Is Your Organization Ready to Change?

A useful insight from the field of health promotion is the importance of a person's readiness to make changes in their health-related attitudes and behaviors. A person's readiness to change determines what will be realistic goals and timelines for them – and whether they stand a chance of making any progress at all. Readiness is assessed by past actions, knowledge, and awareness about change benefits, and the motivation to adopt new lifestyle practices.

Organizations also can be assessed for their readiness to change in a healthy direction. First develop a vision that you and your coworkers would like to see your organization achieve. Today, this vision could outline the kind of vibrant and productive workplace you want to create post-pandemic.

Once you have a healthy organization vision that sets out your shared aspirations for how the organization can improve, use that vision to assess to what extent the important components of your organization are "ready" to support or enable changes in the direction of the vision. As a start, use the **Change Readiness Checklist** on the next page to assess key organizational features, rating each using the following four criteria:

1. A current or potential source of **resistance** to introducing changes to realize your healthy organization vision.
2. A source of **inertia** created by the weight of tradition and/or indifference that will have to be overcome.
3. Ready to be tapped as an actual or potential **capacity** for healthy change.
4. Already generating **momentum** for healthy improvements in the work environment, the culture, or organizational systems.

Whatever your organization's readiness profile, the objective is to leverage the sources of capacity and momentum, find ways to reduce resistance, and break free of the inertia. And for those factors you assessed as either sources of resistance or inertia, think about what you and other change agents can do to move the factor to a state of readiness or momentum.

Conducting this change readiness assessment should be an early step in planning a healthy workplace / post-pandemic recovery strategy. Tailor the change strategy to fit the picture that emerges.

For more on designing a healthy change process for your organizations, see the Healthy Change chapter in my book, [Creating Healthy Organizations: Taking Action to Improve Employee Well-Being](#).

Change Readiness Checklist

	Check ✓ to indicate if the feature is a source of …			
	Resistance	**Inertia**	**Capacity**	**Momentum**
ORGANIZATIONAL FEATURE				
Culture				
Senior leadership				
Line managers and supervisors				
Mission and strategic plan				
Your team or coworkers				
Existing wellness and OHS programs				
Employee assistance program (EAP)				
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy				
Support for ongoing learning and development				
Quality improvement initiatives				
HR, OHS, OD, CSR, and wellness professionals				
Systems for communicating with employees and managers				
Union leadership (if applicable)				
Relationships with external health promotion, OHS, and other community partners				
Anything else about the organization's current state you deem relevant				