



McMaster University

Mosaic

Tips on understanding and dealing with resistance to change seen in meetings / design sessions

February 2013

Introduction

- This deck is intended to help project team members
 - Know how to approach a conversation where there is resistance to help you to a positive outcome
 - Understand the types of resistance that you may face in meetings and interactions with people about the project
 - Recognize some typical (not ideal) responses to resistance to avoid
- If you have any questions about this topic or anything else related to change management, please contact the Mosaic Change Management Team

Reminder: Golden Rules for Dealing with Resistance

Maintain Clear Focus

- Keep both the long term and short term goal in mind
- Don't forget you're trying to build support
- Tell the truth
- Tell people "what is in it for them"

Don't Get Too Far Ahead

- Involve people early to go through the cycle together
- Explore and understand the underlying resistance
- Gather as much information as you can

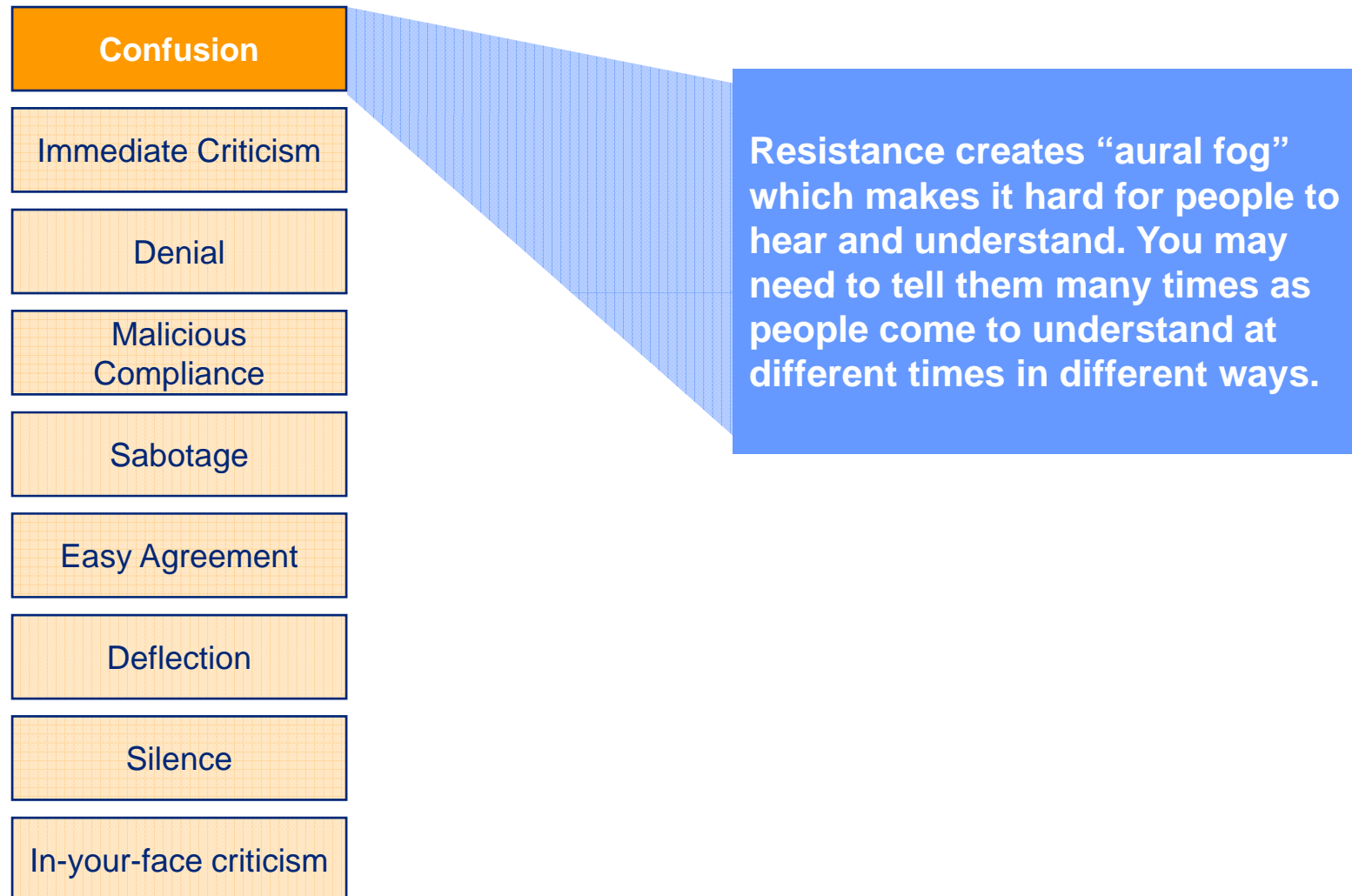
Respect Those Who Resist

- Assume they mean well, even though they disagree
- Take them seriously; Listen intently with an open mind
- Try to see the world through their eyes

Create a Win – Win Situation

- Find ways to join interests
- Rise above the zero-sum game
- Then you can respond and find a win - win solution

Types of Resistance Seen in Meetings



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- Confusion
- Immediate Criticism**
- Denial
- Malicious Compliance
- Sabotage
- Easy Agreement
- Deflection
- Silence
- In-your-face criticism

Disapproval is expressed even before they've heard the details. Perhaps they have been burned before and are protecting themselves.

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People put their heads in the sand. They refuse to listen, to look at the evidence or to acknowledge its meaning.

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They don't appear to resist, and go through the motions of supporting the change, but later you find they are dragging their feet.

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There may be active attempts to hinder the change technologically or perhaps politically. At least this is easy to spot.

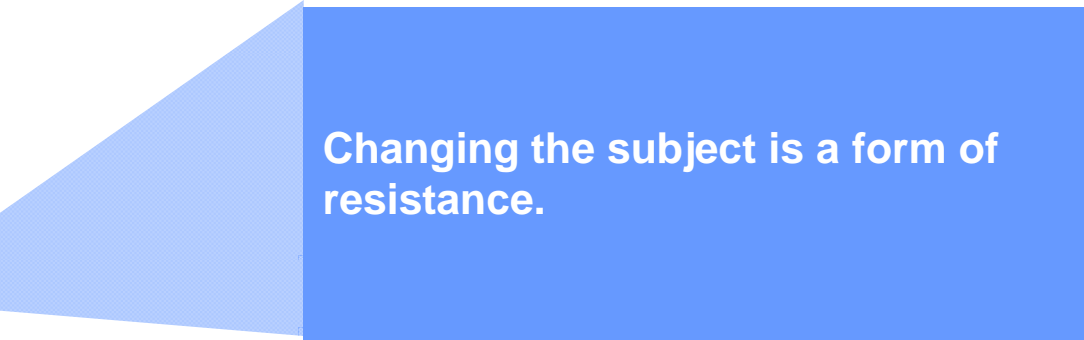
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They appear to agree with little criticism or even wild applause. But they haven't really understood and digested the implications. This just saves up trouble for later.

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Changing the subject is a form of resistance.

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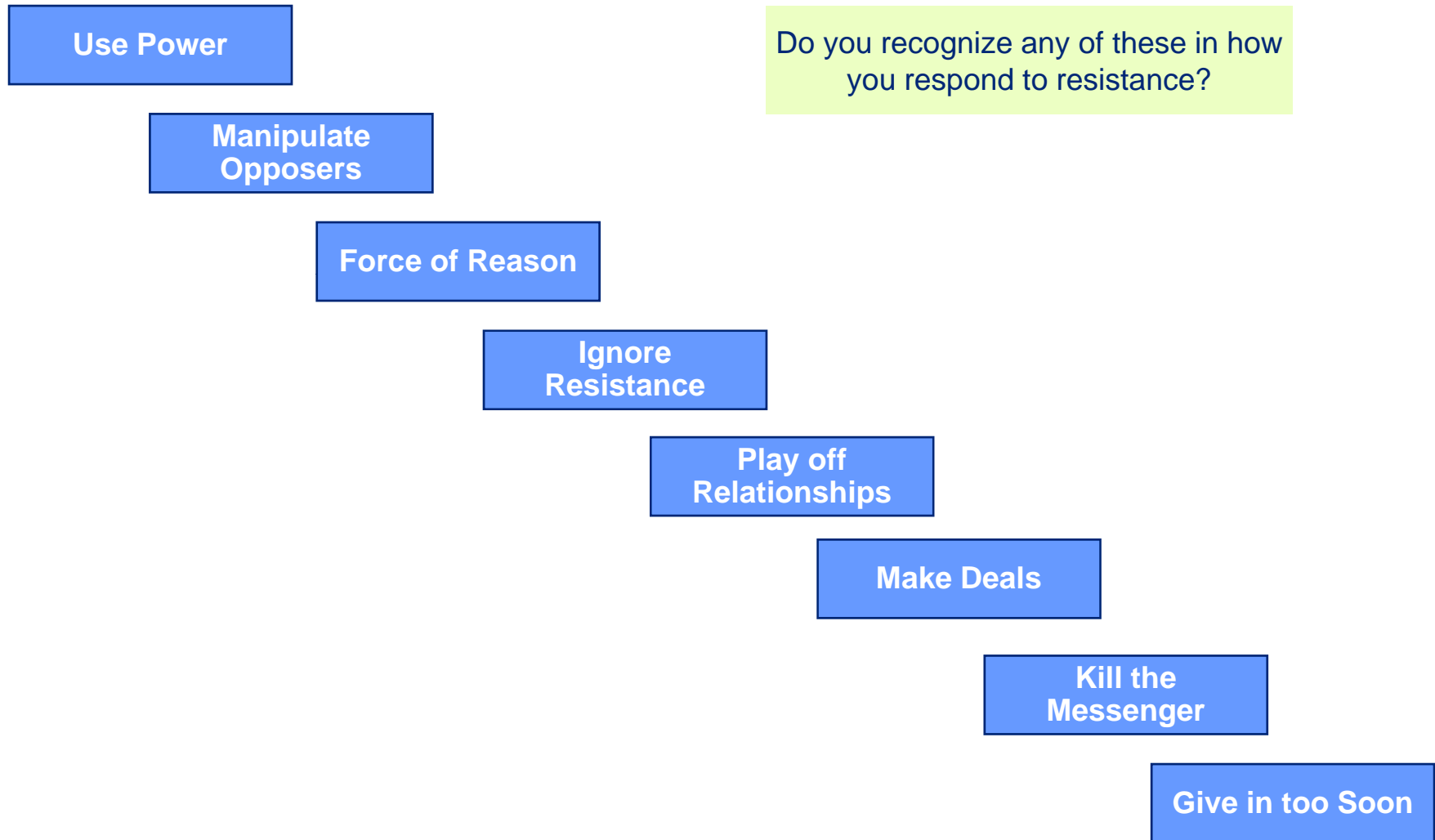
People give no hint of what they think but you can't assume silence implies agreement. This is a difficult form of resistance as it gives you little to work with.

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People tell you what they think. Though we may find them difficult, impolite, and so forth, these are the people who are telling the truth as they see it. It's important not to ignore or attack them. They may be saying what others want to say and you can learn a lot from what they have to say.

How do we typically respond to resistance?



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