalisation is all-pervasive:** it changes all aspects of the way people work and live, so should be managed accordingly with *due diligence*. It cannot be left to chance or to employers/management, however well intentioned they may be.

### What doesn't work and leads to a bad outcome for workers:

- management creating plans to implement digitalisation in the organisation (**top-down approach**)
- Forced (e.g. Covid) or purely technology driven change (**reactive**)

### What does work and leads to a good outcome for workers:

- worker involvement from the start (**integral approach**)
- vision led change, with a specific vision for each sector or organisation created together with workers (**proactive**)

Now, in the early '20s, the digitalisation train has left the station so to speak, and is picking up speed rapidly. This has created great pressure on organisations, both profit and non-profit, to fundamentally change the way they work, as well as to change the products and services they deliver. And to keep on doing that. Again and again.

Businesses need to keep up with digitalisation in order to stay in business, to survive and thrive. For public sector organisations it is a prerequisite to stay relevant for the public, citizens and businesses alike. This has made digitalisation an existential issue: a fundamental threat to some, the opportunity of a lifetime to others.

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*Beware that technology can overpromise and underdeliver, especially in situations with a lot of uncertainties. So don't just implement everything that's technologically possible.<sup>1</sup>*

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To secure a social and just outcome of digitalisation, to make it work for citizens, workers and businesses alike, a pro-active involvement of governments and trade unions is needed. Kevin Kelly<sup>2</sup> coined the idea that technology has a mind of its own and that there is a risk attached to doing what technology wants, to passively follow what's technologically possible. Left to its own devices, the digitalisation train might go in a direction that is not beneficial to the whole of society. So the challenge we're facing today is making sure the outcome of digitalisation is fair and just.

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<sup>1</sup> Better Leadership, *How to prevent policy blindness in a complex world*, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Kevin Kelly, *What technology wants*, 2010.

## Digitalisation of Public Services

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*“There is no doubt that the computer has been and will continue to be advantageous to large-scale organisations. (...) But to what extent has computer technology been an advantage to the masses of people? (...) These people have had their private matters made more accessible to powerful institutions. They are more easily tracked and controlled; they are subjected to more examinations, and are increasingly mystified by the decisions made about them. They are more than ever reduced to mere numerical objects.”<sup>3</sup>*

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Enthusiasm to introduce new digital technologies within the public sector already existed throughout the 1990s. With the dawn of the digital age, bureaucratic and inert public sector institutions became less and less capable to meet the expectation of citizens to receive more effective, efficient and better public services. Therefore, the public sector resorted to the adoption of ICT that could transform organisational structures, documents, service provision, policy and governance systems with a view to meet these needs of citizens.

It is expected that digitalisation can make public sector institutions more cost-efficient, effective and transparent in service delivery, making the service provision more citizen-centric, as well as supporting public decision-making, improving trust in government and eventually contributing to better quality of life for citizens.<sup>4</sup>



### Why this is Trade Union involvement in the Digitalisation of Public Services so important?

Public administrations carry a large scale societal responsibility. **Digitalisation will transform the way citizens and businesses interact with governments** to obtain public services. **As well as transforming the services themselves:** digitalised services will become the norm.

**Balancing power** between 'the system' and the (vulnerable) individual workers, citizens and businesses will be more important than ever to keep Europe safe, social and economically healthy (*self-sustaining, agile & resilient*). Securing this balance is exactly what Trade Unions were founded for in the first place.

With the increased pressure to stay relevant by delivering new and improved services to the public, we are seeing that governments are moving from targeted e-government projects towards a 'whole-of-government' approach, which means that all government services are provided in a more integrated way and facilitated by digital technologies.

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<sup>3</sup> Neil Postman, *Five things we need to know about technological change*, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Visionary Analytics, *DiWork Final Report*, 2022.



The shift goes beyond digitalisation of services and includes improving internal processes, structures and working practices in the organisation. This integral approach to digitalisation makes it even more important to adequately balance the power between the individual, both as a worker and a citizen, and the system.

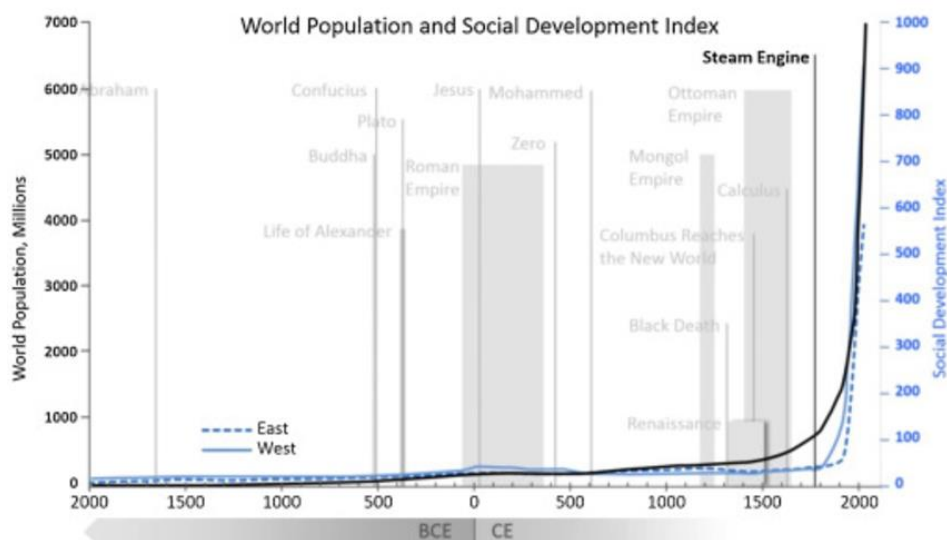
Public services form the backbone of a fair and well-functioning society, so their digitalisation should be approached with even more due diligence than those of a commercial enterprise. Possible negative side-effects of digitalisation should be carefully considered and addressed.

As the inevitable downsides of technology are not always acknowledged by administrators, especially if they are of the technocratic variety whose prime focus is on gathering ever more technology, information and control, trade unions in the public sector can play an important corrective and countervailing role to ensure that the digitalisation of public services is and will remain human centered.

# Change Management

*Change management is an enabling framework for managing the people side of change.*

We are living in era of unprecedented and relentless change. Although that has been said many times before in history, the Social Development Index<sup>5</sup> shows that this time it is actually true. To put the Social Development graph (below) into perspective: *a child born today will witness a greater social development in its lifetime than the whole of humanity has since its beginning up to now.* This is so extreme, that it's hard to imagine, let alone to predict, what our world will look like just a decade or two from now.



Having to adapt to continuous and ever faster change isn't easy for people and organisations alike. It generates a lot of anxiety and fear which can be both justified and unfounded. This makes change often quite uncomfortable, leading to resistance in ourselves and others, even when the need to move on is clear. So, it's important to understand how people are feeling, and why, as they approach change. If you can guide them through it skilfully and compassionately, they will likely – eventually – accept and support it. Change Management helps you achieve this.

In order to maintain efficiency, relevance and sustainability, all organisations must be proactive, instead of reactive with regards of implementation of changes. But a lot of them have no awareness of, or strategic approach to, change management at all; they either talk about a change too much (or not at all), just make the change, and hope for the best — treating a change as an event instead of an ongoing, everlasting process. The main problem is then that changes are not approached systemically or holistically by means of a change management plan.

<sup>5</sup> Ian Morris, Social Development Index in: *Why the West rules - for now*, 2010.



## The added value of managing change

**When workers actively participate in a change initiative, the effort is 3x more effective, the implementation planning 10x more effective<sup>1</sup>.**

**Without Change Management**  
employees feel surprised and intimidated by change

- Failed project results
- Extended project timelines
- Additional project costs
- Low adoption and usage

**With Change Management**  
employees feel prepared, equipped and supported

- 6x more likely to meet objectives
- 5x more likely to stay on schedule
- 2x more likely to stay on budget
- People-dependent results achieved

<sup>1</sup> CEB Making Change Management Work, Survey, 2016.

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*Sixty-five percent (65%) of employees agree or strongly agree that if leaders had more empathy it would be easier to buy into – and attempt to – change.<sup>6</sup>*

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Digital tools alone cannot enable an organisation to achieve large-scale, sustainable change. Also, traditional foundational approach to change management is no longer sufficient. According to the Boston Consulting Group<sup>7</sup> there are four imperatives in change management in our era of always-on transformation:

1. Leaders must be personally engaged
2. Change must happen faster
3. Employees must be included
4. New behaviours must be ingrained (in the people and the organisation)

The two combined, digital tools plus an empathic, contemporary approach to change management, create a powerful and holistic way for change leaders to articulate, plan and implement the results of the desired change.

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<sup>6</sup> Institute for Health and Human Potential, *All change is personal*, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Boston Consulting Group, *Is your change management approach keeping pace with digital?*, 2018.

# Change Management for Digital Transformation

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*“Employees must be included. (...) They crave transparency and collaboration, want their voices to be heard and want to be engaged in meaningful work. (...) When employees actively participated in planning a change initiative, the effort was 3 times as effective - and implementation planning was 10 times as effective – as initiatives developed solely by leaders.”<sup>8</sup>*

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Technology and large scale changes have a huge impact on every aspect of life and work, with no exception to public services which face big cultural, demographic and especially technological shifts. Digitalisation introduces complexity and 74% of the managers thinks that this added complexity is currently hurting performance<sup>9</sup>. Change management should not add to this complexity but must lead to simplified structures, processes, activities and decision making.



## Why Trade Unions have to learn to master change management for digitalisation

To be able to **proactively** protect workers' interests and stay relevant in the Digital Age of continuous change.

- Digitalisation leads to **a radical transformation of organisational culture**, requiring much more than workers having to learn some new skills.
- Trade unions will have to **change themselves to stay relevant** for a new generations of workers in a transformed society.
- In a world of relentless change, **change management** has become **a crucial competence** in every organisation and for every **leader** including trade unions.
- **Understanding the change management process** helps to make trade unions' interventions more effective. It helps **keeping oversight** and **partner as an equal** with organisational leadership.

In his 1996 publication *Leading Change* John Kotter mentions that 70% of change programs fail. In 2008 a McKinsey survey showed that only one transformation in three actually succeeds and thus two thirds fail. When viewing digitalisation as the transformation that it is, it becomes clear that change management isn't a luxury, it is a must. From a change management perspective it is important to understand where hesitance, resistance and sometimes even dismissal towards digital technology comes from. When workers feel voiceless, and or powerless, their brain goes into overdrive, moving to defend and protect<sup>10</sup>. Fear takes over and the desired change is then experienced as an existential threat.

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<sup>8</sup> Boston Consulting Group, *Is your change management approach keeping pace with digital?*, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Boston Consulting Group, *Is your change management approach keeping pace with digital?*, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Institute for Health and Human Potential, *All change is personal*, 2009.

When discussing the far-reaching digitalisation of work and public services you can thus count on a substantial part of the workforce to have negative feelings about this change. In order to adequately deal with this, to address the fear which is both rational and irrational, it is important to understand where it comes from, to take it seriously and to factor it in in your change management plan. Remember, the desired change isn't something to push through top-down, but to create together with the workers. To be able to do this professionally has become a key competence for leaders in the public service.

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*The central role of workers is often downplayed in the process of digitalisation, as their needs and interests are rarely reflected in how the digital tools are designed and implemented in workplaces.<sup>11</sup>*

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In her report *Competencies necessary for eGovernment*<sup>12</sup> Maria Christina Pantiru highlights the importance of leadership and change management programs and workshops for digitalisation in public administrations. From her analysis it is clear that change management should be one of the core competencies of leaders. As the benefits and blessings of digitalisation are communicated pretty much continuously, leaders and trade unionists have to give some thought on the risks and the negatives (for an overview see: [DiWork Final Report](#)).

Because digitalisation has changed our lives so fast and so completely, people can feel overwhelmed and long back to a time when the world was much more predictable and slow. Psychologist and science writer Richard de Grandpre summed it up in this sentence: "*Feeling oh so analogue in an all-to-digital age*<sup>13</sup>".

Some other considerations for trade unions regarding possible negative effects of digitalisation as identified by Culture and Communication professor Neil Postman<sup>14</sup> are:

- Technology isn't neutral; it always gives something and takes something away.
- There will always be winners and losers with the introduction of any new technology.
- Digital technology doesn't just add a dimension to the workplace, it changes it fundamentally.

These possible effects should not be used as an excuse to dismiss digitalisation, but should be incorporated and addressed in relevant policies, collective agreements and comprehensive change management plans. Both to ensure a human-centered outcome and to release unfounded fear workers may experience surrounding digitalisation.

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<sup>11</sup> Visionary Analytics, *DiWork executive summary*, 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Maria Cristina Pantiru, *Competencies necessary for eGovernment*, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Richard de Grandpre, *Digitopia: the look of the new digital you*, 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Neil Postman, *Five things we need to know about technological change*, 1998.

## Change Management Models

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*Attaining true adoption of a new technology takes inspiration, hard work, persistence and a solid change management strategy based on tried and tested models.*

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When organisations are implementing an organisation-wide change, such as the digitalisation of its services, it is essential to use a change management strategy to make it a success. Ideally, such a strategy is based on at least one proven model.

The following three models give you a basic insight into what factors should be included into a Change Management plan. They are chosen for ease-of-use and ease-of-understanding. The models each approach organisational change processes from a different angle and combined provide you with a solid foundation from which to conduct your activities as a trade unionist on behalf of your members when it comes to the digitalisation of public services. In other words, change management models provide you with a framework to work from so you don't lose sight of the forest for the trees.

The models incorporated here are:

1. ADKAR model,
2. Transition Adoption Curve, and
3. Bridges Transition Model.

These models are covered in detail in the following pages.

## ADKAR Model

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*Organisational change requires individual change.*

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The ADKAR model is a change management method created by the company Prosci<sup>15</sup> with the objective of guiding organisational changes in the workplace by helping each individual in the organisation make the change. Organisations can use the model at an individual level, so that every worker can go through the steps at their own pace. This can be beneficial because management can find barriers that are keeping some employees from moving through the steps and help them progress, by answering more in-depth questions and providing them with additional assistance.

The acronym ADKAR stands for the five outcomes an individual needs to achieve for a change to be successful: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement. As a process, ADKAR consists of 5 steps:

### **1. Establish AWARENESS of the need for change**

The first step in using the ADKAR model involves building an awareness of the need for change amongst all employees in the organisation. In order for employees to be fully aware of an impending change, they need to know why it's necessary. When they understand that, they may be more likely to become actively aware of the need for change and decide they want to take part.

To make them aware, consider communicating the need from a variety of angles, including using personal stories of the current challenges people are facing in the organisation and how the change would provide solutions to those challenges. In addition, offer an open discussion to all employees so that management can answer any questions they have about it.

Some questions management can ask themselves when forming responses for employees include:

- Why is the change happening now?
- What are some of the risks that could happen if we don't change?

### **2. Create a DESIRE to make the change**

After workers become aware of a change, the next step is to create a desire in them to make the change. Consider seeking one employee from each department to be a change leader. They, as change agents, can show support for the change and speak positively about the benefits workers can expect once the change is in place.

Management can try asking themselves what personal motivators would cause employees to support the change. Once they have answers, they can relay them to

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<sup>15</sup> [www.prosci.com/methodology/adkar](http://www.prosci.com/methodology/adkar)

the change leaders so they can explain that information to their teams to increase a desire for the change.

Organisations may experience resistance from some workers, so it's important that management takes time to consider the reason people are feeling resistant to the change. Once they've developed a list of possible reasons, they can speak with those employees and give them direct responses to their concerns so that they understand the need for the change and begin to feel the desire to implement it personally.

### **3. Offer KNOWLEDGE to help facilitate change**

The third step in the ADKAR model is to provide the necessary training and knowledge to facilitate the change. It's important that management understands how the change is going to affect each team and what knowledge they are going to need to implement it effectively. For example, if an organisation is introducing a new cloud computing system, the IT department is going to focus on learning methods to introduce it to the other departments. The part of the organisation that has direct interaction with the end-user, and thus uses the cloud system in a different capacity, is going to learn how to use the system specifically for their service.

If the impending change involves learning a large amount of information, consider breaking it up into smaller amounts so that employees have the opportunity to learn the information without becoming overwhelmed. Some strategies organisations can use to provide knowledge to their employees include:

- **Self-guided learning:** Self-guided learning allows workers to learn the new material at their own speed and comfort level. Organisations that use this method might consider setting a deadline on when they require employees to complete it to ensure it's done on time.
- **Videos:** Some employees are visual learners and prefer to watch videos showing them how to use the new skills.
- **Blogs:** Some people enjoy learning skills by reading blogs that thoroughly explain the necessary material so they can implement it.

### **4. Make sure employees have the ABILITY to make the change**

After employees have gained the knowledge needed to implement the change, it's important that they have the confidence to follow through with their new abilities on a day-to-day basis. Consider asking the change leaders to work with their departments and coaching their colleagues on the skills they've learned so they feel more confident using them at work.

Teams can practice using the skills in a familiar environment with leaders available to answer questions and help them use them effectively. The leaders can then ask for feedback from their teams and relay that information to management to make adjustments and improvements as needed.



“(...) you probably have experienced a friend or co-worker who struggled to make a change happen, only to find out that no one noticed. In this case, the absence of reinforcement becomes a barrier to sustaining the change.”<sup>16</sup>

## 5. Find ways to REINFORCE the change

The final step in the ADKAR model is ensuring that employees continue using the change once the organisation has implemented it. To ensure that employees are behaving consistent with the transition, consider using some of these reinforcement strategies:

- **Set small goals:** Teams can set goals for themselves and agree on an awards each member gets as they reach their goals.
- **Share successes:** Departments can take a few minutes at the end of each week to discuss some of the personal successes they've had since using their new skills, computer software or whatever the change in place is.
- **Celebrate milestones:** Organisations can celebrate large accomplishments together. They can get everyone together via video chat, town hall or even send an email congratulating one another for goals the organisation has accomplished since making the change.

Overview of the ADKAR model:



These questions have to be answered adequately, in order for change to be a success.

ProSci ADKAR Model: The People Side of Change

An example of the concrete application of the ADKAR model for a digitalisation in the workplace, remote working, can be found in the Appendix.

<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey M. Hiatt, *ADKAR: A Model for Change in Business, Government and our Community*, 2006.

## Relevance to Trade Unions

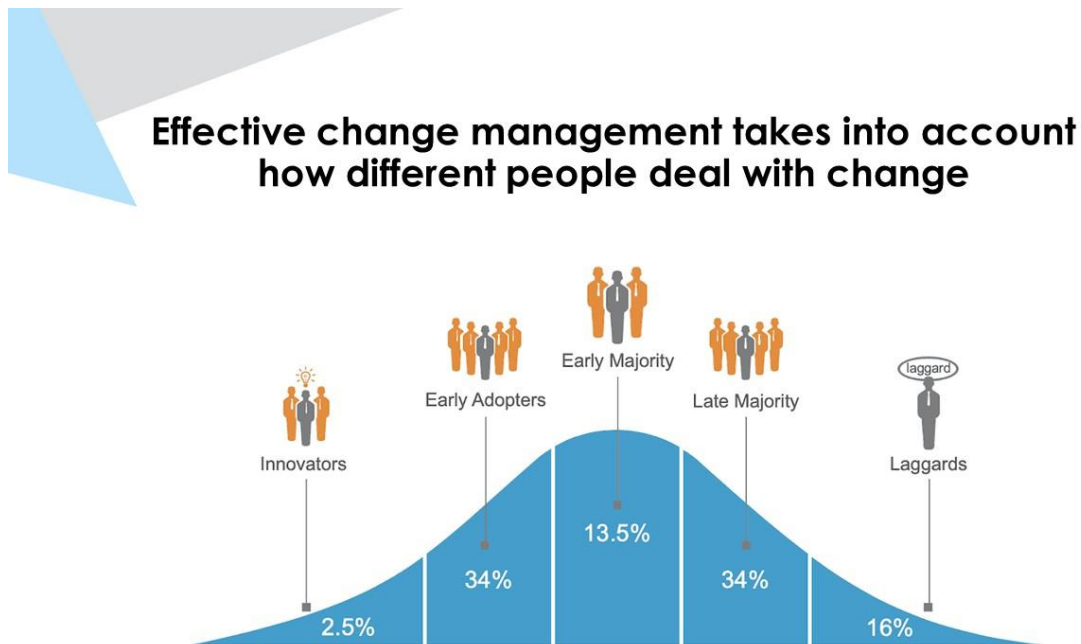
The ADKAR model helps you because:

- It has a **bottom-up approach**: Since the ADKAR model works bottom-up, it focuses on each individual worker to help them willingly make the change. This fits in with the way trade unions work.
- It is **goal-oriented**: The model is goal-oriented, which allows organisations to use it for a variety of changes, both big and small. It helps to not lose oversight when changes are happening on many fronts by using the model for each separate change, for each separate goal.
- It has a **high success rate**: ADKAR focuses on the needs of each worker, which often leads to a higher success rate when implementing a change.
- It highlights where in the change process trade unions can **provide added value** for their members and should **focus** their **interventions**.

## Technology Adoption Curve

“The danger is to cling to comfort and custom at a time when events demand breaking away from both. But it is also foolish to jump at every startling moment. Darwin selects primarily for prudent fast-following.”<sup>17</sup>

What is today known as the Technology Adoption curve was originally created by Everett Rogers as the theory of Diffusion of Innovation<sup>18</sup>. This curve shows how, over time, the use of a new technology gains momentum and spreads through an organisation. The end result of this diffusion is that the workers, as part of the organisation, adopt a new digital technology. Adoption means that workers do something differently than what they did before (i.e. acquire new skills and perform a new behavior). The key to adoption is that the person must perceive the new technology as beneficial. It is through this that diffusion is possible. However, not all people deal with new technology in the same way.



Five distinct groups can be identified and a good change management plan caters for these differences and has different communication strategies for each group:

- **Innovators:** Innovators are workers that are prepared to take a risk with adopting a new technology. They are intrinsically motivated to seek out innovation and are the first to adopt a new technology.
- **Early Adopters:** Early Adopters refers to workers who use a new product, service, or technology before others. Early adopters may take more risk than later adopters but accept this because they want to improve efficiency and

<sup>17</sup> Geoffrey A. Moore, *Crossing the Chasm*, 1991.

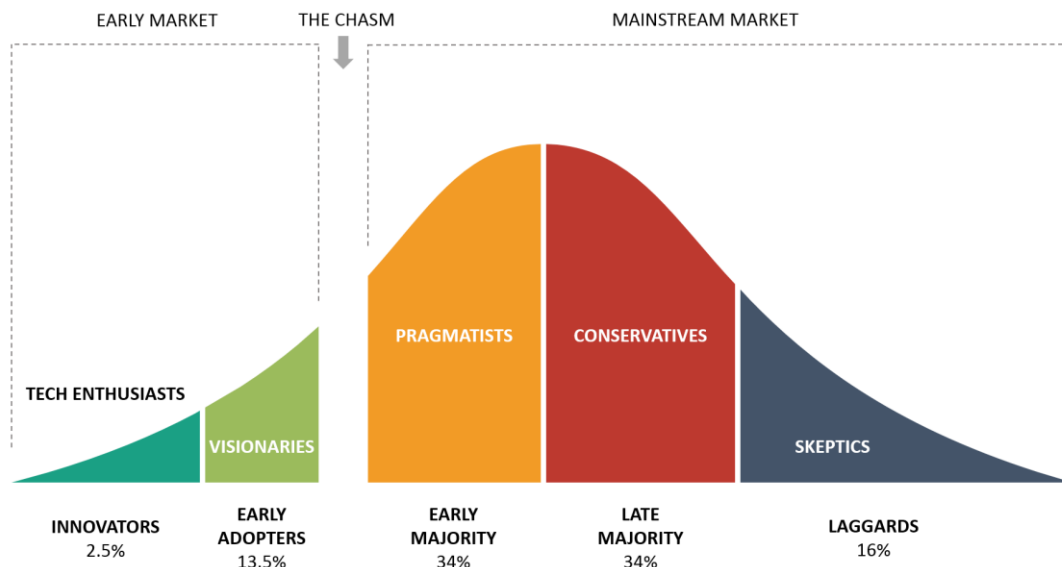
<sup>18</sup> Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovation*, 2003.

the quality of their work, and stay ahead of the curve when it comes to their position in the organisational hierarchy and on the labour market.

- **Early Majority:** The Early Majority are workers who start using a new technology after the innovators and early adopters have proven the benefits.
- **Late Majority:** Late majority is the second to last segment of employees to adopt innovative technology. The Late Majority is typically older, less affluent, and educated than the early segments in the technology adoption lifecycle.
- **Laggards:** Laggards are workers who avoid change and do not adopt new technologies until all traditional alternatives are no longer available. The group is mostly concerned with reliability, low cost, and ease of use.

Apart from obvious personality traits, to what group someone belongs can be influenced by factors such as age, education, social networks, income and lifestyle.

As different people have different propensities to accept a new technology, this results in the adoption of new technology taking time, as it slowly gains momentum. Innovators are most rare since only a few people have the time and enthusiasm to constantly search for the newest thing. Early Adopters are the group that should be 'converted' before the new technology can advance into mainstream adoption. In order to make the digitalisation of a service a success throughout the organisation, *The Chasm* (see below) must be crossed.



19

To cross *The Chasm* it is important to realise that:

- the first two adopter groups are primarily focused on *technology* and *performance*,
- the following groups are more focused on *solutions* and *convenience*.

This should be reflected in how the groups are approached within the change.

<sup>19</sup> Source: <https://whatfix.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Accelerating-the-Product-Adoption-Curve.png>

Three key take-aways from the Technology Adoption Curve:

1. **Every adopter group requires a different approach**, with different messages and sometimes different communication channels.
2. In order to make the digitalisation of a public service a success **The Chasm** within organisations **must be crossed**.
3. **Use each separate group as a base for getting the next** group on board.

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*The biggest problem (with digitalisation) is typically overly ambitious expectations combined with inadequate resources.*

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## Relevance to Trade Unions

The Technology Adoption Curve helps to:

- Identify to what groups their members belong and therefore **better tailor their services and interventions** on behalf of their members.
- Understand **the importance of crossing The Chasm** in order to make digitalisation work.

## Bridges Transition Model

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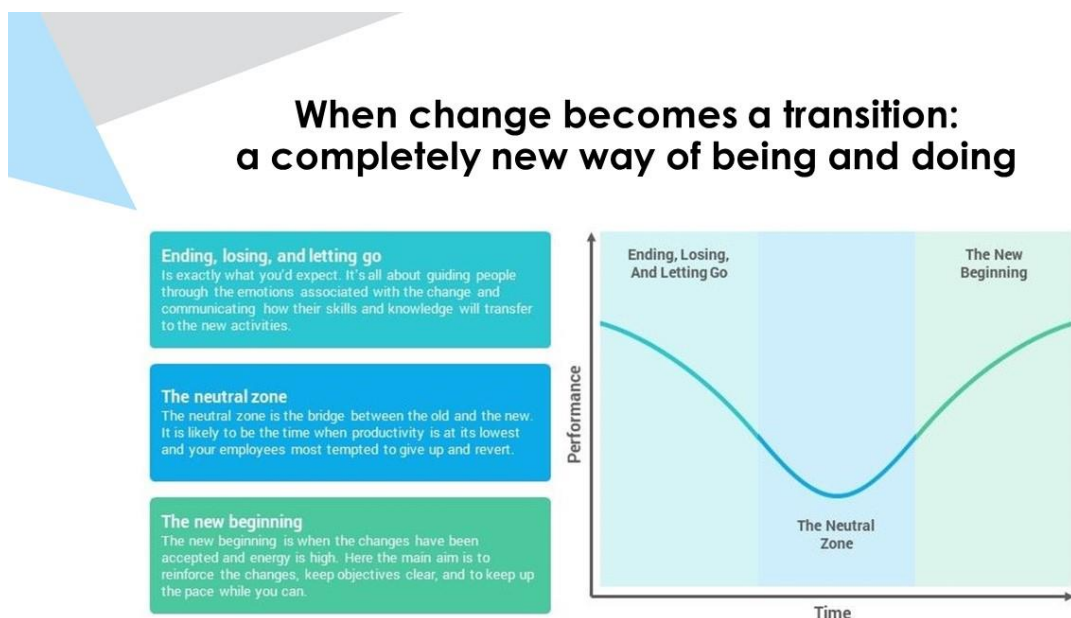
*A transition does not require you to reject or deny the importance of what you did before, just that you let go of it.<sup>20</sup>*

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In his book *Managing Transitions* William Bridges makes a useful distinction between change and transition. He describes change as an external event that happens (e.g. new software being adopted or new services being launched). The actual switching from the old to the new is the 'change'. What people go through personally during this external change is the internal 'transition'.

The transition model is about focusing on the psychological process that people experience during change. In general when a change has a substantial influence on the way people work, the transition process comes into play. Certainly, the digitalisation of work fits the bill, so his model helps to understand and respond to what people are going through 'on the inside' during the digitalisation of a service they have to deliver.

Bridges' transitions theory describes three key stages that people go through and that leaders and change managers need to be aware of so they can successfully move people forward through the change project. If personal feelings of transition aren't addressed, the resistance to change can cause a change project to derail or not produce the desired end result.



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<sup>20</sup> William Bridges, *Managing Transitions: making the most of change*, 2009.

The 3 phases of transition are:

- **Endings (Losing and Letting Go):** Managing transitions during change means understanding that it starts with an end or loss. Employees are saying goodbye to the way things used to be done, a sense of loss which can involve feelings of anger, denial, confusion, and frustration.
  - **Possible feelings:** *Loss/grief, anger, denial, confusion and frustration.*
- **Neutral Zone:** This stage in the Bridges transitions model is when people have managed to let go of negativity with leaving a process behind and are processing new information about the change. This is a time of flux where performance levels are down.
  - **Possible feelings:** *Resistance, anxiety, confusion, excitement, creativity and innovation.*
- **New Beginnings:** This part of the Bridges change model includes the release of power and energy in the new direction. It means cementing new ways of doing things and incorporating those as the new norm.
  - **Possible feelings:** *Relief, uncertainty, exploration and commitment.*

A key takeaway from the Bridges change model is that the starting point for a successful change project should not be the desired outcome of the change, but rather the “saying goodbye” or ending of the old process that people have to address at the beginning of that change.

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*Like all true transitions, the digital transformation of work has to start with an ending.*

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## Relevance to Trade Unions

The transition model helps you:

- **Make a distinction between** the ‘**change**’ part of digitalisation **and** the ‘**transition**’ part. This helps to assess where the digitalisation process is on course and where it falls short.
- **Assess transition readiness** with an assessment (see: [Managing Transitions Appendix A](#)).
- **Monitor the progress of the workforce** as they go through the three stages of transition via consultations.
- **Prevent negative consequences** for workers because of a temporary reduction of performance (during the neutral stage) by communicating with the employer/management that this is normal and to be expected.

## DiWork sessions: observations and recommendations

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*Regular ongoing member consultations are a must when it comes to digitalisation.*

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As part of the DiWork project some 18 sessions were planned in member states, as well as with expert commissions. During these sessions several observations were made, success factors and best practices discussed.

An overview:

- **Focus on low-hanging fruit:** easily generated concrete evidence that the digitalisation produces positive results for the workers generates confidence in the process and motivates them to further go along the path of change.
- **Always remember change management for digitalisation's Big Five:** skills, equipment/facilities, communication, culture and leadership.
- **Use young tech-savvy workers as change agents:** young innovators and early adopters can coach older colleagues in working with new digital systems. This not only promotes the diffusion of digitalisation in the organisation, it impacts organisational culture in a positive way. This can also be structured in the form of workshops and seminars.

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*Conduct surveys of workers or organise discussions where they can share their experiences with digital tools, and how it impacts them on a daily basis. This allows trade unions to hear first-hand experiences and learn more about how digitalisation of workplaces look in practice. Such discussions could also involve employers.<sup>21</sup>*

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- **Get the basics in order:** before you can really capitalise on the digitalisation of public services, basic digital skills, basic technological equipment (e.g. network, laptops, home office), salary and basic work arrangements have to be in order.
- **Set the example as a trade union:** embrace digitalisation within a larger change process to keep trade unions themselves relevant for new generations of workers. Having actual experience with the digitalisation of your own services and your own organisation, makes you an authority on the subject. This also strengthens your negotiation position.
- **Prioritise digitalisation, keep it on the agenda:** when society is going from crisis to crisis (e.g. Covid, Ukraine and inflation) it is easy to let digitalisation slip out of your focus. But because it is so all-pervasive and defining, it must be kept on the agenda. Although not always urgent, digitalisation will remain extremely important to the work of trade unions.

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<sup>21</sup> Visionary Analytics, *DiWork Executive Summary*, 2022.



- **Continuously communicate with your members and their organisations from a change management framework:** all trade union activities regarding digitalisation should be ongoing, structured and cohesive. This way you keep oversight and stay in control.
- **Facilitate your members:** with training, information(days), mutual exchanges, forums, etc. based on their needs as established through your consultations.
- **Urge for adequate allocation of resources:** without substantial investments (e.g in equipment, basic digital skills and IT specialists) the digital transformation is bound to fail.
- **Strive to keep work joyful, rewarding and humane:** immersion in digital technology sometimes creates the assumption that ideally workers act like cogs in a machine: rational, objective, interchangeable, predictable and programmable. However, we humans have the unique capacity to experience things subjectively and as a whole, unified in all their physical, emotional, mental and moral elements. We thrive on substance, meaning, creativity and love. That is what makes us human and what should be preserved in a digitalised workplace.



## Research-backed digitalisation success factors

**Organisational adaptability is more important than having the right tools.**

- **Company culture and leadership** are #1 and #2.
- **Active support of top management:** setting the example each and every day.
- **Communication plan:** communication is a 2-way street. Don't forget to listen.
- Choose the right **change agents** to drive the change from the start: #GoTeam.
- Identify and train the right **change ambassadors** to set a positive peer example for the (early and late) majority.
- Make the change **relevant and desirable** at the **individual level**.
- **Communicate change:** especially by SG/CEO and direct supervisor/manager
- **Keep communicating,** keep checking in how people are doing **and give it time.**

## Articles and Videos

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For more explanation and background information on the main topics of this reader, you can check out the following articles (link to PDF) and videos (link to YouTube).

Please note: This is just a small selection and consider this an invitation to search further for what is applicable in your specific situation and what resonates with you.

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### Articles

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Is your Change Management approach keeping pace with the digital?

- Boston Consulting Group, 2018.

Making Change Management Work

- CEB, 2016.

All change is personal: Why most change efforts fail and what to do about it

- Institute for Health and Human Potential, 2009.

Change Management and Digital Age Training

- V. Terziev et al in: International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences, 2020.

Competencies necessary for eGovernment

- Maria Cristina Pantiru, National Agency of Civil Servants, Romania, 2019.

Five things we need to know about technological change

- A talk by Neil Postman delivered in Denver Colorado (US), 1998.

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### Videos

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Why people are crucial in digital transformation – Claudia Crumenerl (Cap Gemini)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMwVFEKt100> (English, generated subtitles)

The Adkar Model – An interview with Tim Creasy (Prosci)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_7I03LOyyk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_7I03LOyyk) (English, generated subtitles)

The Technology Adoption Curve – An animated video on the diffusion of innovations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QnfWhtujPA> (English, generated subtitles)

Managing Transitions – An animated video on the Bridges transition model of change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Gm9bEGp4mY> (English, generated subtitles)

Empowering Internal Change Agents – An interview with Michele Buck (CEO Herschey)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zj\\_mV-aegg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zj_mV-aegg) (English, generated subtitles)

Technopoly, the surrender of culture to technology – an interview with Neil Postman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbAPtGYiRvg> (English, generated subtitles)

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## Appendix: Applying the ADKAR model to remote working

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The ADKAR model can be used to guide workers through a digitalisation process. The following quick-start guide gives you a concrete example of how you can apply the ADKAR model to help workers excel at remote working. In similar vein, other changes regarding digitalisation at work can also be structured and managed using the ADKAR model.

*Please note:* This quick-start guide is shared with kind permission of [Prosci](#) to CESI for the DiWork project and may not be shared for other purposes or projects. Thank you.

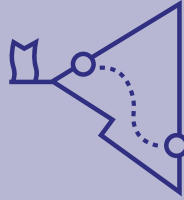
# Quick-Start Guide for Applying ADKAR® to Today's Change Challenges

The adoption challenge: to help your employees excel as remote contributors

What are the biggest restraining forces you anticipate?



How might we overcome these restraining forces?



A	D	K	A	R
<p><b>"This is temporary... why should I put so much effort into it?"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misinformation</li> <li>Distractions and information overload</li> <li>Uncertainty of change and duration</li> <li>Fear – loss of job, loss of influence</li> <li>Lack of trust in leadership</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Concern over job security"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fear of unknown future state – loss of salary/job, isolation, the unknown</li> <li>Disruptive home environment – kids, spouse, caregiver, etc.</li> <li>Disconnection from coworkers and office</li> <li>Anxiety around 'new normal'</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Not trained in online tools and resources to complete online work"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of technology learning resources</li> <li>No time to learn technology</li> <li>Inadequate technology solution</li> <li>Overwhelming workload</li> <li>Information overload</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Not having resources at home that they have in the office"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disruptive environment at home</li> <li>Network connection/bandwidth</li> <li>Technology or tool limitations</li> <li>Change saturation and unmanageable workload</li> </ol>	<p><b>"No recognition for hard work since they are not 'seen'"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of recognition</li> <li>Lack of visibility of accomplishments</li> <li>Lack of budget or funds</li> <li>No certainty of 'finish line'</li> <li>Lack of standardized work/routine</li> </ol>
<p><b>"Frequent communication from trusted executives"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective and consistent leadership communication</li> <li>Regular individual and team check-ins</li> <li>Consistent cadence of consolidated/aligned information</li> <li>Transparent thinking/plans shared conversationally</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Reiterate what is known and give them a sense of control and stability in the workplace"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver more frequent communications</li> <li>Increase number of connections – preferably face-to-face video</li> <li>Enable flexibility of work hours, tasks, or methods</li> <li>Establish mechanism to frequently review and adapt</li> <li>Recognize individuals in new ways</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Share 'work-remote' tips and tricks with coworkers/teams"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual training</li> <li>Resource library for just-in-time learning</li> <li>Access to 1:1 support or coaching</li> <li>Practical guidance</li> <li>Prioritized time for learning</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Converge and focus on few but impactful targets"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add structure through to-do lists and task planning</li> <li>Set a routine and plan your day</li> <li>Practice patience, empathy and understanding</li> <li>Provide coaching on technology</li> </ol>	<p><b>"Recognize positive contribution"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share success stories</li> <li>Offer recognition and appreciation – by peers and leadership</li> <li>Increase 1:1 connections</li> <li>Provide virtual rewards</li> </ol>