

# [Impact of organizational change on employee's commitment](https://assignbuster.com/impact-of-organizational-change-on-employees-commitment/)

### IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE ON EMPLOYEE’S COMMITMENT

Employee commitment has been an important factor to determine the success of an organization. In the current section we are going to see the influence of organizational change on employee’s commitment.

Many authors and researchers have concentrated on reactions closely associated with the change itself, such as participants openness to change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), willingness for change (Armenakis et al, 1993), confrontation to change (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979), or pessimism toward change (Wanous, Reichers, & Austin, 2000). On the other hand few researchers have focused on broader workplace outcomes, such as organizational commitment and absenteeism (Hui & Lee, 2000). But, Hercovitch & Meyer (2002) investigated individual’s support for a single change initiative as a function of both commitment to change and organizational commitment. Judge et al. (1999) argues that if it is known how a change initiative is managed and the consequences of the change initiative can impact organizational commitment as they cause employees to re-evaluate their personal association with the organization. Thus, knowing that organizational change may indicate alterations in the rapport between the employee and the organization (Caldwell et al., 2004), it is important for management to understand how change initiatives may strengthen or weaken employee’s commitment to the organization. Coetsee (1999) argues that commitment is one of the important factors involved in employee’s support for change initiatives.

Some aspects of change initiatives may also play important role in the change-commitment relationship. First, attitudinal reactions to change are considered to be focused, in part, by feelings of uncertainty, loss of control, and fear of failure engendered by the change events (Oreg, 2003). As such, the magnitude or extensiveness of a particular change, by affecting the degree of such feelings, provides a context within which fairness and favourableness are evaluated in shaping employee’s responses to the change (Caldwell et al, 2004). Second, a given organizational change can be conceived as occurring or having different impact at different organizational levels, such as the organizational, work group, or individual levels (Goodman & Rousseau, 2004). Fedor et al (2006) suggests that Changes having proximal impact, that is, changes affecting one’s own job needs or one’s immediate work group should be more salient in shaping the change-commitment relationship than changes having their effects at higher levels in the organization.

Hercovitch & Meyer (2002) defined commitment to a change as “ a mindset that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative”, and argued that this mindset “ can reflect (a) a desire to provide support for the change based on a belief in its inherent benefits (affective commitment to the change), (b) a recognition that there are costs associated with failure to provide support for the change (continuance commitment to the change), and (c) a sense of obligation to provide support for the change (normative commitment to the change)”.

### Attitudes towards organizational change

The role of organizational commitment in a change context is evident from the change management literature (Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005). Darwish (2000) says that according to many authors employee’s appreciation of change is dependent on organizational commitment of that employee. Iverson (1996) ranked union membership and organizational commitment first and second respectively as determinants for attitudes towards organizational change. Lau & Woodman (1995) argued that organizational change is supported by highly committed employees if it is supposed to be advantageous. But, Vakola & Nikolau (2005) contradicts this by saying that many researchers indicated that highly committed employees may refuse to accept to change if they perceive it as a threat for their own benefit. Influence of organizational commitment on attitudes to organizational change is evident from the above findings. Iverson (1996) supports this as organizational commitment is better predictor of behavioural intentions than job satisfaction within change context, based on previous research. He then adds on that in a change project more effort is put by highly committed employees, as a result positive attitudes towards change are developed among employees. From the above discussion it can be predicted that the relationship between organizational commitment and attitudes to change is positive.

### Locus of control

The concept of LOC was initially proposed by Rotter (1966), which refers to an individual’s awareness of his or her ability to employ control over the environment. Internals believe that they have control over their environment, whereas externals view their lives as controlled by external factors. Researchers have proposed that the concept of LOC should be considered a multidimensional construct and thus the internal and external control might be relatively independent as opposed to consisting of opposing ends of a single continuum (e. g., Levenson, 1981). However, most studies of locus of control within organizations have been dominated by Rotter’s single factor LOC scale (Chung & Ding, 2002).

Given that change unavoidably places an individual in an indecisive environment (Begley, 1998). An individual’s psychological reactions to change will be influenced by his or her control over the environment. According to Judge et al. (1999), some evidence confirms the relationship between LOC and various psychological reactions to a change. Lau & Woodman (1995) identified that compared with externals, internals had a more positive attitude toward a change, and could better handle with a change (Judge et al., 1999). However, Chen & Wang (2007) argued that internals may resist a change and externals may support a change in some cases. Thus, the relationship between LOC and psychosocial reactions to a change is more complex than it appears. Chen & Wang (2007) proposed that the above difference between internals and externals lies in the manner of their support or resistance to a change, which comes from a different psychological mechanism, and thus LOC should be studied in relation to more comprehensively analyzed psychological reactions to a specific change.