

supervisor tools

Helping Employees Through Transitions



Stage One: Denial

This stage is characterized by feelings of numbness and disbelief. People tend to focus on the way things were. Managers can help by:

- Giving employees time to let the effect of the change sink in
- Building awareness about the change:
 - Clear, accurate, frequent communication
 - Face-to-face communication whenever possible
- Making realistic expectations about job performance; productivity may be affected until employees adjust to the change.

Stage Two: Endings

This stage is characterized by anger, depression, grief and feelings of loss. Managers can help by:

- Being open and willing to listen; you don't have to "fix" anything
- Giving employees permission to vent negative feelings
- Creating opportunities for employees to say goodbye to the old ways.

Stage Three: Neutral Zone

This stage is characterized by questioning, searching, challenging and creating. Managers can help by:

- Giving employees a "map" and a sense of direction about what they can expect, as well as how they might respond most effectively to new challenges
- Allowing time for exploration and questioning
- Creating common experiences for employees to participate in the decision-making process to regain their sense of control, commitment, connections and challenge.

Stage Four: New Beginnings

This stage is characterized by new beginnings and a focus on action plans and team building. Managers can help by:

- Keeping promises
- Keeping communication lines open
- Keeping employees involved in decision-making.

