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Resistance is futile

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Resistance is Futile: Does Resistance to Change Subside in Response to a Vivid Depiction of the Future?

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Abstract

Partly because employees often seem to resist changes, many workplace changes do not generate the benefits that managers anticipated. To offset this impediment, this study invokes expectancy theory to uncover, and then to examine, three antecedents to this apparent resistance that can be modified while implementing changes: future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning in life. Specifically, 207 participants completed a questionnaire that comprises a validated measure of resistance to change and these three antecedents. As hypothesized, future clarity and meaning in life were inversely associated with resistance to change. However, future self-continuity, or the extent to which individuals feel their identity will persist in the future, was positively associated with resistance to change. Thus practices or procedures that increase the extent to which the workplace vision is vivid to employees should contain resistance to change.

Keywords: anxiety; future aspirations; goal setting; resistance to change; meaning in life; mental imagery; self-continuity; strategic change; workplace change.

Introduction

Employees often dismiss, rather than embrace, the changes that managers announce (Erwin & Garman, 2010). Sometimes, this reaction of employees could be ascribed to unfeasible plans (Alexander, 1985), limited consultation (Raps, 2004), or a host of other management oversights (Hrebiniak, 2006, 2008). Yet, on some occasions, this reaction could manifest a reluctance in employees to shift their existing routines and practices—even if these changes could benefit both themselves and the organization in the future (Oreg, 2003)

In recent decades, to redress this issue, researchers have begun to explore the antecedents of both openness and resistance to change. Nevertheless, many determinants of openness to change, such as age (Kunze, Boehm, & Bruch, 2013), cannot be redressed. Most of the other determinants of openness to change, such as resilience (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), may demand weeks, months, or even years of intervention to cultivate. Indeed, some researchers contend that mood and resilience cannot improve sustainably over time (Cummins, 2010).

The aim of this study was to uncover modifiable antecedents of openness to change—antecedents that can be modified during the implementation of a particular workplace change. In particular, this study tested three characteristics, derived from expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), that might foster openness to change: future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning in life. Figure 1 outlines the theoretical model that underpins this study.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Resistance and Reluctance to Change

Managers frequently bemoan the challenges they experience, and the obstacles they must overcome, while they strive to introduce changes to the workplace. These hurdles and impediments now infuse the folklore of management discourse. One study, comprising interviews with over 1500 executives, revealed that less than 40% of the changes to workplaces, from procedural improvements to strategic transformations, were deemed

successful (cited by Isern & Pung, 2007). Another study estimated this figure was closer to 25% (Franken, Edwards, & Lambert, 2009).

Several researchers have catalogued the gamut of obstacles and hurdles that impede these changes (Getz, Jones, & Loewe, 2009; Hrebiniak, 2006, 2008). These hurdles include implausible targets (Alexander, 1985), insufficient training (Alexander, 1985), limited consultation (Raps, 2004), and inadequate incentives (Freedman, 2003).

Yet, perhaps the most cited hurdle—at least the hurdle that managers lament most often—is the entrenched resistance of individuals to change (Erwin & Garman, 2010; for historical examples, see Coch & French, 1948; Lawrence, 1954). Indeed, many researchers cite a study, conducted by Deloitte and Touche, that culminates with the conclusion that resistance to change is the primary source of failed changes (for a discussion, see Erwin & Garman, 2010).

Nevertheless, the definition and purported source of this resistance to change has evoked ongoing controversy over many years (for a review, see Van Nistelrooij & De Caluwe, 2016). For example, researchers frequently debate whether this resistance to change is a characteristic of systems, such as workplaces, or a trait of individuals (for an historical perspective of this controversy, see Dent & Goldberg, 1999). Furthermore, researchers do not agree on whether this resistance to change in workplaces can primarily be ascribed to a fault of employees or deficient management (Ford & Ford, 2010). Indeed, scholars disagree on whether this resistance is typically an impediment to progress or an opportunity to amend the change: Ford and Ford (2010), for example, underscored how resistance can uncover sources of cynicism that need to be addressed, inspire managers to engage employees, and unearth possible improvements to the planned changes.

Despite these intricacies, research indicates that some individuals resist, oppose, or defy changes they concede might actually benefit the workplace, or even their own life, in the future (Oreg, 2003). To illustrate, in one study, conducted by Moshinsky and Bar-Hillel (2010), participants were asked which of two alternative policies they prefer, such as whether prostitution should be legal or illegal. In general, participants chose whichever alternative they were told was the existing policy; they tended to prefer the status quo to change.

Oreg (2003) differentiated four distinct causes of this preference towards existing practices. First, individuals do not like to deviate from entrenched routines. Second, the uncertainty that change entails can evoke anxiety and other negative emotions. Third, people tend to orient attention more towards the immediate complications of change instead of the future benefits. Finally, individuals do not like to adjust ensconced beliefs. Nevertheless, because the definition and source of resistance to change is controversial, we will invoke the phrase *reluctance to change* to signify this preference towards existing practices.

Practices that Diminish Reluctance to Change

In response to the incessant frustrations of managers, struggling in vein to introduce their innovations, many consultants and scholars developed some formulaic routines that purportedly inspire employees to embrace change. Kotter (1996) developed and promulgated perhaps the most celebrated set of guidelines, delineating eight phases, such as the recommendation to imbue employees with a sense of urgency, to organize a guiding coalition, to formulate and convey an inspiring vision of the future, to empower individuals, to achieve a small achievement first, to consolidate these achievements, and to embed changes into the culture.

Research broadly corroborates the benefits of these practices and similar attempts (for a review of workplace practices that diminish resistance to change, see Robertson, Roberts, & Porras, 1993). To illustrate, whenever the contributions of employees are heeded and

respected—comparable to the notion of empowerment, advocated by Kotter (1996)—these individuals become more receptive to change (García-Cabrera & Hernández, 2014). Similarly, when managers convey the changes sensitively and positively, reluctance to change tends to subside (McKay, Kuntz, & Näswall, 2013). Conversely, as Klonek, Lehmann-Willenbrock, and Kauffeld (2014) showed, when managers or change agents do not seek the perspective of employees, a damaging cycle of complications often unfolds. Employees feel their autonomy is infringed, sometimes evoking defiance. These responses merely heighten the resolve or tendency of managers to impose their plans without consultation, eliciting increasingly greater defiance.

These traditional practices, however, tend to foster openness only towards specific, isolated changes in the organization; these practices are not designed to override reluctance to the prospect of change in general. Yet, if this reluctance is not redressed, several problems are likely to unfold. First, if individuals are reluctant to change in general, they are not as likely to suggest innovations or initiatives that could improve the performance of their organization. They may be concerned these innovations could transform their role or responsibilities too dramatically. Consistent with this notion, as studies demonstrate, reluctance to change is inversely associated with productivity and performance (Kunze et al., 2013).

Second, whenever employees are reluctant to change, change management practices that are sometimes effective tend to be futile. Specifically, even the prospect of change tends to evoke negative emotions, such as anxiety, in these employees (Piderit, 2000). When people experience negative emotions, they become wary of the actions and plans of managers or acquaintances, diminishing trust, openness, and respect (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). Therefore, if individuals are reluctant to change, and their trust thus subsides whenever changes are announced, practices that usually inspire employees to change, such as ingratiation, are no longer effective (e.g., Furst & Cable, 2008).

Limitations of Attempts to Contain Reluctance to Change

Yet, because of several impediments, this reluctance to change is hard to address. First, many of the established antecedents to this reluctance cannot, or cannot readily, be modified. To illustrate, at least in some circumstances, reluctance to change is positively associated with tenure (van Dam et al., 2008) but—contrary to stereotypes—negatively associated with age (Kunze et al., 2013). Because the tenure and age of individuals cannot be modified, to diminish reluctance to change, organizations would need to dismiss both young and experienced employees—an intervention that would most likely provoke a range of other complications.

Second, the modifiable determinants of this reluctance to change may demand significant time and effort to redress. To demonstrate, if individuals can regulate unpleasant emotions or negative thoughts effectively—encompassed by measures of resilience (Wanberg & Banas, 2000) and emotional intelligence (Di Fabio, Bernaud, & Loarer, 2014)—they tend to be receptive to change (see also Chreim, 2006; Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, & Welbourne, 1999). Conversely, individuals who are susceptible to irrational beliefs, such as the belief they need to seek approval from everyone (Bovey & Hede, 2001a), or defensive responses, such as denial (Bovey & Hede, 2001b), are more reluctant to change. These individuals cannot readily withstand the uncertainty and complications that change, almost invariably, entails.

To enhance resilience, and to nullify these irrational beliefs or defensive responses, prolonged interventions would be necessary. Cognitive behavioral therapy—the paradigm that, despite attracting critics, has arguably been validated more than other psychological treatments (Tolin 2010)—usually demands around 12 sessions to diminish the effects of irrational beliefs and defensive responses. Individuals who resist change are unlikely to embrace an intervention that, in essence, can be conceptualized as a sizeable change, spanning approximately three months.

Third, some attempts to diminish this reluctance to change could provoke a range of other complications. To illustrate, organizations could employ individuals who are likely to acquiesce to all the changes and demands of managers. Yet, in some circumstances, reluctance to change can be fruitful or helpful (Bareil, 2013): Employees who resist an initiative may not be averse to changes in general but genuinely concerned that some proposal could damage the organization (Ford & Ford, 2009). In response to this reluctance, managers may attempt to accommodate the concerns of employees (Hiatt, 2006), improving the decisions they reach (Lines, 2004) and preventing unethical or unrecognized social consequences (Piderit, 2000).

Modifiable Antecedents of Reluctance to Change

To overcome these limitations, researchers need to uncover determinants of reluctance to change that can be modified readily, perhaps within the context of a change management program. Nevertheless attempts to overcome this reluctance would not nullify the benefits of legitimate concerns about the proposed change.

To achieve this goal, an intervention that integrates several theories and phenomena—including spreading of alternatives (Harmon-Jones, Harmon-Jones, Fearn, Sigelman, & Johnson, 2008), expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), and the future self-continuity hypothesis (Ersner-Hershfield, Garton, Ballard, Samanez-Larkin, & Knutson, 2009)—could be beneficial. In particular, after managers introduce a change to the organization, some employees will commit to this change and formulate plans to shift their behavior accordingly (Oreg, 2003). Consistent with research on a human bias called spreading of alternatives (e.g., Harmon-Jones et al., 2008), after people commit to some change, they are more likely to orient their attention towards the benefits, instead of the drawbacks, of this plan. These individuals, thus, become more likely to perceive the change favorably.

Therefore, to contain reluctance to change, organizations must somehow increase the likelihood that employees commit to these plans. Expectancy theory, formulated by Vroom (1964), can be applied to promote this commitment. As this theory implies, if three conditions are cultivated—instrumentality, expectancy, and valence—individuals will often commit to future plans. Individuals first need to feel they can achieve the goals that are now their responsibility as a consequence of this change, called instrumentality. Second, individuals need to feel their achievement of these goals will attract rewards, called expectancy. Finally, they need to feel these rewards are valuable and fulfilling, called valence.

The key challenge revolves around how managers should foster instrumentality, expectancy, and valence both sustainably but efficiently, preferably as one facet of a change program, obviating the need to implement an additional initiative. One solution revolves around the vision or direction of some workplace or workgroup. Specifically, three features of this vision or direction can promote instrumentality, expectancy, and valence respectively: future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning.

To demonstrate, when individuals can imagine or envisage the future vividly, called future clarity, they tend to predict the goals they hope to achieve are likely to happen, as shown by McElwee and Haugh (2010), augmenting instrumentality. Presumably, when the future seems vivid, individuals are more attuned to how they can achieve their goals. They can readily enumerate several activities they could undertake to fulfill these objectives. Consequently, consistent with research on ease of retrieval (e.g., Haddock, 2002), these employees assume that many other courses of action could be pursued to fulfill these objectives. These goals, therefore, are perceived as feasible (for related mechanisms, see Carver & Scheier, 1990; Kuhl & Goschke, 1994). Similarly, consistent with construal level theory, when individuals are attuned to the details of some future setting, called a concrete

construal, they are more likely to perceive this setting as probable rather than improbable (Todorov, Goren, & Trope, 2007).

Second, when individuals feel their identity now, including their values or passions, will persist indefinitely into the future—called future self-continuity (Ersner-Hershfield et al., 2009)—they tend to predict their achievements in the future will be rewarded, increasing expectancy. In contrast, if individuals feel their identity now might shift dramatically, they perceive their future instantiation of themselves as, in essence, a distinct person altogether (Ersner-Hershfield et al., 2009). Consequently, they might feel, in response to their achievements, they will not receive a reward themselves. Instead, this reward will be bestowed on another identity, comparable to a different person. Consistent with this premise, if individuals feel their identity might shift appreciably, they tend to discount the value of future rewards (Bartel & Rips, 2010; Bartels & Urminsky, 2011); they might, for example, prefer \$100 now to \$500 in one year.

Third, when individuals feel their life is meaningful, these rewards are more likely to be perceived as significant and thus valuable. In particular, as Stillman, Baumeister, Lambert, Crescioni, DeWall, and Fincham (2009) demonstrated, whenever people feel they belong to a force or network that transcends their personal interests, they appreciate the extent to which their activities are significant to other people or communities. Their activities, therefore, seem meaningful and significant. They feel the rewards they receive, such as status or money, do not improve only their own interests but can shape the lives of many other individuals: their family, friends, communities, and society in general. These rewards, thus, seem valuable, increasing valence.

In short, future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning in life should each increase the likelihood that individuals commit to future plans. Because of this capacity to commit to

future plans, individuals should be more attuned to the benefits of these changes, diminishing reluctance to change in general.

Method

Participants

The participants included 207 individuals, aged between 18 and 66 with a mean of 33, 46% of whom were female. The participants all resided in English speaking nations. In addition, 54% of the participants had completed either a Bachelor degree or higher.

The crowdsourcing platform called Microworkers was utilized to recruit participants. This platform, in contrast to Amazon Mechanical Turk, tends to recruit participants from a broader range of nations. Past research indicates that Microworkers attracts a sample that is representative of internet users in general and generates valid responses to psychological questions (Crone & Williams, 2015).

Procedure

Microworkers presents users, called workers, a catalogue of jobs they could complete, from reviewing a website to completing a survey. Participants of this study had clicked a link to this online survey.

To access the plain language statement, participants were instructed to copy and paste a URL into their browser. This plain language statement outlined the aim of this study—to understand the consequences of thoughts about the future—as well as the rights and roles of participants, consistent with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). If individuals were still willing to participate, they consented by pressing another icon to initiate the survey.

The survey comprised measures of reluctance to change, future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning in life as well as questions on age, gender, and education. Furthermore, the survey included a measure of status quo bias; however, because of

limitations in this measure, no status quo bias was observed; thus, responses to these questions were excluded from the analyses. After entering their demographic details, participants received a code. Once they copied this code into the designated space on the Microworkers website, participants received a payment of \$1.00 US.

Materials

Reluctance to change. To gauge reluctance to change, participants completed a scale, comprising 16 items, constructed and validated by Oreg (2003). This scale comprises four subscales. The first subscale, called routine seeking, encapsulated the extent to which individuals prefer entrenched customs or routines and entails five items (e.g., “I’d take a routine day over a day full of unexpected surprises any day”). The second subscale, called emotional regulation to imposed change, comprises four items that assess the degree to which individuals feel stressed and anxious in response to impending changes—especially changes they did not chose (e.g., “When I am informed of a change of plans, I tense up a bit”). The third subscale, short-term focus, entails four items, each of which gauge the extent to which people feel the immediate complications of changes override the future benefits (e.g., “Often, I feel a bit uncomfortable even about changes that may potentially improve my life”). The final subscale, cognitive rigidity, comprising three items, revolves around the extent to which individuals are reluctant to shift their beliefs and attitudes (e.g., “I don’t change my mind easily”). Oreg (2003) showed that Cronbach’s alpha for the four subscales was .81, .81, .71, and .68 respectively and correlations between the subscales were moderate and positive. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis substantiated these four factors, with CFI = .97 and RMSEA = .039 (Oreg, 2003). As evidence of validity, such reluctance was shown to be negatively related to tolerance for ambiguity and openness to experience (Oreg, 2003).

Future clarity. To measure future clarity, participants completed five items, constructed and validated by McElwee and Haugh (2010). Specifically, participants indicated the degree

to which they agree or disagree with statements such as “My future seems vague and uncertain to me”. Four of the items were reverse scored. McElwee and Haugh (2010) generated a Cronbach’s alpha of .86 and showed this scale is highly associated with optimism and related positive states. The original scale also included another set of five items that measured a distinct facet—the frequency with which individuals contemplate their future. This set of items was not germane to this study and, therefore, was excluded from the survey.

Future self-continuity. To measure future continuity, participants completed the task that Ersner-Hershfield et al. (2009) constructed and substantiated. Seven pairs of circles, arranged in a horizontal sequences, appeared on the computer screen. The left circle of each pair represented the identity of participants now. The right circle of each pair represented the identity of participants ten years in the future. Participants were instructed to indicate which of the seven pairs matches the degree to which their identity now—such as their values, goals, and interests—overlaps with their identity in ten years. If participants chose the two circles that overlap to the greatest extent, they were assumed to experience future self-continuity. This continuity has been shown to predict the extent to which individuals delay gratification and, for example, choose larger, delayed rewards instead of modest, but immediate rewards (Bartel & Rips, 2010; Bartels & Urminsky, 2011).

Meaning in life. To gauge meaning in life, participants completed one of the two subscales of the Meaning in Life questionnaire, constructed and substantiated by Steger, Frazier, Oishi, and Kaler (2006). Participants completed the presence of meaning subscale but not the search for meaning subscale. To complete this subscale, participants indicated the degree to which they agree or disagree with five statements, such as “My life has a clear sense of purpose”. Steger et al., (2006) generated a Cronbach’s alpha of .86 and showed this subscale is inversely associated with various problems in life, such as anxiety and depression.

Confirmatory factor analysis verified that presence of meaning is distinct from search for meaning, with CFI values ranging from .93 to .99 (Steger et al., 2006).

Results

Table 1 reports the mean, standard deviation, possible range, and Cronbach's alpha of each scale or subscale together with the correlation between each pair of measures. As this table shows, Cronbach's alpha was lower than .70, but approximated .60 for one subscale: cognitive rigidity. This modest value, although reasonable given the subscale comprised only three items, might nevertheless diminish statistical power (Nunnally, 1978). Cronbach's alpha exceeded .70, indicating adequate levels of internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978), in all the other scales and subscales.

Insert Table 1 about here

In addition, as Table 1 reveals, and consistent with the hypotheses, both future clarity and meaning in life were negatively associated with three facets of reluctance to change: routine seeking, emotional regulation to imposed changes, and short-term focus. Furthermore, but contrary to the hypotheses, future self-continuity was positively associated with two facets of reluctance to change: routine seeking and emotional regulation to imposed changes. Cognitive rigidity was not significantly associated with future clarity, future self-continuity, or meaning in life. None of the correlations were high enough to indicate that multicollinearity may be a concern.

To ascertain whether future clarity, future self-continuity, or meaning in life are related to the various facets of reluctance to change, a sequence of four hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. In each analysis, the criterion was one of the four facets of reluctance to change. In the first step, the predictors were age, sex, and education level. In the second step, the predictors were future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning in life.

In each analysis, the residuals were normally distributed; further Cook's distances did not reveal any influential cases.

The unstandardized B coefficients and t values that emerged from each analysis appear in Table 2, coupled with the R^2 change values at each step. Consistent with the correlation analysis, future clarity was inversely related to routine seeking, emotional regulation to imposed changes, and short-term focus, and future self-continuity was positively related to routine seeking and emotional regulation to imposed changes.

However, meaning in life was not significantly associated with any facets of reluctance to change. Nevertheless, when future clarity was withdrawn from this analysis, meaning in life was negatively associated with routine seeking ($\beta = -.21, p < .01$), emotional regulation to imposed changes ($\beta = -.22, p < .01$), and short-term focus ($\beta = -.20, p < .01$). These findings imply the negative association between meaning in life and reluctance to change dissipates after future clarity is controlled.

Insert Table 2 about here

Discussion

Many studies attest to the inclination of many employees to resist change (e.g., Oreg, 2003). This reluctance to change, at least partly, explains the lamentable observation that changes to the workplace seldom achieve the anticipated benefits (Franken et al, 2009; Isern & Pung, 2007). The determinants of this reluctance to change however, such as tenure (van Dam et al., 2008) and resilience (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), tend to be immutable or hard to modify.

This study, however, tested the argument that three modifiable tendencies, primarily derived from expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964)—future clarity, future self-continuity, and meaning in life—might also diminish this reluctance to change. Consistent with this premise, future clarity and meaning in life were inversely associated with three facets of reluctance to

change. Nevertheless, after future clarity was controlled, the association between meaning in life and reluctance to change dissipated. Furthermore, contrary to the hypotheses, future self-continuity, or the degree to which individuals feel their existing identity will endure indefinitely, was positively associated with reluctance to change.

The discovery that future clarity is negatively associated with reluctance to change could inform future interventions. Specifically, when managers disseminate information about impending changes, they need to depict the future as vividly as possible. Perhaps they could first establish, and then demonstrate, a prototype or pilot, before they convey this change. In addition, they could offer employees choices over specific details, such as the arrangement of offices—choices that not only help people imagine the future vividly but have also been shown to foster commitment to the workplace (Knight & Haslam, 2010).

These vivid images might not only diminish reluctance to the impending change but could also diminish reluctance towards other changes as well. Specifically, after individuals envisage their future vividly, they may be able to assimilate other promised changes into these images. Consequently, other plans can also be imagined vividly. Plans that are imagined vividly tend to be perceived as achievable, consistent with construal level theory (Todorov et al., 2007) and the work of McElwee and Haugh (2010).

Like future clarity, meaning in life was also negatively associated with reluctance to change. Yet this association dissipated once future clarity was controlled. Future clarity and meaning in life are intimately related to each other, consistent with Table 1. Presumably, if individuals can imagine their future vividly, they are more likely to appreciate how the proposed change activities could be germane to their future goals, tantamount to a sense of meaning. Perhaps future clarity, and not meaning per se, diminishes reluctance to change.

For example, to generate the hypotheses, meaning in life was assumed to magnify the value of rewards. Instead, future clarity could magnify the value of rewards. Future rewards,

if imagined vividly, can be appraised fluently and rapidly. As research on the effects of fluency has shown, information that is appraised fluently and rapidly tends to be perceived as more appealing (Lee & Labroo, 2004; Reber, Winkielman, & Schwartz, 1998).

In contrast to future clarity and meaning in life, future self-continuity was positively associated with reluctance to change. One explanation is that, to some extent, future self-continuity could manifest a need for closure—the inclination of some individuals to shun uncertain, ambiguous, or unpredictable circumstances (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). In particular, if people experience a need for closure, they become susceptible to two inclinations. First, they seize or reach decisions or form judgments prematurely (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). Second, they freeze or maintain these decisions or judgments, even when exposed to contradictory information (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). Consequently, these individuals will perceive their values as enduring, manifesting as future self-continuity. In addition, these individuals will perceive existing practices as suitable, manifesting as a reluctance to change. Therefore, in a subset of participants—participants who experience a need for closure—both future self-continuity and reluctance to change will be elevated.

Limitations and Conclusions

Several limitations of this study might challenge the legitimacy of these findings. First, future clarity was not manipulated; the direction of causality, therefore, was not established in this study. To illustrate, some other characteristic, such as an inspiring leader, could have enhanced future clarity and decreased reluctance to change, culminating in a spurious relationship between these measures (see Behling & McFillen, 1996). To preclude this possibility, future studies should manipulate future clarity experimentally. Perhaps, individuals could be asked to describe their most cherished friends, locations, and activities. Next, to prime future clarity, some individuals could be instructed to construct an image of

their future that encompasses one or more of these friends, locations, or activities. This future clarity should then diminish reluctance to change.

Second, this study assessed reluctance to hypothetical, rather than actual, changes in the workplace. Future research could examine whether future clarity contains reluctance to genuine changes.

Notwithstanding these limitations, this study uncovered a promising avenue to diminish the reluctance that often stymies change. The next phase may to develop a range of protocols and practices that clarify the future of individuals in this uncertain and dynamic world.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Associated with Study Variables

	Mean	Stdev	Range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Future clarity	2.93	0.92	1-5	.87						
2 Future self-continuity	4.16	1.57	1-7	.01	-					
3 Meaning in life	3.33	0.94	1-5	.60**	-.03	.90				
4. Routine seeking	2.73	0.73	1-5	-.30**	.14*	-.25**	.70			
5. Emotional regulation to changes	3.18	0.90	1-5	-.37**	.16*	-.28**	.58**	.81		
6. Short-term focus	2.92	0.84	1-5	-.35**	.04	-.28**	.67**	.74**	.76	
7. Cognitive rigidity	3.24	0.76	1-5	.03	.10	-.08	.31**	.27**	.41**	.60

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

NB. Range refers to possible, rather than actual, range. Cronbach's alpha values, when applicable, appear in the diagonals.

Table 2. Results of the Regression Analyses that Explored Whether Future Clarity, Future Self-Continuity, and Meaning in Life Affect the Resistance to Change.

	Routine seeking		Emotional regulation		Short-term focus		Cognitive rigidity	
	B	t	B	T	B	t	B	t
Step 1								
Constant		11.82**		11.45**		12.74**		12.98**
Age	-.04	-.54	-.11	-1.63	-.19	-2.69*	-.01	-.18
Sex	.12	1.68	.18	2.57*	.10	1.40	.03	.46
Education level	-.14	-1.92	-.12	-1.75	-.12	-1.79	-.05	-.74
ΔR^2		.04		.06**		.07**		.01
Step 2								
Constant		6.60**		6.37**		8.09**		5.95**
Age	-.03	-.38	-.11	-1.55	-.15	-2.17*	-.04	-.53
Sex	.08	1.19	.13	2.02*	.05	.82	.05	.64
Education level	-.12	-1.75	-.11	-1.65	-.11	-1.59	-.04	-.55

Future clarity	-.24	-2.89**	-.30	-3.83**	-.28	-3.37**	.12	1.36
Future continuity	.15	2.23**	.19	2.92**	.08	1.19	.10	1.40
Meaning in life	-.07	-.84	-.05	-.60	-.07	-.81	-.13	-1.43
ΔR^2		.10**		.15**		.10*		.02*

NB. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Males were coded as 0 and females were coded as 1.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Schematic illustration of the conceptual framework

Figure 1

