

INVESTIGATING EMOTIONAL RESISTANCE TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE:
A DESCRIPTIVE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY OF LOCAL TELEVISION
NEWSROOM LEADERS

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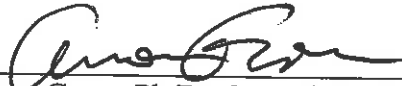
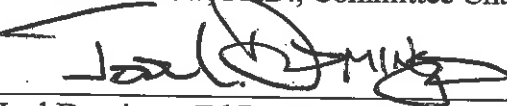
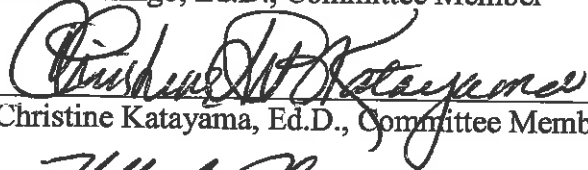
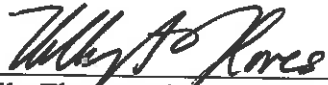
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ABSTRACT

A factor contributing to failed change initiatives in organizations is emotional resistance from change recipients. If overlooked, emotional resistance can impede changes for an organization's survival (Bateh, Castaneda, & Farah, 2013). Some employees are unwilling to adapt for leaders they do not trust, when changes are too abrupt, or if they feel the changes will threaten their livelihoods. The purpose of this study was to understand how leaders identify emotional resistance in workers and what leaders are doing to address this problem in their organizations. Leaders in organizations across the United States are under increased pressure to meet new market demands, yet they find a great deal of emotional resistance from the people they need to carry out new strategies to remain afloat (Benson, 2014). Research on the implications for leaders who do not tend to emotionally resistant employees is scarce; however, new insights on addressing emotional resistance can help leaders cultivate this skill (Wang, 2015). Consequently, the aim of this study of television newsrooms was to add to the existing literature on emotional resistance to change while providing recommendations on meeting this challenge. The study was designed to use descriptive qualitative research methods, specifically in-depth interviews with newsroom leaders. Data analysis was performed using pattern matching techniques, which revealed that the most common forms of emotional resistance were frustration, fear, distrust, and shock. The leading sources of emotional resistance were change burnout and fear of failure. The main strategies leaders used to counter emotional resistance were to allow workers to express their emotions

constructively and to communicate effectively with stakeholders. Recommendations for leaders include embracing emotional resistance and utilizing transition tools. Focusing on resistance across different generational groups and examining the best leadership styles for addressing the personal impact of change are recommendations for future research.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Almost all forms of change pose a set of challenges for leaders whether they come at the beginning of the process or later during implementation. Quy Nguyen, Corley, and Kraatz (2014) found that one of the biggest obstacles for many leaders of change is overcoming emotional resistance from change recipients. Major changes to organizational structures, processes, or job descriptions can disturb people's values, roles, identities, interests, and interpersonal relationships. One of the most difficult things for leaders to do during change is to address employees who are dealing with the emotions of uncertainty, stress, and complexity generated by proposed changes. Today's leaders confront a wide range of market forces. Examples of forces include new laws, products, and competition, evolving technological shifts in consumer habits, and new cultural trends (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). In response to these forces, many leaders find themselves coordinating a change effort at least once per year. However, some organizations undergo changes much more frequently, which makes addressing emotional resistance effectively even more crucial. This study on emotional resistance to change was designed to help leaders of change understand and work more constructively with employees who display emotional resistance so that employees' emotions have minimal impact on the desired outcomes.

Emotional resistance may be even more prevalent and difficult to address in fast-paced work environments where leaders constantly ask employees to adapt. An example of such an environment is the local television newsroom. This research was designed to

use the television journalism landscape to bring attention to the important subject of emotional resistance to change because of its high-stress environment and sweeping changes in audience demands, social media trends, increasing integration of the Internet, and the entry of non-traditional platforms, that include mobile phones and tablets (Reinardy & Bacon, 2014). Leaders in local television newsrooms across the United States are under increased pressure to make convergence or new media journalism a reality in their organizations, but they encounter a great deal of resistance from their employees. Newsroom leaders are concerned that if they do not keep up with the pace of technological advances, social media trends, and evolving media consumption habits, their newsrooms may be left behind or become irrelevant to audiences.

The challenges for newsroom leaders in addressing emotional resistance may be due in part to employees who are unwilling to adapt for leaders they do not trust, when changes are too abrupt, and if employees feel that the changes will hurt the work atmosphere (Băeșu & Bejinaru, 2013; Drzensky, Egold, & Van Dick, 2012). The driving force or purpose of this study was to understand the human elements leaders may work with as they lead employees through change in fast-paced work environments. The study was designed to focus on the leaders' experiences related to emotional resistance to fully understand the phenomenon of resistance and its impact on organizational change efforts. Through an examination using in-depth interviews with television newsroom leaders to discover how they address emotional resistance to change, this study's significance is

found in the recommendations and strategies for reducing emotional resistance so it does not interfere with change goals.

Current State of the Field in which the Problem Exists

A cause of emotional resistance is the involvement of leaders who are incapable of addressing the problem of responding effectively to people's emotions during the change process. Mariana, Daniela, and Nadina (2013) said leaders of change often call upon managers who may be inexperienced in responding to emotional resistance or unprepared to handle emotionally resistant team members. In an article on leading change and how to support people through change, Benson (2014) agreed by stating that frontline managers are regularly overlooked, despite potentially being the most influential group during change. Thus, leaders of change may be able to reduce the amount of emotional resistance during change by being mindful of whom they are asking to help facilitate change.

Leaders of change themselves may not be qualified to address emotional resistance. Hence, coping with emotional resistance is an expected component of the change process and can not be disregarded or taken lightly (Drzensky et al., 2012). Mariana et al. (2013) warned against revamping processes while neglecting the emotional resistance that comes with change. Doing so may send a message that employees are irrational or defiant, which can cause emotional resistance to escalate. The goal of presenting this information is not to label all change leaders as insensitive to the

emotional responses of individuals, but rather to demonstrate that a problem with addressing emotional resistance exists.

Though there may be a problem with addressing emotional resistance in some organizations, research is clear that emotional resistance to change is a common occurrence in organizations (Bareil, 2013; Dollard, Osborne, & Manning, 2013). All organizational leaders will endure some level of resistance whether small, medium, or large, and despite an abundance of literature on the subject, the dynamics of emotional resistance to change remain unclear (Bareil, 2013). Bateh (2013) made a similar claim by stating that organizational practitioners and researchers remain intrigued by the nature of emotional resistance to change; Bateh also asked how leaders can tackle the problem.

Leaders have the ability to harm or help change processes by how they view change recipients (Parker, Abdul-Ghaffar, Campbell, & Vickers-Johnson, 2012). Traditional thinking about resisters suggests that these individuals complicate the process, create problems, and put the organization at risk of falling behind. Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) discussed the presence of emotional reactions following change and said emotional resistance is neither good nor bad and cannot wholeheartedly be blamed on either change leaders or recipients. The preferred way of thinking about resistance is to see it as an opportunity to learn how interactions between leaders and followers may be contributing to how employees respond. Such a mindset may be achieved only by putting competent leaders, those skilled at dealing with emotional resistance, in charge of managing change programs (Parker et al., 2012).

Giving responsibility to leaders with positive perceptions among followers is just as important. Evidence supports the existence of a relationship between employees' willingness to accept change and the personalities of leaders (Asencio & Mujkic, 2016). Băeșu and Bejinaru (2013) found in many instances that organizational leaders do not make the connection between leadership personality and employee willingness and therefore assign change initiatives to leaders who are inexperienced in tackling the human aspects of change.

Finally, in some cases, leaders are fully aware that there will be emotional resistance to a particular proposed change, yet few of them take the necessary time to assess which groups will become resisters and determine the reasons for their resistance (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Moreover, if there is an attempt to diagnose and limit resistance, the leadership approach is usually too narrow to draw meaningful solutions.

Deficiencies in the Evidence

There is no shortage of studies on implementing change and how to gain competitive advantages through change, but there does appear to be a deficiency in research on the stresses and emotional resistance employees reveal during organizational adaptation to environmental demands (Dollard et al., 2013). Due to the overwhelming demands and requests leaders make during a change process, and although mostly justified, it would help leaders if studies elaborate on the impact emotional resistance can have on workers. Researchers of change management have shown that inquiries about the emotional responses to and during organizational transformations are limited

compared to studies centered on models, theories, and goal-setting (Lawrence, Ruppel, & Tworoger, 2014).

The study of emotional resistance in organizations began in the 1980's and soon thereafter both academics and business leaders found increased interest in the topic. More recently, the study of emotional resistance in organizations has moved into the adolescence stage (Bowen, 2014). One reason for the increased attention is a desire to provide leaders of change with tools and information to address emotional resistance rather than dismiss it as irrational. A second reason for a renewed interest in emotional resistance to change is to highlight its impact on change goals. The implications of emotionally resistance employees on change initiatives are becoming increasingly important for leaders of change to understand, particularly the emotional aspects of change at the individual level (Malik & Masood, 2015). The emotional component of change is often neglected in organizational change literature.

Bareil (2013) added to the call for leaders to gain a deeper interpretation of emotional resistance through research for two reasons. First, emotional resistance is the number one reason for change failures (Băeșu & Bejinaru, 2013; Bareil, 2013). Second, change recipients who emotionally disagree with a planned change tend to be perceived as a threat or problem. Some leaders view them as disturbances to the system that may need to be eliminated or ignored. Bareil asked leaders to see emotional resistance as a resource that can be used to create change positively. However, with limited evidence to support the case for a positive outlook, emotional resistance to change is considered a

domain of unfinished business in the area of organizational change. This study was designed to help fill the void and provide leaders with useful approaches to apply when confronted with emotional resistance in their own organizations. Chapter 2 includes a detailed discussion of the debates and deficiencies in the extant literature.

Specific Leadership Problem

Once a change process begins, leaders should understand how to implement changes while minimizing some of the negative emotions from employees that naturally occur along the way (Wang, 2015). Iverson and Zatzick (2011) used the idea of downsizing to illustrate what happens when leaders overlook the emotional responses of individuals. They found that employees who survived a workforce reduction experienced anger, depression, fear, guilt, and powerlessness. These negative emotions led to a decrease in trust and support for leadership and also lowered their commitment to other change propositions. The adverse impact of allowing emotional responses to go unchecked was felt most poignantly in organizations that were identified as high-performance work systems (HPWS). Iverson and Zatzick (2011) defined these systems as those that relied heavily on employee skills, motivation, and commitment to gain a competitive advantage. Leaders of organizations with HPWS risked the firm's livelihood by permitting harmful emotions to fester. The authors argued that a better alternative was to give employees a voice before, during, and after a change so they can ask questions and air concerns.

Ignoring emotional resistance during a change plan does not facilitate effective change (Lawrence et al., 2014). While not all changes will result in a wave of negative emotions, leaders may want to prepare for it because people do not typically change their attitudes and behavior overnight. Instead, they evolve gradually as the changes to the organization structure begin to take shape.

The appearance that individuals are acting in accordance with transitions in the early stages is not always an indication of cooperation throughout the entire process. People are motivated to comply with a change program for many reasons, some of which have nothing to do with their support for the program. For some individuals, the reasons for compliance are personal, and doing anything different could put them at risk if they do not adapt to what their supervisors ask of them. Leaders cannot be misled into thinking obedience indicates the absence of emotional resistance (Lawrence et al., 2014).

It would be good if leaders remember that the conception of a change plan is as important as its execution. This includes recognizing that everyone embraces change differently (Wilson, 2014). When under pressure to adapt quickly, those who display emotional resistance to change can be perceived as bothersome, which can cause leaders to become exhausted or uninterested in addressing their concerns (Drzensky et al., 2012). Leaders who continuously grapple with how to attend effectively to emotional resistance during change may find their change efforts halted as organizational members become increasingly unmoved by the need to adapt.

Problem Statement

Change requires a plan that details the various stages of how an organization will transform; however, a plan alone does not necessarily address the emotional concerns of workers during the change process (Firoozmand, 2014). Therefore, the general problem that was addressed in this research was understanding the connection between employee emotions and the transition itself.

Emotional resistance to change is a natural part of any change program (Lawrence et al., 2014). Changes will have an emotional impact on the people who make up the organization. Emotional resistance to change can present a problem for leaders given the magnitude of some transformations. Some leaders have even gone as far as describing people who resist change as incapable of enduring the change or as problematic (Bareil, 2013). Leaders with this mindset become judgmental and do nothing more to learn about what is preventing their staff from seeing and accepting the proposed change.

Consequently, the specific problem this study addressed was this potentially harmful leadership behavior. Local television newsroom leaders were interviewed to discover what types of emotional resistance they encountered during change efforts to learn what newsroom leaders have done and can do in the future to prevent emotional resistance from disrupting their change efforts. Television newsroom leaders face the problem this study addressed—recognizing the relationship between employee emotional resistance and successful change initiatives. Forthcoming sections in this document will outline the

justifications for using leaders in local television newsrooms as participants and the connection their experiences had to the problem statement.

Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) studied negative responses to emotional resistance and found that not all employees who displayed emotional resistance were intending to be difficult. Instead, they concluded that organizational members who displayed emotional resistance may simply need to mend broken trust and relationships with their leaders. As pressure mounts for change to occur, rather than understanding, persuading, and motivating staffers, many leaders demand and coerce workers into accepting their new roles and responsibilities. Daniels and Hollifield (2002) argued that when properly addressed, emotional resistance could provide leaders with valuable information about the change. To clarify the relationship between change initiatives and emotionally resistant employees, this analysis of in-depth interviews with newsroom leaders is organized to conclude with practical recommendations that are designed to address emotional resistance. These recommendations can be used by all leaders of change in their organizations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to better understand how leaders perceived, responded to, and countered emotional resistance to organizational change. Findings were collected from leaders in television newsrooms and analyzed to provide general descriptions of what leaders of change think about the phenomenon of emotional resistance to change. As a result of this study's findings, leaders may find it helpful to

have regular discussions about the natural occurrence of emotional resistance during times of organizational change when adapting to internal and external forces can make or break their organization's survival. The research study was designed to identify perspectives from leaders in local television newsrooms and this information was used to synthesize sources, causes, and solutions for addressing emotional resistance to changes in processes and systems.

Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study, the research questions include:

1. How do television newsroom leaders perceive emotional resistance, and what does it look like to them?
2. When emotional resistance, as perceived by the leaders, presents itself, what do the newsroom leaders do to counter it, if anything?
3. What do newsroom leaders think are the sources of employee emotional resistance?

The first research question was designed to consider how newsroom leaders perceived emotional resistance and what it looked like. This question was asked to understand how emotionally resistant workers come across to leaders during change. In-depth interviews with 12 newsroom leaders at local television news stations across the United States were conducted to understand the perceptions and appearances of emotional resistance. The data allowed for the emergence of an understanding of various perceptions and appearances of emotional resistance in television newsrooms.

The second research question addressed the strategies for countering emotional resistance. Understanding the newsroom leaders' processes of coping with emotional resistance was vital to the discussion of organizational change and leadership because it allowed for a discussion of what leaders of change in other organizations can do to meet this same challenge.

The third question was devised to consider the potential implications of employees' emotional resistance. Analyzing the ways that change created perceived emotional resistance informs the discussion of what leaders believed were the sources of emotional resistance and what they did to prevent it from occurring.

Methodology Overview

These three research questions driving this study were asked in response to the call in the literature to understand more about emotional resistance and to provide suggestions to leaders on how to address emotional interferences during change. Therefore, a descriptive qualitative research methodology was used because researchers who use such methods seek to discover and document complex circumstances while filling in gaps in the literature (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Descriptive qualitative research is useful for discovering new actions and beliefs that occur during a phenomenon. For instance, emotional resistance to organizational change—this study's focus.

Participants and Recruitment

Data were collected from 12 television journalists who worked as leaders for local

television stations across the United States. The participants represented various levels of the newsroom leadership. They held positions of Executive Producer, News Director, and Assistant News Director (see Appendix A for a detailed breakdown of interview participants). All of them played key roles in proposing and executing change initiatives in their respective newsrooms. Some of their other duties included setting the goals and objectives for story coverage, incorporating new technology to enhance news products, evaluating employee performance, providing staffers with resources, and maintaining a positive work environment. The leaders oversaw the performances of various groups comprised of individuals who work as Producers, Anchors, Reporters, Photographers, Editors, Writers, Engineers, and Assignment Editors. These journalists performed specific tasks to fulfill the organization's purpose, which is producing and delivering high quality content to audiences in their television markets: Phoenix; Dallas; Sacramento; San Francisco; Palm Springs, CA; Louisville; Las Vegas; Portland, Oregon; Lubbock, Texas; Tri-Cities, Washington; and Philadelphia.

Procedure

The method of data collection was telephone-based, semi-structured interviews in which the participant answered the research questions. Follow-up questions were posed to clarify or to expand on an idea. All participants gave permission to record their interviews. A transcription service transcribed all of the interviews. The coding process involved analyzing the interview transcript of each participant, taking notes, and writing down key words and phrases that specifically aligned with the research questions. After

transcript analysis, the next step in the process involved using the codes for each question and searching for common themes among the responses. Chapter 3 will provide a more detailed discussion of this study's methodology.

Limitations

This study was limited in that it was designed to describe emotional resistance from the view of leaders. The study design stressed the specific problem of tackling emotional resistance from the leadership perspective to get newsroom leaders' understanding on the causes, sources, and solutions to the problem. Although including subordinates could have led to additional findings and recommendations, this research was not designed to investigate the viewpoint of people working in non-leadership roles.

Furthermore, the study was only an inquiry into emotional resistance to change in local television newsrooms. The investigation was not designed to include other types of newsrooms such as print, cable, and online news organizations. Some of the participants did have experience working in these news environments, but the interview questions and discussions solely centered on their experiences and perspectives on emotional resistance in local television newsrooms. Moreover, since television newsrooms represent unique environments, the findings may not be applicable to all organizations, particularly those that do not have similar demands to compete at a high level.

In addition, this study did not target a specific designated market area (DMA). Media research companies use the term to identify which television stations cover a particular part of the country. According to Nielsen Research, there are 210 DMAs in the

United States. New York City is number one, followed by Los Angeles. The smallest DMA, according to Nielsen Research, is Glendive, Montana. Designated market areas are important to the discussion of limitations because larger markets tend to have greater resources and highly skilled journalists, while smaller markets tend to have fewer resources and employ people who are entering the broadcast news industry for the first time. Based on the differences in how large market newsrooms operate compared to small market newsrooms, this research's objective was not devised to draw conclusions that exclusively apply to leaders in a certain DMA.

Audience

The intended audience for this study was leaders of change across all levels of an organization. The intent was to provide these leaders with a deeper understanding of what they can do to handle some of the emotional resistance that may disrupt a change process or cause it to fail. Băeșu and Bejinaru (2013) defined leadership as a process of generating change. Leaders have the power to influence and motivate people toward accepting change. They also have the power to dissuade people from change, whether the discouragement is done directly or indirectly. Seeing how influential leaders of change can be in getting people to accept change, they formed the core audience of this study. Leaders in organizations other than television news may also benefit from this study's findings.

A subgroup expected to benefit from this discussion on emotional resistance are leaders of television news organizations. Kaul (2013) and Reinardy and Bacon (2014)

said today's newsroom leaders are becoming increasingly familiar with the challenges of responding to emotional resistance. The current fast-paced, technology-driven media landscape is turning a rising number of audiences away from television news outlets and toward other sources for news and information.

In a study by Reinardy and Bacon (2014), they discovered that journalists worked differently than they did a few years ago. Many are now doing more work with less time, pay, and support. Most workers in the study referred to social media and the Internet when discussing added responsibilities. In one case, a reporter said leaders in their newsroom told staff that getting a story online and onto social media was more important than working on the story that was supposed to air on television. The new television news media landscape is what makes leaders of local newsrooms a subgroup that could learn from the findings of this study.

Summary

Emotional resistance is an important, and in many cases, unavoidable part of the change process, yet many leaders wrestle with how to address this hurdle. This study is important to the understanding of emotional resistance because changes to a system, process, or regular duties can leave employees feeling frustrated, angry, or unsure about the direction they are going. Although some research has offered insights into how to deal with emotional resistance, more work is needed to help guide leaders into the future (Malik & Masood, 2015). Through an examination of the local television news industry and using descriptive qualitative research methodology, this study was devised to explore

how leaders perceived emotional resistance, what they did to counter it, and what they believed may be the source of emotional resistance.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five chapters, including this introduction to the research study, which is summarized above. The literature that supports the research questions for this study is presented in Chapter 2. The review of the literature is designed to focus on relevant research studies and the major issues that are central to the study on emotional resistance to change. Chapter 2 is organized using the three research questions. The first part is an examination of the literature on perceiving emotional resistance; the second part is a review of what has been discovered about the sources of emotional resistance and how leaders can counter this problem. By demonstrating the relationship between emotional resistance to change and the options available to change leaders, the literature review is included to provide a foundation for the purposes of the study and the research questions.

Chapter 3 is designed to present and describe the methodology employed in the study, which includes the research design and details the procedures for data analysis. This chapter contains information regarding the selection of participants, the coding process, and the organization of the findings.

Chapter 4 is presented to show the results of the research findings. The results are organized into three areas, which align with the research questions. Chapter 5 includes a detailed analysis and discussion of the findings and conclusions. Further, a review of the

applicability of the findings to leadership, in addition to the implications for further research and recommendations for action, concludes the chapter.

Definition of Key Terms

The study will use the following terms when discussing emotional resistance.

Emotional resistance: Human opposition to a change, which is filled with a range of emotions that cause discomfort and doubt. The feelings can be expressed verbally and non-verbally. Some emotions include anger, frustration, disappointment, and surprise (Quy Nguyen et al., 2014). Emotional resistance has been identified as a top reason for change failures (Bareil, 2013).

Organizational change: Organizational change is altering the present form of the organization in order to become a better form (Băeșu & Bejinaru, 2013). It can occur anytime there is a modification to processes, mission, or strategic function.

Change recipients: Change recipients are the organizational members who have been called upon by leaders to acquire new skills and competencies in order to handle new roles and tasks. They are the individuals impacted by change whose behaviors and mindsets need to be modified in order to achieve goals (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Benson, 2014).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the most important bodies of literature in leadership perceptions of emotionally resistant workers, the causes of emotional resistance, and approaches to reducing this form of resistance using the organization offered by this study's research questions. The overall purpose of the literature review is to draw attention to the complexity of addressing emotional resistance by discussing key findings and insights. The chapter is organized into four major sections: 1) the emergence of emotional resistance as an area of study; 2) the ways leaders perceive change; 3) the ways that leaders counter emotional resistance; and 4) the sources of emotional resistance. Furthermore, the research design, data collection, and analysis of the study were guided by these four main sections.

The Emergence of Emotional Resistance to Change

Powell and Posner (1978) helped lay the foundation for studying emotional resistance to change. They examined the origins of emotional resistance and the implications when leaders allowed it to persist. Powell and Posner argued that when leaders detected opposition to change, they stopped listening to what people had to say. If leaders did listen, they only did so as a consolation instead of as a genuine attempt to incorporate some of what staffers said into the change plan. Employees often found themselves communicating their reservations, only to see their superiors maintain that nothing was wrong. Consequently, change recipients held back and lost trust in the

leadership team. The findings by Powell and Posner on emotional resistance still hold true today.

Emotional resistance to change is a complex and multidimensional occurrence, yet many leaders of organizational changes struggle to make sense of it (Szabala, 2007). The challenge makes emotional resistance to change a topic of high interest for leaders tasked with growing an organization and scholars looking for ways to help leaders overcome resistance. Bareil (2013) and Malik and Masood (2015) argued that not enough organizational change leaders have been exposed to models and insights that offer clear recommendations for helping emotionally resistant workers adjust to new processes and systems.

Scholars and leaders of organizational change agree on a renewed effort to clarify the impact emotional resistance can have on change goals (Bareil, 2013; Bowen, 2014; Varol & Varol, 2013). The reason is because continuous changes to processes, technologies, people, practices, and objectives can be the turning point for an organization looking to regain its competitive edge in the marketplace (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012). To underscore the need to address emotional resistance, Wilson (2014) contended that leaders alone do not transform organizations. People tend to fear and resist the unknown, thus making it harder for leaders to gain support and execute changes. A successful outcome of a change initiative lies in part with how well leaders motivate their staff during times of uncertainty and when emotions run high.

Most recently, scholars have come to agree that emotional resistance to change is not irrational, and recipients of change can have legitimate concerns leaders should take seriously (Bareil, 2013; Quy Nguyen et al., 2014). Thus, organizational leaders, and newsroom leaders specifically, need to understand the nature of emotional resistance to change if they are to incorporate and cope with the common reaction and achieve successful change outcomes. Recognizing the forms of emotional resistance is vital to this goal.

Perceiving Resistance

Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) argued that how leaders perceive and choose to prepare employees for change, thereby helping them overcome their fears and anxiety over altering the status quo, can prevent or help organizations achieve their change goals. Breaking with Kotter and Schlesinger's findings, Battilana and Casciaro (2012) and Băeșu and Bejinaru (2013), and Rains (2013), argued that the frequency and scope of changing processes, systems, and responsibilities can cause people to feel a sense of instability and uncertainty. Thus, both the types of changes and the timing of changes can create negative emotional reactions to change.

Rains (2013), in a study on emotional responses to workplace change in subordinates, identified the major responses from employees facing changes. These responses were: discouragement, depression, frustration, anger, anxiety, fear, helplessness, resentment, poor motivation, sadness, and loss of sense of identity and security. In today's global economy, organizations with leaders who can both recognize

and conquer emotional resistance to change, regardless of the frequency, are more likely to see their staff endure the competitive environment.

Responses to Planned Change

Szabala (2007) examined the multifaceted nature of emotional resistance in a study motivated in part by a lack of an advanced understanding of emotional resistance. Organizational change practitioners agree that human resistance may be the main cause of change failure, yet they do not know enough about it to counter this type of resistance effectively.

Szabala (2007) sought to inform leaders about the relationship between leadership strategies and reactions to change along the emotional dimension. Through a study of 281 county government employees in the Midwestern region of the United States, Szabala found that change strategies provoked emotional resistance from the respondents. The power-coercive strategy was the leadership strategy that resulted in the highest amount of negativity. Change agents who operated under a power strategy found that subordinates complied with changes, but they did not fully support them. Although necessary in some situations, utilizing coercion to implement change has more negative consequences than benefits. To avoid the penalties associated with the power-coercive strategy, Szabala argued that leaders should remain aware of the strategies they apply and the variety of emotions each strategy can trigger.

Lawrence et al. (2014) illustrated how leadership reactions to employee emotions played an integral part in the acceptance and execution of a change initiative. Their study

captured the leaders' reactions and reflections at all stages of the change process. The process came at a time when the healthcare industry was experiencing a demand to meet new expectations set by customers, society, and government agencies. Lawrence et al. found that emotions among hospital employees intensified during particular stages of the change process. Like many business sectors, the healthcare industry endured sweeping changes, externally and internally. Pressures arose from new laws, payment structures, new technology, and staffing concerns. Healthcare executives described these turbulent times as the norm rather than the exception. The majority of hospital managers found themselves responsible for designing, implementing, and leading their teams through a growing number of transformations from small to large scale.

Lawrence et al. (2014) used Musslewhite and Ingram's four-stage model of change to examine hospital executives' perspectives as stakeholders during the change initiative. The model is an illustration of the stages people experience during a transition. The stages are: 1) acknowledging; 2) reacting; 3) investigating; and 4) implementing. The framework showed what healthcare workers and executives felt during a transition. The data was created by analyzing survey questions answered by hospital executives who were in charge of making changes.

Lawrence et al. (2014) discovered that although most respondents accepted change because of their passion for providing good care to patients, they shared a similar desire for leaders to help keep them motivated and focused. The findings also suggest that leaders can do more to aid employees in expressing their feelings rather than

suppressing them. Lawrence et al. concluded that leaders should not only be held accountable for change and performance goals, but also for leading team members through the emotional transition process of accepting change. The conclusions called for a more balanced approach to leading organizational change since adaptation to environmental demands has the potential to prevent change from occurring.

Emotional Reactions to Radical Change

The need to acknowledge emotional resistance is supported in the results of a study conducted by Balogun, Bartunek, and Do (2010). They analyzed the creation of a new division in a multinational European consumer goods organization. The company was reorganized in response to declining revenue and tougher competition in the marketplace. Business leaders took what they believed were steps to make the company more sustainable. They redefined goals, set new strategies, and developed new operating structures.

The reorganization led to confusion over roles and responsibilities, most notably regarding who was in charge of making decisions. The leaders in charge of changes did not have a common purpose and were forced to launch a culture change program to restore faith in what they were trying to accomplish. Despite these efforts, several managers left the organization. Balogun et al. (2010) argued that this case illustrated the emotional toll that change can take on leaders and subordinates alike as they simultaneously work to implement and accept change. Balogun et al. found that

organizational leaders should reconsider how they view emotional resistance in order to understand it better.

According to Quy Nguyen et al. (2014), not only can emotional resistance influence the outcome of a proposed change, it also shapes how employees perceive the information communicated to them. Allen et al. (2014) also found that the root causes of emotional resistance have not been as well researched as they could be, particularly during the implementation phase of a change program; moreover, people's feelings can steer the end result of an organizational change (Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia, & Irmer, 2007; Quy Nguyen et al., 2014).

In a qualitative study on emotional resistance, Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) concluded that planned radical organizational change (PROC) could lead to a high level of emotional resistance. They defined PROC as sudden and intense change that profoundly disturbs people's values, roles, identities, interests, and interpersonal relationships. Their study involved a large organization that was plummeting as a result of de-regulation and the competitive and technological environments. They spent three years following the organization's management team as it conducted change efforts to bring the company out of its slump. The researchers examined the emotional resistance by middle managers as changes were proposed and implemented.

During their investigation, Quy Nguyen et al., (2014) learned that because employees worked long hours and took on many projects, they began to feel underappreciated. From this inquiry into emotional resistance, Quy Nguyen et al. found

that as leaders increased demands to change, employees expected leaders to increase their ability to recognize when emotions took a negative turn. The researchers concluded that a way for leaders to recognize emotional resistance was to gain a deeper knowledge of the tasks and responsibilities workers carried out, which would be a necessary shift in perspective if leaders wished to be able to counter emotional resistance to change and achieve their change goals.

Countering Emotional Resistance

Emotional resistance to change continues to be a major issue for leaders of today's organizations (Varol & Varol, 2013). A competency for leading successful change efforts is the ability to tackle the problem of emotionally resistant workers. Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) supported that argument by stating that more research in the area of countering emotional resistance was needed.

The argument made by Quy Nguyen et al., (2014) and Varol and Varol (2013) calling for additional research on emotional resistance is supported in part by the conditions of the global marketplace. Looking at the current business environment, change has never been more prevalent as leaders respond to new technology, shifting cultural values, behaviors, globalization, economic downturns, increased competition, and a changing workforce (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008; Wilson, 2014). Even though leaders understand that at some point these forces will reshape organizational structures and objectives, many of them find it hard to convince emotionally resistant employees to adapt.

In consideration of the need for leaders to work better with emotionally resistant followers, Wilson (2014) stated that leaders of change must be competent in four key areas: (1) crafting a compelling and unified change strategy; (2) developing a clear and effective communications plan; (3) understanding how change will affect stakeholders; and (4) establishing a reasonable timeline for the change implementation. However, even leaders who are competent in these areas can see their change efforts run into problems, take longer to carry out, lower morale, and cause significant emotional and mental anguish (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Moreover, due to the problems associated with implementing changes, some leaders come to the early conclusion that their change plans will not work and abandon them altogether.

It can be puzzling for leaders to understand why employees with the skills, intellect, and commitment to the company do not adapt to change. This situation is especially baffling when the marketplace commands leaders to adopt new strategies for conducting business. In a previous discussion about employees' emotions during radical change, Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) highlighted an organization in which leaders found themselves needing to get their teams to adapt to de-regulation and an evolving marketplace. Change under these circumstances is the result of market conditions or what has been described as an external force.

Market Forces

Parker et al. (2012) examined the relationship between management practices and the impact those practices had on the comfort levels of people going through

organizational change. They provided evidence that a leader's approach to proposing and implementing change can impact the level of emotional resistance. The findings align with one of the goals of this study, which is to provide suitable strategies for overcoming emotional resistance. The conclusions that are drawn from this research study will not only advance the literature on the subject of emotional resistance to change, but they will also assist leaders of change in their organizations, thereby demonstrating the applicability of this research.

Internal forces can create serious problems for leaders who are struggling to deal with emotional resistance. Most people do not have a problem with change, but rather with the possibility of a negative outcome and uncertainties that come from change (Rains, 2013). When potential problems begin to surface, recipients of change who resist can play important roles in drawing attention to aspects of a change plan that are improbable or simply will not work.

The study of internal forces that cause emotional resistance by Mariana et al. (2013) built on the work of Parker et al., (2012) by noting that both the internal and external environments can greatly impact the level of resistance from employees. A leader's ability to reduce resistance is essential for successfully implementing a change, but doing so requires the leader to understand what forces may be prompting emotional resistance (Mendonca, 2015). In the internal atmosphere, Mariana et al. named the following as forces that greatly influence how employees respond to change: (1) the size of change; (2) the number of team members affected; (3) the frequency of change; (4) the

communication methods; (5) the speed of its implementation; and (6) the extent of how amendments to the system will prevent employees from achieving tasks. These forces are relevant to this study, which was designed to better understand emotional resistance. The forces are especially important to the third research question, which was asked to discover whether leaders know the source of emotional resistance. Furthermore, the forces that influence how employees respond to change could already exist in newsrooms, but the leaders simply do not recognize them.

Economic downturns and cultural trends are external forces that sound like valid reasons for organizational change, yet even with logical reasons for change, some employees still resist adaptation. In such situations, it may be advantageous for leaders to look internally to discover the causes of the resistance. An example of an internal force is the threat to the interpersonal relationships that organization members have developed over time. Through a closer look at the internal environment, leaders may find themselves better positioned to counter emotional resistance.

Traditional and Modern Paradigms

Bareil (2013) examined two paradigms for interpreting and dealing with emotional resistance to change. The first describes resistance as a form of disobedience or a fight against a proposed new action or behavior. This paradigm depicts resistance as the enemy of change and something negative that must be either ignored or terminated. Those who view resisters in this regard perceive them as foes instead of partners in the pursuit of transforming the enterprise into a sustainable organization. Bareil provided

several interpretations of the word resistance. For example, Bareil explained one interpretation of resistance as a refusal to accept new ideas or changes. Bareil defined a second paradigm as the ongoing behavior that challenges and disrupts changes to a system. Bareil explained that resistance in the traditional sense is to slow down or disturb the planned change. A contrasting interpretation of resistance offered by Bareil noted it as a resource, a form of feedback, and something that can contribute to effective change. People with the intent to disrupt a change may do so even at the implementation or follow-up stages of the process. Resistance does not always manifest early in the change process. Sometimes it can appear without warning. The abrupt appearance of emotional resistance is something that can leave leaders stumped because at the onset, the absence of resistance suggested acceptance of the ideas.

In an article that discussed the means to cope effectively with resistance to change, Bareil (2013) asked leaders to reconsider the negative view of resistance in favor of a more positive outlook. Researchers of the modern paradigm of resistance view emotional resistance as a form of feedback that provides more information. The frame of mind regarding resistance is that individuals are indeed committed to company goals and willing to adapt, but hesitant about how to achieve the desired outcome. Employees become resisters only after reflective thinking with the intention of cooperating with change agents. The level of discomfort is interpreted as beneficial to the overall goals of the change program. Backers of the modern paradigm argue that resistance to change is a form of expression of people's desires to learn more about what is occurring (Battilana &

Casciaro, 2012; Malik & Masood, 2015). In workplaces where change is rapid and continuous, Bareil concluded that employees could see gaps in communication about objectives. In some instances, details about an initiative may come from subordinates themselves rather than leaders. As misinformation spreads across units, so does confusion and uncertainty. Therefore, recipients resist in a search for clarity, dialogue, and understanding.

Supporting Emotionally Resistant Workers

Anderson and Anderson (2010) provided some insights for leaders who struggled to address emotional resistance. They stated that the goal for leaders is not to get change recipients who show emotional resistance to commit. Instead, the goal should be to support them through an environment where recipients can express their emotions. Doing so will allow those emotions to be felt by those who are emotionally resistant and other change recipients. Anderson and Anderson concluded that if workers are not allowed to process what is lost during change, they will not be ready, emotionally, for the new state that the organization is trying to become.

Creating a safe space for expression begins with how leaders invite people into the conversation. Employees need to know that their leaders will listen openly and there will be no retribution for what is communicated (Nafei, 2014). Employees need to know the goal is to learn what they think and feel about the change so that the leadership team can address the concerns. Anderson and Anderson (2010) called for leaders to remain conscious of what occurs in their own mind, body, and emotions. The difficulty for

leaders is giving the space entirely to the change recipient. The idea behind leaders simply receiving what people have to say is that once employees' resistance has been heard and acknowledged, it will dissolve. Anderson and Anderson argued that once the resistance dissipates, a level of openness emerges and employees' perceptions of change become more positive. Subsequently, emotionally resistant workers view the proposed changes as sensible and valuable. Commitment to these changes will develop by itself, not because of anything leaders did, but by simply providing change recipients with the space to express themselves. A central component to providing safe spaces for emotionally resistant workers is the leaders' ability to operate from their highest self. This means being consciously aware of what their thoughts and feelings can trigger during dialogue.

Most literature on organizational change primarily focuses on process and system issues, while neglecting emotional issues. To prevent leaders from giving up on change, Lawrence et al. (2014) called on leaders to understand the relationship between people's emotions and change. Emotional resistance to change may include excitement and happiness, but also anxiety, fear, anger, and confusion. Grasping the connection between emotions and transitions can greatly improve a leader's probabilities of gaining higher commitment and encountering less emotional resistance from employees (Nafei, 2014). Human response to change has been described as a process, while change has been labeled as an event. These descriptions are an example of a key piece of information that could help leaders in addressing emotional resistance. People's attitudes, values, and

behaviors do not change overnight, but do so gradually (Lawrence et al., 2014).

Therefore, even when people intellectually understand the need for change, they can be emotionally unable to make the transition.

The success or failure of change depends greatly on how leaders manage emotional dynamics (Malik & Massood, 2015). Emotional states during change are usually expressed through organizational behaviors and attitudes of the change recipients. Malik and Massood (2015) found that if allowed to go unchecked, emotions could weaken a person's willingness to commit to change and perform his/her duties effectively. They collected data from a sample of 170 employees from multiple organizations using questionnaires. Malik and Massood added that leaders should develop emotional intelligence (EI) to increase awareness of emotional resistance in members of organizations that are undergoing change. The contention here is that emotionally intelligent leaders who recognize their own emotions during times of uncertainty may be successful at detecting resistance in others.

Emotionally intelligent leaders have the ability to reason with emotions and emotional signals (Malik & Massood, 2015). They understand the emotions in others and in themselves then use the information to adapt to concerns and demands. EI helps foster team engagement and further opens the line of communication between leaders and followers. EI provides leaders with a basis for understanding how people's emotions influence others who work around them. Bowen (2014) echoed this conclusion in a study that found a strong link between EI and commitment to change and performance.

Sources of Emotional Resistance

In a study on what obstacles get in the way of change, Băeșu and Bejinaru (2013) found that the main hurdle to successful change was human resistance. People resist change because they would rather focus on what they may have to give up rather than what they could gain during change; people also tend not to consider how they could contribute to change goals. This way of thinking could lead to a high level of emotional discomfort.

Role Ambiguity

Authors of the literature on emotional resistance to change commonly argue that leaders who view their proposals and demands from the view of the change recipients will have better success in working with recipients who display emotional resistance (Fox & Amichai-Hamburger, 2001; Olsen & Stensaker, 2014). Doing so allows leaders to determine the uncertainties recipients may feel as a result of the required new skills leaders ask them to acquire. Olsen and Stensaker said that change initiatives, regardless of their size and magnitude, can cause employees to have some doubt regarding their competencies.

Olsen and Stensaker (2014) came to this conclusion in a study on how leaders of change respond to recipients who experienced uncertainty during change. They investigated role ambiguity and its connection to emotional resistance. Olsen and Stensaker defined role ambiguity as the trouble with understanding expectations and the necessary skills required during change. They studied job-related uncertainty during

change and found recipients struggled to put new competencies into practice, mainly because of role ambiguity. The findings resulted from 33 semi-structured interviews with leaders of change, middle managers, and employees in the Norwegian public sector, particularly the education unit. They found role ambiguity could cause recipients to either not acquire the skills necessary for change or to take longer than others to develop them.

Another takeaway from Olsen and Stensaker's (2014) research on emotional resistance to change is that when leaders were unable to provide answers to workers' job-related uncertainties, recipients attempted to solve their own problems. Since leaders are the individuals mostly in charge of identifying the skills and expectations for change, they hold most of the burden of communicating this information to recipients. Role ambiguity relates to the proposed research because emotional resistance to change may be prompted in part by vague messages from leaders on what they expect from their employees. Too much doubt associated with new tasks, responsibilities, and necessary skills could be a source of emotional resistance leaders have yet to realize.

Modifications to structures, roles, and responsibilities are unlikely to be carried out successfully without acceptance from the various groups of people that make up the organization. The notion that everyone affected by change will have some sort of emotional reaction to what they are being asked to do or support, whether that reaction is positive, negative, or somewhere in between is common (Varol & Varol, 2013). Another reason for emotional resistance to change may be lack of trust in leadership,

misunderstandings, and self-interests (Mariana et al., 2013).

Perception and Trust in Leaders

In a study linked to role ambiguity, Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia, and Irmer (2007) examined employee perceptions and trust during change. The researchers interviewed employees from 16 organizations to learn the effects trust and perceptions had on how change recipients received information from leaders. Their study on perceptions and trust has its place in the discussion on emotional resistance to change because the findings by Allen et al. suggest a leader's behavior may be the source of emotional resistance.

As part of the research design, participants were asked a series of questions about a change that occurred in the past 12 months. Allen et al. (2007) found that perceptions influenced how work groups responded to change propositions, specifically the proposals made by their superiors. Allen et al. justified the power of perceptions in their findings that showed employee trust in leaders swayed how they received information during change.

Asencio and Mujkic (2016) agreed with the conclusions made by Allen et al. (2007). In a study on trust in leaders and how the leaders' behavior influences employee perceptions, Asencio and Mujkic learned that the source of the information about change and ideas was an important factor in whether employees supported a change plan. The risk of resistance was much greater among workers who did not trust the leader or change agent who was facilitating the changes. Individuals who had more trust in management,

believed in the rationale for making modifications to current conditions and were more willing to take appropriate steps to improve their situations (Allen et al., 2007). This exploration of employee perceptions of leaders during change underscores the importance of defusing distrust in leadership because it can lead to emotional resistance and the failure of change efforts.

In a study that examined the effectiveness of leadership behaviors in building trust with employees, Asencio and Mujkic (2016) investigated employee perceptions of transactional and transformational leaders. They found transformational leadership behavior, such as motivating, inspiring, and communicating attainable goals, built higher levels of employee trust. The implications of their research are important to the discussion on combating resistance to change since the more employees trust their leaders, the more likely they are to be motivated to complete new tasks.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

The quality of the relationships with the individuals leading change and employees impacts employee perceptions of leaders (Shweta & Srirang, 2013). A way for leaders of change to better understand the influence of perceptions on emotional resistance may be through the Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX), which focuses on the quality of the relationships between leaders and followers. The concept states that in high-quality relationships, leaders meet far less resistance to change compared to low-quality relationships.

Van Dam, Oreg, and Schyns (2008) studied how a work environment related to people's emotional resistance to change. The study's participants were employees of a housing corporation who experienced repeated organizational changes as a result of a merger. Participants described significant concerns in the work environment. Examples include complicated procedures, leadership practices, and uncertainty about the organization's future. All of these issues were factors in whether people resisted changes proposed by leaders following the merger. Van Dam et al. found that the work environment does include the exchanges between leaders, and therefore, the environment should support a climate conducive to change. Consequently, a low-quality LMX relationship does not create the environment in which emotional resistance will have a minimal impact on changes.

Likewise, Furst and Cable (2008) found that employees may use the quality of their relationships with leaders to help them interpret the meaning and intent of a proposed change. High and low LMX relationships have important implications for leaders who encounter emotional resistance during change but are ineffective at addressing it. Furst and Cable specifically pointed out that when settling on how to address emotional resistance, leaders might want to consider the relationships they have with those individuals who are putting up resistance.

Shweta and Srirang (2013) underscored the magnitude of high-quality leader-member exchanges when they concluded that employees who believed leaders care about their well-being and valued their contributions were less likely to resist change. On the

other hand, low-quality leader-member exchanges led to emotional resistance when change occurred. The reason is low-quality exchanges are purely transactional. This means the benefits of the relationship are routine and standard. Shweta and Srirang determined that emotional resistance could be avoided in organizations where LMX is high.

In a study that focused on the relationship between employee resistance to change and the perceptions arising from supervisor-employee relationships, Georgalis, Samaratunge, Kimberley, and Lu (2016) found that the LMX characteristics did relate to resistance to change. The authors concluded that leaders would benefit from paying close attention to fostering positive relationships with their staff to model respect and fairness. Since employees play valuable roles in the ultimate success of a change initiative, their interactions with leaders can affect how a change plan develops. Furthermore, Georgalis et al. found that leader-member exchanges can influence how an individual evaluates the effectiveness of the change being presented. This discussion on LMX connects to the present study because it draws attention to a key part of the research questions, which ask newsroom leaders what they do to counter emotional resistance when it presents itself.

Communication during Change

Some leaders may find it harder to foster high leader-member exchange relationships to reduce emotional resistance if their communication is poor. Good communication before, during, and after the change process is important in reducing emotional resistance from followers (Bateh, Castaneda, & Farah, 2013). Fox and

Amichai-Hamburger (2001) argued that communication is the key to overcoming resistance to change. Open and honest communication between leaders and employees has its advantages during changes. Two of the advantages are strengthening relationships and reducing resistance.

Communication to overcome emotional resistance is unlike communicating the rationale for change. Fox and Amichai-Hamburger (2001) stated that communication has a rational component and an emotional component. However, many leaders of change seem to emphasize communicating the rationale for change. Fox and Amichai-Hamburger made the case for supporting change with data, reports, cultural trends, and marketplace conditions instead of acknowledging and appealing to the emotional aspect of change.

All of this evidence is important to the call for change, but evidence is not enough to alleviate the emotional resistance blocking people from accepting change. Emotional resistance can have unfavorable consequences for organizational leaders who want to see change occur. Taking into consideration the range of emotions revealed during change, Fox and Amichai-Hamburger (2001) called on leaders to consider five areas: (1) the core messages regarding the change; (2) the way the messages are packaged; (3) the characteristics of the change leaders; (4) the interaction of change leaders with their audience; and, (5) the setting in which the interactions with employees takes place.

The perception and reality of unexpected losses are two of the biggest causes of emotional resistance among change recipients (Fox & Amichai-Hamburger, 2001; Furst

& Cable, 2008). Peus, Frey, Gerhardt, Fischer, and Traut-Mattausch (2009) found that withholding negative information could increase emotional resistance. Because of the many undesirable outcomes associated with change, Peus et al. described the need for quality change communication. An example of quality communication from a leader is sharing job-related information that will allow recipients to follow up with questions. Quality communication about change acknowledges the negative aspects related to the changes. Furthermore, Peus et al. found that employees have to perceive changes as fair and feel like they are being given quality information in order for them to embrace change. The authors underscored how much employees rely on the timeliness, accuracy, and usefulness of the information from leaders to conclude whether they will resist. Peus et al. added to the discussion on the possible sources of emotional resistance to change, but their research was limited in that it did not talk specifically about how leaders can counter emotional resistance. The present study was designed to add new knowledge to fill this gap.

The State of Local Television News

A primary example of an organization where leaders confront emotional resistance as a result of rapid changes is a local television newsroom, the object of this study. News organizations are undergoing substantial changes in how they function, due in part to how and when audiences consume content (Kaul, 2013). New technology and social media are two of the biggest forces influencing the changes. Newsroom leaders find themselves continuously proposing changes in order to survive the digital revolution.

While some television journalists appear excited to embrace the new media landscape, others may not be as enthusiastic. Kaul argued that a dilemma for newsroom leaders of change in the digital age is finding the balance between making necessary changes to goals, processes, and systems while being sensitive to the emotional needs of staffers who are directly impacted by the changes; this dilemma persists today.

One of the major areas undergoing change in local television newsroom is the organizational structure (Singer 2010). Leaders have been forced to revamp responsibilities and working conditions to reflect the new consumer attitudes and practices in a digital era. According to the Pew Research Center (2016), 38% of U.S. adults get their daily news from websites, apps, and social media sites. While the majority of Americans still turn to television for news, a growing number of audiences are more likely to seek digital platforms for news. As a result of this trend, some newsrooms have changed job descriptions to include writing and reporting for digital platforms. Anchors and reporters now maintain social media pages and use them strategically to share and generate content. Since the Internet is a visual and auditory medium, words alone will not maintain online audiences (Singer, 2010). On a daily basis, journalists may be expected to upload interviews, pictures, and videos to go along with their written reports. This type of work especially true in news operations with limited resources or those that have no online staff, which could increase pressure for journalists in these environments to adapt faster than they would like.

The Internet and new technology are not only changing how people consume news and creating economic challenges for broadcast companies, but the biggest future issue may be that in the digital realm the news industry is no longer in control of its own future. News organizations still produce most of the content audiences consume, but each technological advance has added a new layer of complexity and a new set of players in the quest to connect content to consumers and advertisers (Pew Research Center, 2016). As news consumption becomes more mobile, news organizations follow the rules of device makers and software developers to deliver their content. As a result, the new players take a portion of the revenue, and in many cases, control the audience data (Pew Research Center, 2016; Singer, 2010).

Perhaps the biggest problem for companies during the digital revolution will be workplace morale, change management, retention, and employee engagement. The plethora of technological innovations being developed and incorporated into society on a daily basis serves to supplement and undermine previous technologies. This shift presents media companies and individual professionals with the challenge of constant adaptation to the emergence of new technologies and the progressive abandonment of the old (Reinardy & Bacon, 2014).

Surviving the changes in television journalism has not been easy for many workers. The new methods of gathering and delivering content force employees to learn new skills and take on additional responsibilities, thus increasing role ambiguity, which has been shown to lead to emotional resistance. As consumers engage with media in

increasingly immersive, almost instantaneous and interconnected ways, the people whose livelihood and sense of professional identity depend on delivering content and experiences across such media seem to be at a loss over how to come up with and enact survival strategies (Deuze, et al., 2010). Today's journalists must understand the role they play as newsrooms strive to meet the needs of audiences on various platforms.

Due to the major shifts in how local stations operate their newsrooms, leaders have found themselves managing change and encountering resistance from staff. For instance, veteran journalists may be reluctant to embrace social media as a viable platform for reporting news. The reasons for resisting change vary among journalists, but common reasons include losses in routines, relationships, and traditions (Reinardy & Bacon, 2014). Organizational change can sometimes lead to reduced employee job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and an increased likelihood to quit. For an industry undergoing such a major transformation, organizational leaders are pressed to find ways to retain experienced journalists. The causes of low job satisfaction vary, but researchers have found that content changes, profit emphasis, and staff reduction were negatively related to job satisfaction, while emphasis on traditional journalistic values and professionalism were positively related to job satisfaction (Reinardy & Bacon). In essence, higher job satisfaction was tied to the pursuit of journalistic, as opposed to business, goals.

Given the nature of a dynamic world, organizational change is not a new phenomenon, nor will organizational change ever end. Change in newsrooms is no

exception to this reality. Regular changes to systems and processes in news organizations, means that leaders can expect to face continued resistance from staff as they make changes to business models and ask for more out of their employees. Some authors suggest that little research has been done on managing change in this particular industry (Kaul, 2013). However, other researchers conclude that change management in mass communication has received a fair amount of attention over the years (Daniels, 2009). Most researchers propose a comprehensive research agenda for the study of change in journalism (Kaul, 2013; Reinardy & Bacon, 2014). Topics authors recommend include: reward structures, participatory structures, and role structures of those journalists working in organizations undergoing change.

Summary

A common refrain in the existing literature on emotional resistance to change is that the field of organizational change has not done enough to investigate this leadership problem (Quy Nguyen et al., 2014). A reason for the gap is because much of the attention has been given to implementation, communication, and proposal strategies, instead of the emotional aspects (Allen et al., 2007). Georgalis et al., (2016) attributed the majority of failed change initiatives to employee resistance.

Several key areas that justify why this research is needed and how it can fill the void in the literature are highlighted in the chapter. First, in countering emotional resistance leaders, individual responses to change will vary. They can be positive, negative, or mixed, depending on how leaders perceive emotional resistance.

Traditionally, recipients of change who appear to resist are perceived as troublesome or distractors (Szabala, 2007). Leaders with a more fluid outlook of emotionally resistant workers may find it easier to counter the emotions that prevent people from accepting change. Researchers who examined perceptions of leaders during change point to LMX as a possible source of emotional resistance, but they fall short in providing leaders with specifics on how to apply this information in tackling resistance.

Anderson and Anderson (2010) tried to fill this gap in the literature when they conducted research in which they found leaders could minimize the level of emotional resistance by creating safe spaces for workers to express their doubts about the changes. Although safe spaces are an example of a specific solution to addressing emotional resistance, the need to conduct further research in this field is worth repeating as leaders look to keep their organizations successful.

Furthermore, researchers of the literature on emotional resistance to change speak to Research Question one, which asks what resistance looks like to newsroom leaders. Bareil (2013) and Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) challenged the traditional thinking of resistance since it blames the change recipient. Those authors who subscribe to the modern view see resistance as neither good nor bad; instead, resistance is a form of feedback. What is unclear in the literature is if leaders of change, particularly in a newsroom environment, understand this distinction.

The broadcast industry has seen unprecedented changes in a number of areas, including operations, employee job satisfaction, and content delivery to audiences.

Innovations in technology are forcing news organizations to migrate content across multiple platforms. Currently, almost all news media from newspapers, local television stations, and cable news networks provide several gateways to their content (Singer, 2010). For example, organizations are now making their content accessible on the web, mobile phones, satellite radios, podcasts, and in airports and in-flight satellite television feeds. The continuing emergence of new production and distribution technologies and increased competition for audience share in fragmenting media markets has demanded newsroom leaders respond to change conditions.

Chapter 3 contains discussion of the research methodology and the overall research design. Participants were 12 newsroom leaders in local newsrooms across the United States. The primary research instrument was in-depth interviews. The data were coded using a pattern matching technique. A brief discussion on the limitations and delimitations of the study ends the chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This research study was designed to investigate leadership perspectives and challenges faced by newsroom leaders as they worked to combat emotional resistance to organizational change in their newsrooms. It did so through a qualitative study of interviews with 12 newsroom leaders. Developing such a methodology required a framework that was grounded in empirical research and qualitative data, and considered the literature on emotional resistance to change and the implications for leaders who fail to address it effectively. The underlying goal of the interview questions that were administered to newsroom leaders was to generate empirical data, which could be used to answer the following research questions:

1. How do television newsroom leaders perceive emotional resistance, and what does it look like to them?
2. When emotional resistance, as perceived by the leader, presents itself, what do the leaders do to counter it, if anything?
3. What do leaders think are the sources of employee emotional resistance?

This chapter includes a discussion on the descriptive qualitative research methodology and is broken down into six sections. Since qualitative research covers a range of research approaches that are uniquely different from each other, the first section is a review of the research method and the rationale for using the qualitative approach (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Solving the dilemma facing television newsroom leaders requires them to find the balance between implementing change and attending to

emotional resistance from employees; thus, the second section is organized to explain the research design, paying particular attention to why television newsrooms are a good site to study leadership perspectives on emotional resistance. The third section includes a discussion of the instruments and data collection. This section contains a discussion on the type of interviews conducted and the questions asked. The fourth section is an overview of the process of identifying and recruiting participants, including how they were contacted and the procedures undertaken to ensure confidentiality of their identities and answers to the interview questions. The fifth section provides an explanation of the analysis, preparation, and organization of the data after collection. The final section is a summary of the study's limitations and delimitations.

Research Method

This study of emotional resistance to change in organizations can be best labeled as descriptive because authors of descriptive qualitative research use the findings to develop new concepts and theoretical perspectives, or to discover new dilemmas within an existing phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2014). Merriam and Tisdell asserted that—to varying degrees—all forms of qualitative research try to uncover participants' understandings of their experiences. The justification for a continued drive to describe new beliefs and attitudes about emotional resistance was due in part to actual events occurring in today's marketplace, but also because of a need to add to the literature on emotional resistance to change. Consequently, a descriptive qualitative research methodology was selected because the study was designed to understand how

leaders made sense of real-life scenarios involving workers who expressed emotional resistance to change (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

In a descriptive qualitative study, the researcher has an opportunity to learn more about a situation or phenomenon that requires further understanding. Marshall and Rossman (2016) explained that the purpose of descriptive research is to document and describe the phenomenon of interest. Furthermore, descriptive research is used to identify or discover important actions, beliefs, and processes that occur in the phenomenon. For this study on emotional resistance, the problem, as explained in Chapter 1 and detailed in Chapter 2, was newsroom leadership's ability to properly recognize and address emotional resistance from employees in order to prevent it from disrupting the change process. Consequently, a descriptive qualitative study was an appropriate and effective method for investigating the experiences of newsroom leaders who contend with emotionally resistant employees during periods of change.

Research Design

A descriptive qualitative research design was suitable for this study on emotional resistance because descriptive research is conducted to document how people make sense of their experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Researchers who utilize descriptive qualitative design methods seek to discover the actions, events, beliefs, attitudes, social structures, and processes that occur during the experience being studied. For this study, the experience that was explored was leadership responses to emotionally resistant workers and strategies for overcoming this problem.

The local television media landscape has created a pressing dilemma for newsroom leaders, which calls on them to attend to emotional resistance from staffers who are directly impacted while also implementing necessary changes to objectives, processes, and operations (Kaul, 2013). The last several years have been demanding for television journalists across all levels of the organization; such demands still exist today. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained that one way researchers who conduct descriptive qualitative research gain an in-depth understanding of the problem is through in-depth interviews, observations, or document analysis. The next section provides an explanation of the instrument that was used in this research study to achieve a deeper understanding of the problem of how newsroom leaders contend with emotionally resistant employees in local television newsrooms.

Data Collection

The primary instrument for data collection was interviews with 12 newsroom leaders because interviews are among the most useful data collection methods in descriptive qualitative research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Semi-structured interviews, which are scripted questions asked in a specific order, were conducted and formed the foundation of this research study. A benefit of interviews as a collection method is that they produce data quickly and make clarifying answers to questions easier by allowing for immediate follow-up questions.

The leaders spent no more than one hour answering three open-ended research questions. All interviews were recorded with the permission of the participant to ensure

accuracy and improve data quality (Yin, 2014). For reasons of clarity or to expand on an idea, some participants answered follow-up questions during the initial interview. A transcription service transcribed all of the interviews.

This study was designed to use purposeful sampling, and participants were identified and recruited through personal contacts based on the jobs they performed in their newsrooms. Creswell (2013) explained that purposeful sampling is a means to select specific participants because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem. Study participants were deliberately selected due to their knowledge of the current state of television news and their roles as leaders of change in their organizations. Thus, participants had experiences with leading local television newsrooms that cannot be obtained elsewhere.

An introduction to the study was included in the initial telephone contact with each potential participant. Participants were then sent an email that included a consent form that outlined the purpose and goals of the research (See Appendix B). The consent form was written specifically to communicate the following: (a) the right to withdraw from the study at any time; (b) the purpose and procedures of the study; (c) the way that participants' identities would be protected; (d) any known risks associated with participation; and (e) the expected benefits of participating.

The anonymity guaranteed by the consent form was achieved by assigning fictitious names and only using the names of the cities in which the newsrooms were located as identification instead of the call letters for the television stations where

participants worked. See Appendix A for the complete list of fictitious names and participant cities. All names of subordinates and fellow leaders that surfaced during the interviews were also protected. This protection was achieved by informing the participants prior to the interviews that any names of colleagues or subordinates mentioned in their responses would not be used in the report of the findings. Additionally, in reporting the findings only the fictitious names assigned to participants were used.

Participants

Twelve television newsroom leaders responded to the interview questions to produce the results of this study. The leaders represented various levels of leadership in large, medium, and small newsrooms, which allowed for some variation. The participants held titles of Executive Producer (7), News Director (4), and Assistant News Director (1). Despite the different titles, all of them proposed, communicated, and executed change initiatives. Examples of change initiatives included setting new goals and objectives for story coverage, introducing new technology to improve breaking news reporting, evaluating employee performances, providing staffers with resources to perform tasks, and fostering a positive work environment.

The participants worked in the following television markets: Phoenix; Dallas; Sacramento; San Francisco; Palm Springs, California; Louisville; Las Vegas; Portland, Oregon; Lubbock, Texas; Tri-Cities, Washington; and Philadelphia. Each market was represented by one participant except Portland, Oregon which had two. In Chapter 4, the

participants will be referred to by region and pseudonym.

Data Analysis

This study on emotional resistance to organizational change was designed to use the analytic technique called pattern matching to analyze the data (Yin, 2014). Yin and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) said data analysis in descriptive qualitative research involves identifying recurring patterns or themes in the data. The first step in the analysis of the data was reading through the hard copies of each transcript several times to form an overview of the responses, at which time, marginal notes were made. Merriam and Tisdell and Creswell (2013) referred to this stage as the memoing phase in which the researcher becomes immersed in the data by writing notes, ideas, or concepts that come to mind.

After an interview was conducted, it was immediately transcribed, and then notes were written down to capture reflections, possible themes, and ideas from the responses. This procedure was done for each interview until the last interview was completed. Interviews were conducted based on the availability of the participants. Thus, the memoing phase of analyzing the data took several weeks to complete. The purpose of reading and memoing was to become familiar with the entire data collection, which helped transition to the next step—forming codes.

Creswell (2013) defined coding as the gathering of text or visual data into categories of information. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) defined coding as assigning shorthand designations to aspects of the data so specific pieces of the data can be easily

retrieved. Codes can be a single word, letters, numbers, or a full sentence. This study on emotional resistance to change was designed to use words and phrases. Codes represented new and surprising information, and information that was interesting or unusual. The codes that emerged from the interviews will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

Data Interpretation

The study was designed to look for a collection of instances in the data and single instances to draw meanings. This method, called direct interpretation, was selected because it used the data created by the interviews with the newsroom leaders in conjunction with the information derived from the literature (Creswell, 2013). Themes arose first when multiple subjects expressed similar ideas in response to the interview questions. The initial themes became patterns or areas of emphasis when they appeared in at least four interview transcripts or one third of the sample. Using the themes and phrases in the responses, codes were assigned for each question to draw conclusions.

Limitations

In a descriptive qualitative research study in which data are collected through interviews, Marshall and Rossman (2016) said a limitation is the dependency on trust. It is important for trust to exist between the researcher and participants, but trust may be absent when the researcher and participants do not know each other. Under these circumstances, the participants may be unwilling or uncomfortable to share all of their feelings and opinions about the topic being explored. Marshall and Rossman also noted

that some participants may be unable to find words to communicate their thoughts effectively.

Moreover, descriptive qualitative research does not represent a sample. Such research cannot be generalized broadly. In using such a method for this study, the goal was to contribute to the literature on emotional resistance to change, and to give recommendations for solving this leadership problem in television newsrooms.

An additional limitation in this study was the scope of the research topic. The study was conceived to investigate emotional resistance to change in television newsrooms at the local level; the study was unconcerned with other types of news organizations. Print, cable, and online news outlets were excluded from this study. Although some participants had experience working in these environments, the interview questions and discussions centered on participants' experiences and perspectives on emotional resistance to change in local television newsrooms only. Moreover, the study was designed to focus solely on emotional resistance from the view of leaders, not recipients of change. No effort was made to verify what the participants said during interviews about the employees they led. Therefore, answers to questions and scenarios described during data collection were assumed to be true and honestly discussed.

Another limitation in the study was that it did not target a specific designated market area (DMA). Media research companies use designated market areas to identify which television stations cover a particular part of the country. There are 210 DMAs in the United States. Number one is New York City followed by Los Angeles. The

smallest DMA according to Nielsen Research is Glendive, Montana, which ranks at 210. Designated market areas are relevant to the conversation about limitations since larger areas typically have more resources and journalists with more experience to execute change initiatives, while smaller areas have fewer resources and a workforce comprised of journalists who are just entering the field. Looking at these differences between large and small DMAs, the findings may not have implications for leaders in all market sizes.

The study only included television stations located in the United States. Also, the participants held leadership positions in local television news organizations. None of the participants were employed at print publications, cable networks, or online news organizations. The case was further limited to individuals who were responsible for proposing and implementing change.

Delimitations

The study was designed to investigate emotional resistance in local television newsrooms because of the industry's reputation of constantly changing to meet the needs of audiences and technological advances. Interviewing leaders in local newsrooms as opposed to cable networks made for a larger pool of participants. Furthermore, viewership is much higher at the local level, which suggests newsroom leaders at local stations call for change at higher rates than other leaders in broadcast journalism.

Qualitative research methods allowed for deeper conversations that could not be captured using quantitative methods. This research sought first-hand accounts from leaders across the newsroom organizational chart because newsroom leaders, no matter

where they stand in the newsroom hierarchy, play significant roles in proposing, implementing, and executing change. Emotional resistance can occur during any stage of the change process; therefore, it was reasonable to ask questions to specific leaders at the executive level and also those who worked directly with journalists.

Summary

Qualitative research is an effective way to explore the human side of an organizational issue (Creswell, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In this study, a leader's ability to effectively address emotional resistance during change was the leadership problem for reasons that were discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. Although some studies have offered conclusions on the topic of emotional resistance, more research is needed due to the regularity of change in today's organizations and the challenge for leaders who confront the human component of implementing change.

To help advance the discussion, this study was organized to use semi-structured interviews in a descriptive qualitative study with 12 leaders of change in local television newsrooms. The interview questions were asked to investigate new views on emotional resistance and what leaders did to address the problem. Pattern matching was used in the data analysis stage (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The study was limited in that it did not ask questions to change recipients. As such, the data represents only what leaders think about emotional resistance. Furthermore, the findings do not reflect the media industry as a whole.

The analysis of the data collected from the interview participants is presented in the next chapter. The investigation was conducted by applying the research methods identified in this chapter. The research findings are organized according to the three research questions. Insight into the types of emotional resistance study participants encountered and the range of options available to them to counter such resistance is provided by the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA FINDINGS

This study was designed to understand leadership perceptions of and sources of emotional resistance during organizational change. Moreover, it was devised to discover what leaders did to counter emotional resistance when change was necessary for the organization's survival. Interviews with leaders in local television newsrooms were used to explore the phenomenon of emotional resistance to change. Leaders in local television newsrooms across the United States are under increased pressure to make convergence or new media journalism a reality in their organizations, yet they are encountering a great deal of resistance from subordinates (Reinardy & Bacon, 2014). Newsrooms that fail to keep up with the pace of technological advances, social media trends, and evolving media consumption habits, may lose market share or become unimportant (Robinson, 2011). Considering this shift in the broadcast news marketplace, 12 leaders from local newsrooms across the United States answered the following questions about emotional resistance in their newsrooms:

1. How do television newsroom leaders perceive emotional resistance, and what does it look like to them?
2. When emotional resistance, as perceived by the leader, presents itself, what do newsroom leaders do to counter it, if anything?
3. What do newsroom leaders think are the sources of employee emotional resistance?

This chapter begins with a short review of the key terms, followed by a brief description of the participants. The findings of the study, organized by research question, are then presented. The findings section includes an overview of the responses to the research questions and a breakdown of the common themes that appeared during the data analysis.

Key Terms

Emotional resistance: Human opposition to a change, which is filled with a range of emotions that cause discomfort and doubt. The feelings can be expressed verbally and non-verbally. Some emotions include anger, frustration, disappointment, and surprise (Quy Nguyen, Corley, and Kraatz, 2014). Emotional resistance has been identified as a top reason for change failures (Bareil, 2013).

Organizational change: Organizational change is altering the present form of the organization in order to become a better form (Băeșu & Bejinaru, 2013). It can occur anytime there is a modification to processes, mission, or strategic function.

Change recipients: Change recipients are the organizational members who have been called upon by leaders to acquire new skills and competencies in order to handle new roles and tasks. They are the individuals impacted by change whose behaviors and mindsets need to be modified in order to achieve goals (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Benson, 2014).

Participant Profiles

The participants interviewed for this study held leadership titles of News Director, Assistant News Director, and Executive Producer. They worked in the following regions of the United States: West (Phoenix, San Francisco, Sacramento, Palm Springs, Las Vegas, Portland, and Tri-Cities, Washington), Southwest (Dallas and Lubbock, Texas), Midwest (Louisville), and Northeast (Philadelphia). The size of the newsrooms where the leaders worked ranged from small to large. Nielsen, a media research company, ranks television markets across the United States. Typically, large market television newsrooms fall from 1 to 25 in the hierarchy with New York as number one. Medium-sized market newsrooms are ranked from 26 to 52, and small market newsrooms are ranked 53 to 210 with Glendive, Montana being ranked the smallest market in the United States. More than half of the participants in this study were men. According to a 2013 survey from the Radio, Television, Digital News Association, 29% of the News Directors in the country were women. Thus, the demographic makeup of study participants reflected the proportion of men and women who held leadership positions in local television newsrooms, particularly the role of News Director.

All of the participants played key roles in directing a team of producers, writers, anchors, reporters, editors, and other journalists in the production of news products that were of high quality and consistent with the television station's brand. Most importantly, these individuals were responsible for the conception, development, or execution of

change initiatives in their newsrooms. In some cases, study participants were responsible for all three of these change-related activities.

The 12 study participants held various leadership positions in their newsrooms and were, accordingly, responsible for overseeing change initiatives. Among these areas of change, some leaders had greater influence and responsibility than others. In the chain of command in a television newsroom, the highest position was held by the News Director. In the context of this research topic, News Directors played key roles in all aspects of the change process. They looked at the bigger picture in terms of changes to all newsroom platforms and the direction of the newsrooms as a whole. The News Directors in this study oversaw all aspects of newsroom operations. News Directors in this study who worked in small newsrooms had a much larger workload and more responsibility to carry out change initiatives than News Directors in large and medium markets because smaller newsrooms typically had fewer resources to gather and report the news.

In TV newsrooms, the Assistant News Director was the individual who was usually seen as second in command. Only one leader, working in Portland, held that position at the time of this study. The role of the Assistant News Director varied depending on the television station. The Assistant News Director in this study was in charge of executing story coverage across all platforms. Other tasks included working with staff to ensure that journalistic standards were being met. The interactions of Assistant News Directors with employees were similar to those of News Directors but not

as detached. The Assistant News Director in this study had frequent interactions with workers during the implementation of social media strategies and the production of newscasts.

Next in the hierarchy was the Executive Producer or Managing Editor. No leaders in this study held the latter position. Seven leaders worked as Executive Producers; they were located in Portland, Louisville, Las Vegas, Dallas, Phoenix, Sacramento, and Philadelphia. As supervisors of newscasts, these participants worked more closely with journalists to produce content.

Presentation of Findings

Some of the patterns identified in the data were: (1) leaders described emotional resistance in their newsrooms as frustration and fear; (2) leaders believed that allowing employees to express their concerns alleviated some of the resistance; and (3) change burnout and no support for a vision were primary causes of emotional resistance.

The first research question that was posed emphasized perceptions of emotional resistance from change recipients and what leaders thought emotional resistance looked like in their newsrooms. Leaders who answered the second question concentrated on what they did to counter resistance when it presented itself or began to disrupt the changes they wanted to see. The third question was asked to determine what leaders believed was the source of emotional resistance in their newsrooms. Given that these were semi-structured interviews, when appropriate, follow-up questions were posed depending on participants' responses and for clarification purposes.

To achieve simplicity and clarity in this section and subsequent sections, the participants will be referred to by their region and pseudonyms. All leaders who participated in this study were assigned a pseudonym at the start of the data analysis process. The names in this section appear in no particular order.

Research Question 1: Perceptions of Emotional Resistance

Research Question 1 was designed to address two items. First, it was asked to discover the ways newsroom leaders felt about emotional resistance in their employees. Second, it was used to determine the types of emotional resistance leaders typically encountered.

Neutral perceptions. Overall, the newsroom leaders did not have overwhelmingly negative or positive views of emotionally resistant employees. As a group, the impression they gave was neutral. Mary, a News Director in the Western region, said emotionally resistant workers in her newsroom were, “Sometimes difficult, sometimes unyielding, and unwilling to compromise.” Further, one Executive Producer, Laura, perceived emotional resistance as immature.

Laura, who worked in the Midwest, explained that she has hired many people fresh out of college, which she said made them unprepared to cope with the pace and size of change in her newsroom. It also appeared that her perceptions stemmed from younger journalists who came into her newsroom with goals that did not align with the needs of the organization. She used reporters in her newsroom as an example. Talking about how

some of the entry-level journalists were mainly focused on gaining notoriety on television instead of what they could achieve behind the camera, she said:

Nobody really wants to do behind the scenes things, because behind the scenes is where all the real hard work is. You need to know how to do social media, you need to learn how to do the web, you got to do TV, you got to Tweet.

Mary further explained that some employees did not arrive with the knowledge that they have to be multi-faceted, working not only in-front of the camera, but behind it, especially in the area of social media reporting.

In contrast, James asserted that in his newsroom, “Resistance to change is quickly eroding.” He said, “It’s important for us to find people that are adaptive and that understand the changing evolution of workflows and the changing way we need to tell stories.” Both James’s and Mary’s responses typified the neutral outlook on emotionally resistant employees—that much of this generally neutral outlook can be explained by attributing it to immaturity that can be overcome.

Common types of emotional resistance. The look of emotional resistance was wide-ranging, but leaders mentioned some common themes. Frustration was the most often cited type of emotional resistance. Section three includes the sources of emotional resistance, including frustration. Broadly, however, leaders explained that people were frustrated because they had to learn something new again; the rate of change was another source of frustration. Mike said, “It’s frustrating that they [employees] have to learn again and they know that they have to learn again, to be in the job.” His views seem to echo the contradictory notions of job responsibilities television journalists have that

Laura also identified. Both leaders acknowledged how reconciling assumptions about television journalism with the reality can give rise to emotional resistance.

In addition to frustration, the other emotions mentioned the most were distrust, fear, and shock. Mary said, “Sometimes it’s [fear] because something is more difficult and they’ll [workers] say—well you know that makes things tougher. I think most of the time it’s just fear of change because it’s.... you’ve got to learn something new.” Kevin, a News Director, reiterated Mary’s point in a separate interview that was conducted with him, explaining:

The reporter push back I get on this kind of stuff more relates to time, because in this market [Palm Springs, CA], my reporters are VJs [videojournalists]. So they have to set up their own story, drive out to the story, shoot their story, come back and write and edit their story and then go back out and front it again. That one presents a little more of a challenge for me just because that is a valid concern just the work flow time constraints.

Kevin identified the anticipation of an increased workload as that which gave rise to fear in change recipients. Adding duties on top of those that workers were already doing generated apprehension in employees about whether they would be able maintain high performance standards.

Fear appeared most often in newsrooms where leaders repeatedly required their employees to learn new technology, use social media, and accept a new vision. Thus, the change cycle was never complete, and employees had to continuously adapt. Richard said,

We just switched to Avid editing system after working with Edius for years. Everybody in this building who’s worked here for quite some time has only known Edius and so we just switched to Avid. Everybody got at least two days of

training on it and they accepted it. There was some anger and there have been a few tears too.

While fear arose in response to the rate of change, shock can be traced to the size of change. That is, in newsrooms where change required a major modification to an employee's routine or when changes were proposed after a long time of stagnation, employees did not typically fear the incipient changes; they were shocked by the suggestion. Richard, a News Director said,

There had been seven or eight months of no change, this is how we do things and we'll all go by these guidelines—and I think to find out that that was going to change was upsetting to some crew members here.

Thus, in an attempt prevent employees from being afraid due to too much change too fast, Richard staggered his proposed changes over a period of seven or eight months. This had the adverse effect of shocking employees when he did finally propose more changes. He explained:

They [employees] were going about things in a process that was left behind from the last News Director even it had been so long. I think in some cases it helped them maintain some sort of order in the newsroom and kept them out of chaos, but at the same time I think they got into this mold where they were resistant to any change when I came in.

Research Question 1 included two aspects. Leaders focused on perceptions of emotionally resistant workers to address the first aspect of the question. The second part of the question was designed to discover what emotional resistance looked like in leaders' newsrooms. The overall perceptions were neutral with some leaders viewing people who displayed emotional resistance as immature or too inexperienced to cope with the changes that come with being a television journalist. Other newsroom leaders

perceived resisters as individuals who presented opportunities to emphasize the need to hire and train journalists for the speedy, yet every day, changes that occur in local television newsrooms. Common responses explaining what emotional resistance looked like were frustration, fear, distrust, and shock. Of these types of emotional resistance, the most repeated was frustration.

Research Question 2: Countering Emotional Resistance

After newsroom leaders identified emotional resistance to their change initiatives, they had to decide how and when to respond to it. The second research question was asked to guide leaders towards an explanation of what they did in the past to counter emotional resistance to change.

The most common actions leaders mentioned in their responses relied on the leaders' ability and willingness to open the lines of emotional communication. Consequently, leaders who wanted to counter the emotional resistance that employees presented needed to create a dialogue between themselves and their subordinates by (1) listening to people's concerns; (2) communicating honestly and openly; and (3) sharing the information that prompted the changes in the first place.

Listen to concerns. Of these countering strategies, the most common was listening to employees, in either an open or private setting. Most leaders preferred one-on-one discussions with change recipients to allow employees to express their worries about changes. Nearly all of the newsroom leaders said emotional resistance should be dealt with in a closed-door setting instead of the middle of the newsroom. Since

recipients of change can feel shock, frustration, and other emotions, the leaders felt it was best to address concerns privately.

John's response typified the desire to be sensitive. He said, "Because we have so much going on, we have to watch our tone. We have to watch how we effectively communicate what we want to happen." Emphasizing acknowledgement in addition to sensitivity, Mike said:

If you recognize that there's resistance there, listen to what the person has to say and try to understand why either they're frustrated or why they don't want to learn it or why they don't think it's the right way to do it. Then, from there, figure out how you can get them to get onboard.

The leaders' willingness to listen also meant that resistance could be dealt with promptly. Richard's response exemplified this approach when he said,

I think it's very important that it [emotional resistance] needs to be dealt with immediately. The sooner the better, and I think it needs to be dealt with in a closed-door type setting. I don't close my door for meetings, but in an instance where I feel like it's best to maybe have some privacy I do close the door because I don't feel like it benefits anybody to dress somebody down in the middle of the newsroom.

Communicate openly and honestly. Leaders who were willing to listen worked when they were also willing to be honest during communications with emotionally resistant workers. Bill explained this approach to communication, saying,

I think I try to be honest with them even if I don't agree with the policy and we have to do it anyway. I don't mind being honest, I'm not going to lie and say I think this is a great idea if I think it's not a great idea. I'll tell them that but at the same time it's our job to do it.

Kevin emphasized the importance of honest communication when discussing the differences between change initiatives, explaining,

If it's a short-term thing, then you articulate that this might be an experiment or this is something that you want to try. Whereas like a change in work flow I think it's just really important to articulate to the people who have to do it.

Richard summed up the priority leaders in this study placed on open and honest communication when he said: "I think it's so important to communicate with people and make sure you're upfront and honest with people and also make sure that you handle it in a dignified and responsible manner."

Steve explained that he achieves open and honest communication by trying to understand each person on his team. He said, "I can't be the same way across the board and just say do it. It doesn't work that way. I wouldn't want anyone to do that to me."

He added:

Considering the deadlines you have, there may not be any time to do the convincing and persuasion. And when there is time, I've taken my producers out for lunch to learn how I can help them and learn what they need from me.

Share data and information. John, emphasizing the need to openly communicate data to counter emotional resistance, said:

I like to have research to support my argument. So one of the things that I shared with Brooke is I said—hey just so you know, take a look at what these ratings are showing every time that we get your segment—and when she actually saw the minute by minute comparison over a one-month period, she actually came to me and said—you know what maybe we should rethink this and maybe should be doing this instead of that.

Robert noted that sharing data was especially important when dealing with veterans' emotional resistance, saying:

It's a longer endgame with the establishment and the anchors that have been here for 40 years. So I need to have research behind me or have my corporate director

behind me or my consultant behind me to help give them reason that I'm not just making change because I want to do it.

Kevin said he believes in full disclosure when explaining to his staff why change is necessary and the expectations. He said:

Having been in the news business for so long and been on the other side and been a worker bee in the newsroom for many years, who didn't always understand the full picture because my managers didn't tell me the full picture—I bring that to the table as a manager now and the more information I can explain to people and the more information that I can tell them, they're more likely to buy into this. As long as I give them everything that I know. I'm also not afraid to say when I don't know something.

James agreed that sharing information with employees was an effective way to counter emotional resistance, particularly information that showed how change can have positive effects on business goals. For an initiative to increase the station's presence on social media, he asked workers to figure out ways to add content to the station's Facebook page. This was an added responsibility for many people, but he understood the importance of using social media to increase audience engagement. After his team complied with the directive to produce content for social media, James explained how he used information and data to minimize any further emotional resistance he may encounter, saying:

Today we've crossed half a million Facebook likes on our Facebook page, which is a huge deal. It's more than the combined Facebook reach of all the other stations in our market. So it's one of those things where we had a huge kind of celebration for people to show how much that meant, and every day they reinforce it. When you don't have big moments like this we send out digital reports to show people, here are the top four or five Facebook posts that we put out today and here is a real number of people that actually saw it, engaged with it, things like that. So they see that the numbers that we're getting on Facebook are

gigantic and frankly sometimes bigger than what we're getting as a television audience, just to make them understand the importance of that platform.

Research Question 2 was designed to ask the newsrooms leaders what they did to counter emotional resistance when it presented itself in their organizations. The strategies leaders used were listening to concerns, communicating openly and honestly, and sharing relevant information and data about the market forces that prompted the changes.

Research Question 3: Sources of Employee Emotional Resistance

The third question was designed to discover what leaders saw as the causes of emotional resistance in their newsrooms. Identifying the sources was important because it allowed for the creation of real world recommendations to other newsroom leaders, thereby ensuring the practical applicability of this study. Participant responses indicated that change burnout, impact on personal lives, and fear of failure were the primary sources of employee emotional resistance.

Change burnout. In identifying change burnout as a source of emotional resistance, John said:

If this newsroom has been undergoing a lot of change and not seeing very much success from that change, you're going to get resistance, because at some point the people that are in that newsroom are going to get burned out or they're going to have a defeatist attitude.

James named change burnout as a source of emotional resistance in his newsroom because employees have been adapting to new systems, policies, and processes for several months as a result of a change in management. Bill echoed these views, stating,

People do twice the amount of work that they probably were doing. You have to explain why new work processes and workloads have to be invented. A lot of people get frustrated and resistant and it's also hard to reinvent the wheel every day.

For these leaders, change burnout resulted from the pace of change, the continuous nature of change, and the perceived success or failure of past changes. John said:

I think it depends on the culture of the newsroom, honestly. If this is the newsroom that has been undergoing a lot of change and not seeing very much success from that change, you're going to get resistance, because at some point the people that are in that newsroom are going to get burned out or they're going to have a defeatist attitude.

Paul added the concept of change burnout as a source of emotional resistance, saying:

Being bought and then sold and then having new ownership and then all of the technical changes and equipment, there were various types of roll outs that came with that change in ownership. It was crazy because it all seemed to have happened in an 18-month period where literally every 3-4 months there was a new technical thing that had to be handled.

Impact on personal lives. Another source of emotional resistance identified by the study participants was the impact of changes on employees' personal lives, such as career goals, relationships with colleagues and work schedules. Mary said, "The greatest resistance comes with change that affects people's personal lives. For example, if you change a schedule or you change responsibilities or anything that has to do with personal life or work-life balance or your job responsibility." Richard explained the types of changes that bothered workers in more detail, saying:

If it's something that is a drastic change that really impacts the way somebody has been doing their job, whether it be shifting their schedule for a while, or changing the editing system like we did, then you're going to find more pushback than you would see in just a minor change that wouldn't really change anybody's comfortability.

Thus, emotional resistance surfaced when changes in the newsroom bled into employees' personal lives.

Worries about job security increased when employees' thought changes would impact their personal lives. John said:

Journalists want to protect their territory, it's in our nature to say, as the producer well I want to protect my show, or as a reporter, I want to protect my story, or as an anchor, I want to protect my show and my job.

In particular, changes in management contributed to the biggest concerns about job security and growth. Leaders who did not hold positions of News Director or Assistant Director discussed their own concerns with job security when they failed to successfully implement changes that originated with upper-management. John said, "I've had directors come down from corporate and they just say—look you need to do this and if you don't do it immediately your job could be on the line." The relationship between job security and imposed changes complicated leaders' reactions to emotionally resistant employees.

Fear of failure. The other common source of emotional resistance to change leaders identified was fear of failure. Steve said some people in his newsrooms did not see the big picture. He said their vision was too narrow, meaning they were only concerned with their jobs and not how their tasks fit into a bigger plan. He believed that if leaders can get everyone to see a bigger picture, to put aside their own fear of failure, and to understand why change was necessary for the future of the organization as a whole, then overcoming emotional resistance is easier. Paul referred to a situation where

workers had to learn new processes and systems in a short period of time after the television station was acquired by another company. He said,

We went from INews to ENPS and then several other technical processes that came with that [acquisition] so then learning how to do vertigo and learning how to do the technographics and learning how to do a handful of things like that. They [employees] were very alienated by the idea of having to learn a new news room software system.

Robert, in a separate interview, echoed Paul's point about fear of failure, stating, "It's not personality-driven, it's more competence in. A lot of people don't want to fail. There's a fear of failure when you're walking into a news station for the first time." Thus, fear of failure was common and somewhat unavoidable, as Robert noted. However, as Paul explained, this ordinary fear was exacerbated by new situations, namely station acquisitions or the necessity for employees to learn to use an influx of new technology simultaneously.

The last research question was designed to discover what the leaders believed were the sources of emotional resistance to change among journalists in their newsrooms. The most common answers to this question were change burnout, the impact changes may have on their personal lives, and fear of failure.

Summary of Findings

Based on the themes, terms, language, and scenarios the leaders described during the interviews, the most prevalent employee responses were frustration, fear, distrust, and shock. The majority of the leaders had no negative perceptions of emotional resistance. Instead, they perceived employees who displayed emotional resistance mostly as

misguided about what the changes mean, insecure in their ability to learn new skills, inexperienced with respect to accepting change as a natural occurrence in television news, and protective of what changes could mean for their personal growth and security.

When asked what leaders did to counter emotional resistance, the most frequent responses were: listen to people's concerns, communicate openly and honestly, and share the data and other information about market conditions that prompted the changes. Only two leaders said they provided training to their staff and other learning opportunities to counter emotional resistance. The small number of leaders to address the possibility of training and its implication for further research will be addressed in Chapter 5. Leaders noted that the most prominent sources of emotional resistance to change were change burnout, fear of failure, and the impact on personal lives and careers.

The next chapter contains a description of these findings in terms of how they apply to the problem statement and to current research in this area. In addition, Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the application of these findings to leaders in work environments where change is frequent and rapid. Recommendations for action and for future research will also be made.

FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the phenomenon of employee emotional resistance to change because people's emotions play a key role in the success or failure of change initiatives. The purpose of this study was to provide leaders with effective approaches to use when confronted with emotional resistance in their own organizations (Băeșu & Bejinaru, 2013; Bareil, 2013). Countering emotional resistance may be even tougher for leaders in industries where change is rapid and employees are asked regularly to adapt like the television news industry. This chapter is organized to summarize the results of the study, provide conclusions, discuss the key research findings, and offer recommendations for both future academic research and for business leaders.

The purpose of this study was to collect information to understand the perceptions of emotionally resistant employees, leaders' reactions to such employees, the sources of emotional resistance, and leaders' strategies for coping with emotional resistance. To accomplish the goal of collecting the information, a purposeful sample of 12 local television newsroom leaders drawn from small, medium, and large markets across the United States was recruited. One-on-one phone interviews with each of the 12 participants occurred, during which they answered the following questions:

1. How do television newsroom leaders perceive emotional resistance, and what does it look like to them?

2. When emotional resistance, as perceived by the leader, presents itself, what do newsroom leaders do to counter it, if anything?
3. What do newsroom leaders think are the sources of employee emotional resistance?

In their answers to the first research question, newsroom leaders were asked to explain their perceptions of emotional resistance and describe what this type of resistance looked like in their newsrooms. After reviewing the data, several codes that reflected participants' overall perceptions and descriptions of employee emotional resistance to change were developed. The codes were: frustration, fear, distrust, and shock. Overall, the newsroom leaders had neutral perceptions of emotionally resistant workers. The general responses on perception did not suggest a positive or negative view.

The second research question was asked to provide newsroom leaders with the opportunity to explain their coping strategies. Leaders revealed that listening to people's concerns, communicating openly and honestly about changes, and sharing the information that prompted the changes were the most commonly utilized strategies for countering emotional resistance.

The third research question was designed to discover the sources of emotional resistance. Newsroom leaders expressed that the impact on personal lives, change burnout, and fear of failure most commonly led to emotional resistance.

Conclusions

1. Overall, leaders perceived emotionally resistant workers neither positively nor negatively. A small number of participants said resistance was rooted in immaturity or a lack of understanding with respect to job responsibilities, particularly for employees fresh out of college or new to this particular workforce.
2. Frustration was the term leaders most commonly used to describe the emotional resistance workers displayed. Fear, distrust, and shock were also regularly cited by participants.
3. Participants viewed private meetings as the most useful way to facilitate which opened communication between leaders and employees. Effective communication was the most useful tool to combat emotional resistance.

Discussion of Key Findings

RQ1: Perceptions of Emotional Resistance

In the first question on what emotional resistance looked like in their newsrooms, the leaders used various terms such as frustration, upsetting, disappointment, confusion, defensive, and disdain. Frustration was the most common theme that emerged during data analysis. As reported in Chapter 4, a number of leaders specifically used the word frustration, while others shared scenarios of how employees displayed frustrated behavior during change. A commonly cited change scenario that gave rise to frustration involved the incorporation of social media.

As brought up in Chapter 1, new technology and social media are two of the biggest forces influencing changes in the television newsrooms (Kaul 2013). As a result, newsroom leaders are transforming their organizations to endure the digital revolution, which means asking their employees to learn new skills and take on more duties. The emotional resistance that emerges due to new technology was noted in Chapter 4, and the leaders' responses support Kaul's (2013) argument that the increasing pressure to incorporate social media into traditional news paradigms can cause employees discomfort.

In addition to frustration, participants often cited fear as a type of emotional resistance they commonly encountered. The leaders said employees can be fearful for many reasons, but the most commonly cited reason was fear of failure, which can lead to employees growing defensive during change. Nearly all of the leaders said that change put people in a position of vulnerability because in most cases, change meant employees had to learn something new. As reported in Chapter 4, veterans of the news industry were particularly susceptible to the fear of change, which aligns with the ideas espoused by Wilson (2014) and Malik and Masood (2015). They argued that additional research could offer better recommendations of ways for leaders to help emotionally resistant employees make transitions.

Two other themes, distrust and shock, were also commonly cited by newsroom leaders. They repeatedly mentioned employees' suspicions about the ideas they were being asked to support. According to the leaders, most of the distrust employees

expressed had to do with whether the changes would benefit their personal and professional circumstances. Moreover, leaders explained that the emotion of distrust was especially prevalent in newsrooms where changes did not endure. The emergence of distrust echoes Mariana et al.'s (2013) theory of emotional resistance discussed in Chapter 2; Mariana et al. identified the frequency and speed of change as forces that influence how employees respond to change.

As noted in Chapter 4, none of the leaders had negative perceptions of emotional resistance, though some acknowledged a level of immaturity in new hires. Generally speaking, all of the leaders perceived emotional resistance as typical in a work environment that was changing at a fast pace and will continue to do so into the future, which could mean that a disconnect may exist between what aspiring journalists believe they know about working in television newsrooms and the real world. When the two competing conceptions collide, employees naturally resist changing their preconceived notions and leaders must cope with the consequences.

RQ2: Countering Emotional Resistance

The second question was designed to discover what leaders did to counter emotional resistance, if anything, when it presented itself. All of the leaders agreed that doing nothing to overcome resistance would damage their change efforts. Listening to employees' concerns was the most common course of action, followed by communicating effectively, and recognizing positive results.

When listening to emotionally resistant workers, the leaders agreed that giving people an opportunity to express their grievances was important. Opening the lines of communication emerged as one of the most commonly cited and effective action leaders took. Although all of the leaders believed in listening to their employees, none of them were clear about what they did with the feedback that came from these personal conversations, which can undermine the leaders' ability to cope with emotional resistance from employees. Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) and Mariana et al. (2013) raised this potential problem, and it was also discussed in Chapter 1 to frame the problem.

Participants in this study understood the importance of engaging in private discussions to discover the root of emotional resistance to change, not to persuade employees to accept the changes, but to provide an opportunity for them to voice their emotional responses—positive or negative. Such practices were reported in Chapter 4, and the leaders' responses clearly reflect the arguments made by Anderson and Anderson (2010) who called on leaders to allow employees to express their emotions.

For the newsroom leaders who practiced open communication and emotional sensitivity, convincing employees to abide by the proposed changes was insufficient; employees needed to buy into the leaders' rationale if the changes were going to flourish. Wilson (2014) raised the issue of accepting change when he argued for crafting a compelling communications plan. Consequently, the responses of the leaders interviewed for this study and reported in Chapter 4 support such conclusions.

Most leaders in this study said they executed this communications strategy privately because it allowed employees to be genuine when discussing their emotional reactions to change, which alone can help leaders overcome employees' emotional resistance. The leaders agreed that effective communication was the key to countering emotional resistance because too often information about changes was not shared with stakeholders. This emphasis on communication aligns with a strategy emphasized by Iverson and Zatzick (2011). Whether it was done intentionally or by accident, many leaders talked about how poor communication hurt change efforts in their newsrooms, which supports Băeșu and Bejinaru's (2013) argument raised in Chapter 1. Consequently, sharing research, data, or insights with employees about the television news marketplace, something noted as a strategy in Chapter 4, could be an effective way to counter emotional resistance, which supports the arguments made by Parker et al. (2012).

The fast-paced work environment of the television newsroom does not always allow leaders to go into depth about the organization's goals and strategies for achieving them. However, newsroom leaders in this study identified private meetings with their employees as a key to coping with emotional resistance to change. It was during these personal and honest conversations that leaders had the opportunity to share information about what led to the changes. They found it was important to listen and discuss emotional resistance with employees, but these conversations also presented openings for leaders to explain what influenced change. Parker et al. (2012) highlighted the necessity

of explaining the changes to employees, and the responses offered by the leaders in this study support such an argument.

All of the leaders expressed that opening the lines of communication when emotional resistance presents itself via one-on-one conversations was their preferred method. Whether communicating honestly and openly actually helped employees overcome or reduce their emotional resistance cannot be inferred from the leaders' responses. Regardless, the leaders believed in communicating as much as they could about the rationale for changes in an effort to elicit compliance from emotionally resistant workers, which supports the arguments raised by Mariana et al. (2013) and Dollard, Osborne, and Manning (2013) about the most useful ways for leaders to address emotional resistance from employees.

One further strategy leaders employed to counter workers' emotional resistance was by providing such workers with training and learning opportunities, including training sessions in which workers who were competent in certain areas demonstrated to the veterans how to use new technology and social media platforms since technological change was a common source of emotional resistance. Leaders who used this strategy felt that bringing emotionally resistant workers into contact with those who had already bought into the changes was an important strategy to achieve successful change initiatives because doing so allowed the emotionally resistant employees to see the benefits of the change in action and to understand that someone else had already tested and approved the changes. The arguments of Lawrence et al. (2014) and Firoozmand

(2014), introduced in Chapter 1, suggested the potentially positive benefits of the approach to counter the emotional resistance to change that arises from new technology and reported in Chapter 4.

RQ3: Sources of Emotional Resistance

The most common source of emotional resistance reported in Chapter 4 was change burnout. Nearly all of the leaders mentioned employees being overwhelmed with the repeated changes and continuous calls to adapt over a short period of time. Moreover, the leaders said employees were exhausted by previous change efforts that either collapsed or resulted in unpleasant experiences. For such employees, there may be lingering negative emotions causing them to be slow to support another initiative, a possibility introduced by Rains (2013).

The second source of emotional resistance found in the data and reported in Chapter 4 was fear of failure. Employees doubted their ability to become competent in a new skill, which gave rise to the fear that leaders discussed. This cycle was notably apparent in newsrooms with veteran journalists who were used to performing their jobs the same way for many years and who had to learn new methods of storytelling and reporting. The majority of the leaders said people were afraid of learning something new because it opened them up to scrutiny from superiors. The data indicated that leaders believed their employees were simply uncomfortable with changes that resulted in modifications to job descriptions or routines, which echoes the argument by Quy Nguyen

et al. (2014) presented in Chapter 2. This discomfort due to fear of failure could cause some employees to question their longevity with the organization and career stability.

Lastly, the third common theme in the analysis of the sources of emotional resistance was the impact change had on people's personal lives. The leaders talked about the concerns workers may have about growth opportunities, career advancement, job descriptions, pay, and interpersonal relationships with colleagues if they adapt to certain changes. The apparent challenge for newsroom leaders as reported in Chapter 4 was getting their staff to relate the new tasks, ideas, and initiatives to their personal goals and development. Bowen (2014) and Cameron and Green (2015) argued that employees often must see the relevance of changes in order for change programs to succeed. In some instances, employees adapted for survival, not because they bought into the vision. For employees who were worried about what changes meant for them personally, change efforts would continue to collapse unless leaders devised a compelling vision to connect organizational goals with personal goals.

Application of Findings and Conclusions to the Problem Statement

The findings identified in the study were: (1) leaders described emotional resistance in their newsrooms as primarily frustration and fear; (2) the leaders believed that allowing employees to express their concerns alleviated some of the resistance; (3) change burnout along with fear of failure and the impact on personal lives were the primary causes of emotional resistance. These findings directly address the problem statement, which was written to identify a gap in the literature. The authors of literature

that was presented earlier demonstrated that researchers have traditionally paid more attention to implementation and proposal strategies than the emotional aspects of leading change (Allen et al. 2007). Thus, Georgalis et al. (2016) attributed most failed change initiatives to employee emotional resistance. The themes that emerged from this study are indicative of this problem in leadership, not only in television newsrooms, but in organizations across other industries. The findings are presented as reminders to leaders that emotional resistance from employees is an occurrence that warrants recognition so that it can be dealt with accordingly.

Authors of previous studies concluded that instability and uncertainty were sources of emotional resistance from change recipients (Băeșu & Bejinaru 2013; Battilana & Casciaro 2012; Rains 2013). The results of this study align with these conclusions. Rains provided the following examples of emotional resistance: (1) discouragement; (2) depression; (3) anxiety; and (4) sadness. Wilson (2014) encouraged leaders to develop a clear communications plan, understand how change will affect workers, and be reasonable when establishing timelines as methods of overcoming emotional resistance.

Even with these past studies offering some understandings about the phenomenon of emotional resistance, researchers have called for the continued investigation into emotional resistance in order to develop leaders who can effectively deal with this problem (Varol & Varol, 2013). Quy Nguyen et al. (2014) said more research in the area

of emotional resistance and its impact on major change efforts for the development of strong leaders was necessary.

This descriptive qualitative study of leaders' experiences of emotional resistance in local television newsrooms was designed to respond to this call for additional research. It did so by asking newsroom leaders what emotional resistance to change looked like to them, what the sources of emotional resistance might be, and what they did to manage emotional resistance. Previous researchers have concluded that emotional resistance can negatively impact change goals. Consequently, a problem underscored by this study was how inadequately leaders of change grasped the connection between people's emotions and the change itself.

Furthermore, the problem with how some leaders have perceived workers who were slow to adapt because of emotional resistance remains relevant. In some cases, emotionally resistant workers have been seen as troublesome and difficult. As a result, this study was designed to address the problem by discovering what types of emotional resistance television newsrooms leaders encountered during change efforts. This question was asked to learn what newsroom leaders have done in the past and can do in the future to prevent emotional resistance from disrupting their change efforts. When applying the findings and conclusions of this study to the problem statement it became apparent that some organizational leaders of change did make the connection between people's emotions and the change itself. The newsroom leaders who took part in this

study said they acknowledged emotional resistance and took action to understand its existence.

Application to Leadership

Emotional resistance has been identified as a major reason for change failures (Bareil, 2013). Considering the impact negative emotions can have on organizational change goals and employee commitment, psychodynamic approaches to understanding emotional responses are useful for leaders who want to seek help in addressing emotional resistance from their staff (Nafei, 2014). A common criticism from subordinates about leaders is too often they do not understand and respect the responses to change. Employees feel leaders are disconnected from the true feelings of the group, and more concerned with the success of their initiative (Benson, 2014). One takeaway from this study is that everyone—both leaders and employees—will experience a series of emotions; many of those emotions will have no clear beginning or end. Even during the final stage of acceptance of a change, an employee can slip back into frustration or skepticism about an idea. Another key takeaway from this study is that everyone will progress through the ups and downs of change at different times and in different ways (Cameron & Green, 2015). To emphasize the application of these findings to leadership, the following is a discussion of some skills leaders can acquire in order to successfully manage employees who show emotional resistance during change.

Identify Employee Perceptions of Leaders

A strong link between trust in leadership and overcoming employee emotional resistance exists; consequently, this study's findings were included as a prompt for leaders to be more assertive in cultivating positive perceptions from employees about leadership. Using some of the themes found in this study, leaders can help construct positive perceptions by listening and communicating openly with their staff. Leaders who give workers opportunities to express their concerns and communicate honestly about what changes could mean for people's personal growth and routines, increase the odds of creating positive perceptions about leadership and, ultimately, successful change initiatives.

An employee's perception of leaders can influence the frequency and intensity of emotional resistance (Lawrence et al. 2014). In organizations where leaders and workers have frequent interactions, employees are continuously shaping their views of how leaders behave and communicate. A powerful, yet often overlooked, source of employees' perceptions about their managers is indirect interaction. Like many organizations, including television newsrooms, some subordinates have little to no direct contact with their supervisors. Examples of direct contact include regular face-to-face meetings, email exchanges, and phone conversations. Thus, leaders can do more to interact directly with their employees; this call for greater interaction is supported by the findings of this study.

Frequent interactions between leaders and employees can boost positive perceptions, but the quality of these interactions may be even more important. For individuals who have irregular and poor interactions with their leaders, many employees decide how they view their leaders through the experiences of others. Parker et al. (2012) offered the example of observing a leader's job performance as a way people can shape their perceptions. When employees witnessed how leaders performed tasks and duties, they formed opinions that eventually created the context in which the employee chose to interact with the manager. In addition, when negative perceptions persisted, the sentiments led to emotional resistance, which adversely impacted change goals.

The moment managers learn they are perceived as hostile, inflexible, or incompetent, they may find it beneficial to take charge to correct these perceptions, specifically by instituting policies that emphasize open communication and listening. Responding to negative perceptions can be difficult because perceptions may vary from person to person and can go undetected for quite some time. Parker et al. underscored the argument Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) made when they outlined the power and influence emotional resistance can have on a change process. The newsroom leaders in this study reiterated those points by suggesting that leaders can lessen the negative impact of emotional resistance to change goals by doing more to detect how their employees perceived them. Thus, leaders can discover employee perceptions by locating where emotional resistance first emerged and the ways it manifested, whether it was at the individual or group levels.

Discover How Emotional Resistance Affects Worker Emotions

Emotions can be automatic responses to environmental conditions, or they can be triggered by how individuals interpret what is transpiring around them or to them (Bowen, 2014). Bowen devised the conceptual model used to help leaders locate where and how emotions permeate the work environment. Depending on the personality of the individual, events in the workplace can cause emotional reactions, which may transform into a long-term stance on the situation. In this study, newsroom leaders considered private meetings an effective method of helping employees overcome resistance; consequently, other organizational leaders of change may want to use these personal moments to gauge the personalities of the people resisting. Moreover, leaders can use these personal moments to assess the various personalities of their workforce prior to proposing a change so that they know early where emotional resistance may emerge.

Bowen (2014) stated that the most widely used theory to illustrate the emotional differences between people in the business world is emotional intelligence (EI). The concept of EI provides leaders with a basis for understanding how people's emotions influence others who work around them. Studies suggest a strong link between EI and various outcomes, including commitment, performance, and conflict resolution. In a study on the role of emotional intelligence and resistance to change, Malik and Masood (2015) argued that the emotional welfare of workers during change is dependent on their emotional intelligence level. Improving the EI of employees can be done through developing a positive work environment.

Another component of the conceptual model is interpersonal exchanges in which people regulate their emotional displays in reaction to each other or a specific circumstance. Bowen (2014) used the example of an employee complying with organizational demands despite hidden emotional dissonance. When a worker pretends to support an idea while experiencing negative emotions about it, this behavior is called surface acting. On the surface, the person appears engaged and committed, but underneath, the individual has reservations and may even feel threatened, fearful, or uncertain. Surface acting involves altering how much an emotion is shown after the emotion is fully understood and connected to an undesirable outcome (Wang, 2015). Possibly even more troublesome for leaders of change is deep acting because it is the alteration of an individual's inner feelings in order to be consistent with what superiors view as meaningful. A deep actor attempts to hide his or her true emotions for reasons that mostly have to do with potential consequences if their emotions go unchecked.

At the group level in the conceptual model, the focus is on the dynamics between team leaders and followers and a process called emotional contagion, which occurs when leaders influence the emotions of team members through their own thinking and behavior (Bowen, 2014). Emotional contagion can be conscious or subconscious, but nevertheless emotional contagion is a powerful way leaders communicate emotional states to their followers. At this level, team members acknowledge one emotion may describe the group as a whole. Bowen identified the last level in the model as the organization-wide phenomenon, which remains the least researched aspect of emotion in organizations.

When emotion progresses from the individual to the organizational level, leaders need to examine the emotional climate in the workplace. Unlike a culture that is more stable, an organization's emotional climate is composed of the existing social environment and is perceived by the people who make up the organization. Another distinction between climate and culture is that climate can vary across units. Looking at the complex structures and processes in many large organizations, measuring the emotional climate is of great interest to scholars in the field.

Bowen (2014) argued that overcoming emotional resistance is a leadership competency. The aim of his research was to provide business faculty with exercises and knowledge to prepare students to deal with emotional responses prior to entering the workforce. The results of Bowen's study were similar to those of this study, particularly in this study's discussion of emotional resistance in television newsrooms. The assertion that leaders emphasize open communication, transparency, and honesty if they wish to mitigate emotional resistance to change initiatives aligns most closely with Bowen's research. The next section includes recommendations for actions that leaders of change in all organizations that face emotional resistance can take.

Recommendations for Action

Emotional responses to change can be positive, negative, or a mixture of both. This study was designed to focus on the negative reactions by investigating emotional resistance to change in local TV newsrooms. The following are some recommendations for action leaders can take to work more effectively with employees who display

emotional resistance to change. The goal of this research on emotional resistance to change is for leaders of change to find these recommendations useful when encountering emotional resistance because leaders' responses to employees with negative emotions about change can either magnify or suppress the problem.

Embrace Emotional Resistance

The first recommendation of action is for leaders to mindfully expect and embrace emotional resistance from workers before it happens. Based on the data in this study, prior to carrying out a change initiative, some leaders may have already experienced and overcome some level of emotional resistance themselves. The recommendation to expect and embrace emotional resistance is supported by the work of Lawrence et al. (2014) who found that leaders who managed the change process may go through a cycle of emotional resistance long before their employees do. This head start puts leaders far ahead of their followers in the transition curve.

In some organizations, the pace of change is so fast that emotional resistance from employees seems inevitable. However, some leaders do not anticipate resistance and experience frustration and shock, which can make them as dismissive as the employees who need to adapt. Part of getting leaders to acknowledge emotional resistance includes a better understanding of human dynamics (Anderson & Anderson, 2010). People will certainly have an emotional response to change, and how leaders respond can escalate or improve the situation (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Varol & Varol, 2013).

A useful way to embrace emotional resistance is to include it in the change plan. Doing so includes building steps into the process to seek and address emotionally resistant workers instead of allowing this form of resistance to settle. Based on the data of this study, leaders have the responsibility to assist change recipients in overcoming their emotions. To achieve such a positive outcome, leaders may want to become familiar with emotional transitions. Some models illustrate this experience for employees and could be used to guide leaders toward understanding and accepting emotional resistance as an inevitable part of the process. The next section is a discussion of which models leaders could make use of in order to gain a better sense and appreciation of the emotional challenges that come with implementing changes.

Utilize Emotional Transition Tools

In the first research question, newsroom leaders were asked about their perceptions of emotionally resistant employees and the types of emotional resistance they saw. Perceptions were neutral; while the types of resistance varied, a few common themes—fear and frustration—emerged. Therefore, a recommendation is that leaders review and utilize tools that explain emotional transitions. These transition tools will help leaders recognize certain types of emotional resistance, while turning neutral perceptions positive.

Consequently, another recommendation is that leaders undergo training in emotional transition tools, and then put them to use by identifying emotionally resistant workers. Once they have been identified, leaders can monitor their behavior and match

the type of resistance workers exhibit with the stages of the transition tools. This monitoring could be done without the workers' knowledge. This recommendation is meant to be an exercise that will allow leaders to better recognize and empathize with emotionally resistant employees. The responses to the first question indicate that a familiarity with the Kubler-Ross Transition Curve, which emphasizes the five-stage psychological process individuals undergo during changes, will help leaders identify when and how workers cope with change. In some instances, acceptance simply means workers have found a way to manage their emotions. Perhaps more importantly for some people, accepting change has more to do with survival, caring for loved ones, and personal reasons rather than seeing how their competencies contribute to the goals of the organization (Cameron & Green, 2015). This type of employee reaction to change aligns with this study because the impact change has on people's personal lives was a main theme in what leaders described as a source of emotional resistance.

Identify and Eliminate the Foreign Threat

Leaders in this study identified two common sources of emotional resistance to change as the impact on people's personal lives and fear of failure. The Virginia Satir model, which emerged from research on individual and family experiences, will help address these two sources of resistance. Although Satir's model originated from research on family structures, it eventually became a framework for understanding how employees progress through change in a workplace.

Many people maintain the status quo despite signs that tweaks in the system may be required to be more productive and competitive in the marketplace. This inertia occurs because mostly everyone is in harmony since the organization already has well-established processes and practices that appear to need no alteration (Cameron & Green, 2015). The same conclusion was reached in this study on emotional resistance. Newsroom leaders said journalists were afraid to break old habits in order to learn a new skill or take on a new responsibility over concerns about what the new behavior would mean for their performance. Satir explained that this shift from harmony to fear happens when the “foreign element” entered the system. Leaders can use the Satir model by engaging in open and honest communication, which emerged as the main action leaders in this study took to counter resistance in their newsrooms. Open and honest communication will allow leaders to learn new information from employees, including what they view as the potential “foreign element.” The more honest leaders can be about changes to a system or process, the easier it will be for the foreign element to be identified. Fear was found to be a main source of emotional resistance in this study, which aligns with the underlying motivation of Satir’s model; thus, the model can be used to counter employee emotional resistance to change.

One recommendation, then, is for leaders to do their best to share the data and information that justifies changes. When leaders in this study were asked what they did to counter resistance, they focused on sharing data and information. A lack of information about what led to changes can lead to a wave of assumptions and

misconceptions that will eventually permeate department groups. The chaos that ensues is usually internal, meaning people begin to perceive what the changes mean for them.

Similar to what newsroom leaders in this study said about their staff, the state of mind once a foreign element has entered is that of confusion and disbelief as people come to the realization that things are going to be different. According to the Satir model, once chaos reaches its highest point, individuals experience a transforming idea that leads them to acceptance. A recommendation related to the transformational idea is for leaders to reinforce acceptance by seeking the people who are beginning to change their behavior and celebrate their contributions to the organization. Leaders could provide them with support, encouragement, incentives, and other tools to encourage them to continue along the path of acceptance. Cameron and Green (2015) described this stage as experimentation or playing along with the new status quo, which eventually becomes exploration before new roles and processes are permanently planted into people's minds. Consequently, if leaders are to use Satir's model against the threat of emotional resistance to change, communicate openly when harmony shifts to fear as a means to identify the foreign element, share relevant information about what led to the change, and commend individuals who transition from chaos to acceptance.

Klonek, Isidor, and Kauffeld (2015) reaffirmed the need to identify the foreign threat in their study of the Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM), which is also made up of five stages. While workers pass through the stages, they contemplate accepting change while trying to hold on to their positions, skillsets, and interpersonal relationships,

ultimately emerging more confident of their place within an organization. The findings of this study align with the conclusion of Klonek et al. Leaders said people were afraid of failure because they had to learn a new skill or take on additional responsibilities. Thus, for leaders to make use of the TTM, they can consider the following: (1) allow workers to contemplate what the changes mean for them; (2) confirm or dismiss assumptions about what changes mean for roles and responsibilities; and (3) celebrate when a person has taken steps to settle into the new behavior. TTM could be a framework that will help leaders simplify the emotions workers experience as changes begin to take shape.

These brief descriptions of emotional transitional models are included to demonstrate that somewhere in the change process leaders will encounter emotional resistance from the people they need to implement their ideas. Overcoming emotional resistance begins when leaders change how they perceive people who resist. The common mindset views anger, sadness, and anxiety as negative, whereas excitement and confidence are positive (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Bareil, 2013). This way of thinking prevents the emergence of an open forum in which employees can communicate when they are feeling emotionally resistant. Therefore, it would be good for leaders to consider altering their assessment of what it means when people become emotionally resistant to change.

Build a Network through Positive Interactions

Many leaders already expect and embrace emotional resistance because they believe that people will at some point release their emotions, and eventually commit to change (Mendonca, 2015). The Kubler-Ross Transition Curve, Virginia Satir Model, and the Transtheoretical Model of Change demonstrate why leaders it would be good to pay attention to the emotions of their employees. Nonetheless, accepting and committing to change cannot be taken as an indication of engagement and enthusiasm. For that reason, another recommendation for action to minimize emotional resistance to change is for leaders to continuously build and retain positive interactions with change recipients. Doing so increases the level of trust, which this research and previous studies have found to be essential to overcoming emotional resistance (Shweta & Srirang 2013; Wang, 2015). A key aspect of this recommendation is that leaders work to build positive relationships with change recipients long before change is needed. This recommendation to build positive relationships emerged from the themes of fear and distrust, which were found to be among the primary sources of emotional resistance. Leaders can minimize much of the fear of failure and distrust employees have in leadership by fostering positive leader-follower relationships in between transitions.

Battilana and Casciaro (2013) asserted that formal authority is an important source of influence; equally important, however, is building networks with people across all levels of the organizational hierarchy. Regardless of the need to change, it is suggested that leaders maintain positive relationships with subordinates. Building

networks is particularly beneficial for leaders of change in organizations where change is nonstop, radical, and driven by strict deadlines. While emotional resistance is a natural reaction to change, it can intensify when change seems endless (Nafei, 2014). During these times, leaders may be able to rely on their previous positive relationships with employees to quickly overcome emotional resistance.

One way leaders can cultivate positive relationships is to actively and routinely seek input from workers about best practices for improving the organization. Such conversations may persuade workers to mobilize when changing processes or systems is crucial to the sustainability of the organization (Battilana and Casciaro, 2013). The call for action to leaders is to think about the type of network they are trying to build. Leaders should assess relationships with subordinates to see which relationships need the most attention in order for organizational change to succeed.

Create a Communications Plan that Addresses Emotional Aspects

Akan, Er Ulker, and Unsar (2016) defined communication as the process of conveying feelings, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors verbally, non-verbally or in writing in order to influence other people's behaviors. They called on leaders to understand how crucial communicating effectively can be during change. The findings of this study align with the idea that it will be difficult to implement change if there are communication problems (Akan et al., 2016).

Even with the presence of a strong network, when change occurs, people will likely have an immediate emotional response to it (Firoozmand, 2014). If the resistance

is not immediate, it could reveal itself over time; thus, the importance of understanding the transition models that were discussed earlier in this chapter. Because people who emotionally resist change often do not know they are resisting, and they are not easily identified, a leader's core message about change should incorporate an emotional argument. The truthfulness of the potential consequences of a proposed change is what leaders often withhold from their staff (Fox & Amichai-Hamburger, 2001). Making employees aware of the risks, losses, and other negative side effects at the beginning is a useful way to establishing an open line of communication between leaders and followers. Depicting the potential problems with a change outcome is just as important as providing a positive outlook (Peus et al., 2009). Specifically, Peus et al. recommended that leaders develop a transformational leadership style that includes communicating an inspiring vision and clarifying people's roles and responsibilities, all of which are important factors in facilitating positive employee interactions. Additionally, Peus et al. emphasized the need to include negative information in the communication of changes in order to prepare for the benefits and drawbacks of a change initiative.

The recommendations by Peus et al. (2009) on how leaders present organizational change initiatives to employees align with previous studies discussed above and this study on emotional resistance. All of the recommendations demonstrate that the personal impact change has on people is a source of emotional resistance. Whether that is a change to their work schedule, job title and responsibilities, path to career advancements, or the interpersonal relationships they built with colleagues, it is recommended that

leaders of change be open and honest about the reality of what changes mean for people personally. Leaders should coordinate the advantages and disadvantages of changes for the organization with those for the individual. These discussions need to begin at the onset of a change process, not as a reaction to the emotional resistance. Frequent communication about the personal concerns people have about change should remain a priority until changes have been accepted or implemented into normal business practices. Keeping the lines of communication open during a change process is difficult, especially when market forces require the organization to move quickly and when leaders of change are disconnected from the people and the groups who are emotionally resistant. A systems thinking approach during change could help leaders enact this recommendation to improve communication.

Systems thinking is a concept to help organizational members gain a better understanding of something by reflecting on the factors that define it (Neumann, 2013). A system is a community of connected entities. When many entities are involved, a single event, like a change process, can lead to emotional resistance. Some work environments are so complex and the disconnect between leaders of change and employees is so wide that top leaders may need to dispatch specific teams of leaders to help communicate across units. If a change calls for a modification to tasks which would result in people taking on more work, a systems thinking approach will allow a leader to closely examine the various parts that make up the organization. Much of the emotional resistance based on personal reasons can be minimized if employees trust the

organization's leadership. Genuine care and concern for the work people do and have done may help prevent emotional resistance from derailing an important change effort.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study on newsroom leaders' responses to employees' emotional resistance to change concluded the following: (1) the level and types of emotional resistance people display varied; (2) leaders often used their own understanding of emotional resistance to counter this problem; and (3) leaders considered emotional resistance an ongoing and serious concern. Each finding correlates to a recommendation for further research.

Perceptions of the types of emotional resistance that emerged from responses to the first research question indicate a need to further investigate emotional resistance across diverse groups, which is the first recommendation for future research. The responses to the second research question suggest a need to broaden what leaders already know about emotional resistance, which leads to the second recommendation for further research—more effective training and development. Finally, answers to the third research question indicate that leadership styles affect the success of change initiatives, particularly how changes impact employees' personal lives. Thus, the third avenue for future research is an examination of what leadership styles reduce emotional resistance most effectively.

Leading Change across Diverse Groups

The first recommendation for further research is included to prompt researchers to study how leaders can lead change effectively across different generational cohorts.

Based on the answers to the research questions in this study, television newsroom leaders

may need further guidance on what can be done to target specific age and experience groups in order to get them to change. When discussing how to counter emotional resistance to change, leaders in this study noted the different leadership styles required to manage millennials and journalists who have been with the organization for 40 years. Participants asserted that Baby Boomers and Generation X were more resistant to change than Generation Y in part due to technology used in their newsrooms. Looking at these discrepancies among leaders and the behaviors and attitudes that define generational groups, further research could provide leaders with strategies for overcoming resistance when specific age groups become the resisters.

Find More Effective Training Methods to Counter Emotional Resistance

Less than half of the leaders in this descriptive study on emotional resistance in local television newsrooms said training was a strategy used to counter resistance in their newsroom. However, Bellou and Chatzinikou (2015) found that regular training and development could be advantageous in curbing emotional resistance, particularly in employees experiencing change burnout. The reason is training and development suggests leaders are supportive and want their teams to succeed with the new reality. Since fear of failure was a major reason leaders cited for employee emotional resistance, training gives employees the resources and guidance they need to adjust and contribute in meaningful ways since much of their old habits could become obsolete. Further research in the area of training could provide clarity with regard to the benefits and drawbacks of training programs as a tool to counter emotional resistance. Moreover, researchers could

explore formal and informal training opportunities and their effectiveness in countering emotional resistance from employees

Examine Leadership Styles to Address the Personal Impact

The findings of this study indicated that workers consider the personal impact changes have on them before they decide whether to accept them. Personal considerations include current skills becoming obsolete, financial losses, or a drop in work-life balance are among the most common reasons employees are reluctant to embrace to a leader's idea. The data in this study signaled further research could examine the traits and leadership styles of the managers can use to respond to these workers and their concerns. Assigning the wrong leader to listen to and communicate with emotionally resistant workers could escalate the resistance even further. Examples of possible leadership styles and traits researchers can investigate include situational leadership, charisma, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership.

Concluding Statement

In a competitive global economy, organizations must constantly look for ways to sustain growth. Many leaders do this by proposing and implementing changes to processes, systems, values, and cultures. The successful execution of a change initiative presents a challenge for leaders who confront the human component of implementing change. Leaders who are incapable of addressing emotional resistance and who end up implementing changes in spite of this opposition risk creating a wide range of complications that could complicate what may be an already intricate change process.

Despite some literature on the topic of emotional resistance to change, researchers in the field renewed the call for further investigations to help clarify what emotional resistance looks like and what leaders of change can do to overcome this obstacle. Looking at the literature on emotional resistance to change and the implications for leaders who fail to address it properly, this study was designed to investigate the local television news industry in a descriptive qualitative research study to discover new perspectives and recommendations that may help leaders solve this problem. The local broadcast news environment was a fitting site to explore emotional resistance to change because of the continuous and substantial changes in how newsrooms function. Although not all organizations may experience the frequency and size of changes that occur in the newsrooms, all organizations at some point will need to endure change. Thus, the recommendations listed above are applicable for leaders in the midst of constant change and for leaders who anticipate change in the future.

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APPENDIX A: Table of Participants

Leader	Pseudonym	Market	Region	Position
1	John	Dallas	Southwest	Executive Producer
2	Mike	Las Vegas	West	Executive Producer
3	Paul	Portland	West	Executive Producer
4	Steve	San Francisco	West	Executive Producer
5	Robert	Lubbock, Texas	Southwest	News Director
6	Richard	Tri-Cities, Washington	West	News Director
7	Mary	Sacramento	West	News Director
8	Bill	Phoenix	West	Executive Producer
9	Laura	Louisville	Midwest	Executive Producer
10	Kevin	Palm Springs	West	News Director
11	James	Portland	West	Assistant News Director
12	Carol	Philadelphia	Northeast	Executive Producer

APPENDIX B: Consent Form

CITYU RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

I, _____, agree to participate in the following research project to be conducted by Aaron M. Day, student, in the Ed. D. Program. I understand this research study has been approved by the City University of Seattle Institutional Review Board. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent form, signed by all persons involved. I further acknowledge that I have been provided an overview of the research protocol as well as a detailed explanation of the informed consent process.

Title of Project:

Investigating Emotional Resistance to Change: A Case Study of Local Television Newsroom Leaders

Name and Title of Researcher(s): Aaron M. Day
For Student Researcher(s):

Faculty Supervisor: Arron P. Grow

Department: School of Applied Leadership

Telephone: 1-888-422-4898

E-mail: agrow@cityu.edu

Program Coordinator (or Program Director): Dr. Kelly Flores

Purpose of Study:

The study is designed to help leaders understand and work better with employees who display emotional resistance to change so it has minimal impact on the desired changes.

Research Participation:

I understand I am being asked to participate in this study in one or more of the following ways (the checked options below apply):

Respond to in-person and/or telephone Interview questions;

Answer written questionnaire(s);

Participate in other data gathering activities, specifically, _____;

Other, specifically, _____.

I further understand that my involvement is voluntary and I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation at any time without negative consequences. I have been advised that I may request a copy of the final research study report. Should I request a copy, I understand I may be asked to pay the costs of photocopying and mailing.

Confidentiality

I understand that participation is confidential to the limits of applicable privacy laws. No one except the faculty researcher or student researcher, his/her supervisor and Program Coordinator (or Program Director) will be allowed to view any information or data collected whether by questionnaire, interview and/or other means. All data (the questionnaires, audio/video tapes, typed records of the interview, interview notes,

informed consent forms, computer discs, any backup of computer discs and any other storage devices) are kept locked and password protected by the researcher. The research data will be stored for 5 years. At the end of that time all data of whatever nature will be permanently destroyed. The published results of the study will contain data from which no individual participant can be identified.

Signatures

I have carefully reviewed and understand this consent form. I understand the description of the research protocol and consent process provided to me by the researcher. My signature on this form indicates that I understand to my satisfaction the information provided to me about my participation in this research project. My signature also indicates that I have been apprised of the potential risks involved in my participation. Lastly, my signature indicates that I agree to participate as a research subject.

My consent to participate does not waive my legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, and/or City University of Seattle from their legal and professional responsibilities with respect to this research. I understand I am free to withdraw from this research project at any time. I further understand that I may ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation at any time during this research.

Participant's Name: _____

Please Print

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name: Aaron M. Day

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

If I have any questions about this research, I have been advised to contact the researcher and/or his/her supervisor, as listed on page one of this consent form.

Should I have any concerns about the way I have been treated as a research participant, I may contact the following individual(s):

Dr. Arron Grow, Program Coordinator (and/or Program Director), City University of Seattle, at 521 Wall St. Seattle, WA, 98121, 206-239-4766, agrow@cityu.edu