What is Readiness

Readiness is how organizational members collectively feel about a change effort, specifically:

- o Shared resolve to stay the course and implement change (**change commitment**) – "heart"
- o Shared belief in ability to do so (**change efficacy**) – "mind"

Why Readiness Matters

- o When organizational partners, staff, and others are ready, they exhibit greater persistence, effort, and cooperation, leading to more effective change.
- o Lower readiness results in misunderstood, slowed, or failed efforts; some suggest that up to ½ of failed efforts are due to lack of readiness. "Resistance" is often not resistance, but lack of readiness.

> **MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IS COMPLEX**
> *Readiness is an important place to start*

How Readiness Fits Into the Bigger Picture of Creating Successful Change

- o Level of initial readiness is informed by several factors, like whether the individual believes the change will be positive, is clear on their role in supporting the change, as well as organizational factors like whether the organization has what it needs to make the change, its prior history with change, and general culture and climate.
- o Readiness is important, but just one piece of the puzzle. You must have readiness (psychological commitment to and belief in the ability to create the change) and capacity (organizational resources and abilities) to make change happen.
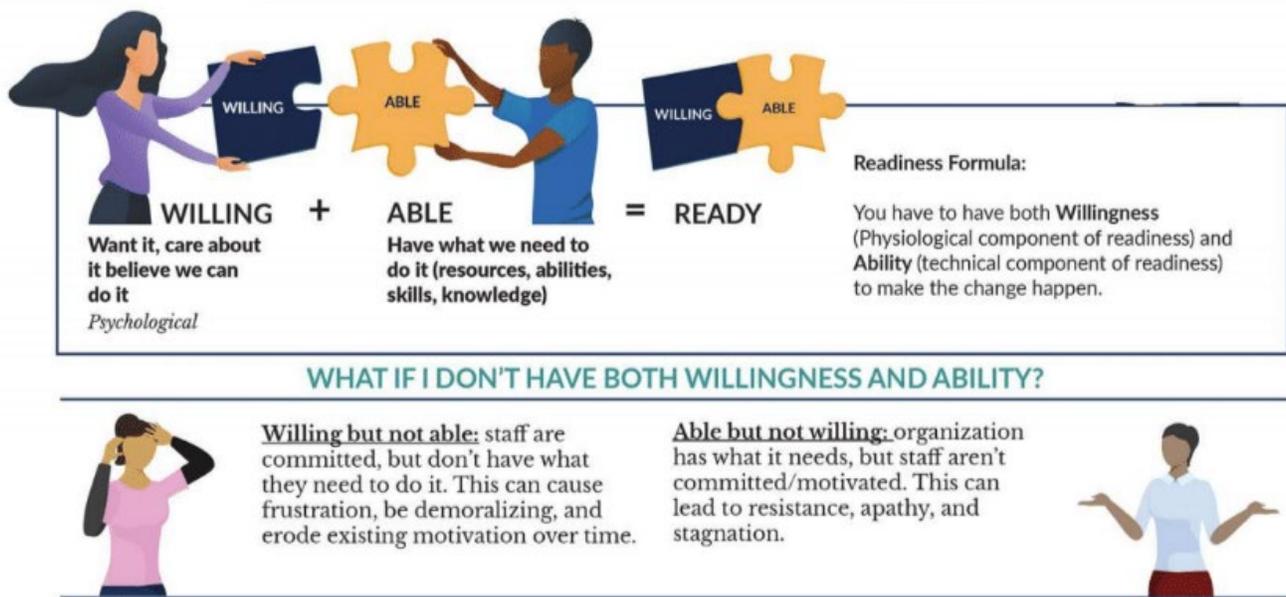

WHAT SHAPES HOW READY PEOPLE FEEL?

Past history | Incentives to do it | Organizational culture | Do I value this? | Do we have what we need to do it? | Do I know my role? | Am I clear on what "it" is?

Principles of Readiness

- o **Readiness is not an "end state"**
  You don't "get ready" and stay there. Readiness is always changing, based on organizational and environmental changes.
- o **Readiness varies**
  Readiness can vary at different levels of the organization (leaders/managers vs. frontline staff) and different parts of the organization (one department vs. another).
- o **Readiness must be actively nurtured**
  Must actively attend to readiness by creating a positive environment for change. Leadership is key to this piece of the puzzle!
- o **Assess and attend to readiness first**
  Readiness is a critical first step in your change journey. Assess your level of readiness and attend to it before thinking about what else it takes to roll out your change.

WILLING + ABLE = READY

WILLING
Want it, care about it believe we can do it
Psychological

ABLE
Have what we need to do it (resources, abilities, skills, knowledge)

Readiness Formula:
You have to have both **Willingness** (Physiological component of readiness) and **Ability** (technical component of readiness) to make the change happen.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE BOTH WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY?

Willing but not able: staff are committed, but don't have what they need to do it. This can cause frustration, be demoralizing, and erode existing motivation over time.

Able but not willing: organization has what it needs, but staff aren't committed/motivated. This can lead to resistance, apathy, and stagnation.

How Leaders Can Nurture Readiness

1. **Ask:** Start by listening to staff – see what they think about the change and what concerns they might have
2. **Make It Clear, Be Consistent**: Early on, set and share a clear vision for the change – why are we doing this, what is everyone's role in this. Be consistent with messaging to avoid confusion
3. **Support:** Actively show commitment to the change by "showing up" to address change -- removing barriers, allocating resources, stating verbal commitment, and showing up alongside staff to be part of the change
4. **Reward:** Rewards don't always have to be financial – specific behavioral praise is a great motivator; recognize staff as they start changing behavior
5. **Tie It Back:** Remember the pieces of readiness – commitment/motivation and belief in abilities. Your efforts should center on building resolve that the change is important and confidence that the change is do-able

References: Weiner, Bryan J. "A theory of organizational readiness for change." Implementation science 4.1 (2009): 67; Shea, Christopher M., et al. "Organizational readiness for implementing change: a psychometric assessment of a new measure." Implementation Science 9.1 (2014): 7.

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