

Resistance Isn't the Problem—It's the Portal

by Robert L. Pruitt

We've been taught to overcome resistance. Push through it. Manage it. Neutralize it. But what if resistance isn't the barrier? What if it's a portal?

Resistance at work—withdrawal, tension, noncompliance—often reveals where people are protecting their truth. And truth that isn't honored becomes sabotage.

In metaphysical work, resistance is not the enemy—it's information. It reveals where we are not yet ready, not fully aligned, or not listening deeply enough. As McCoy (2017) notes, "God's action is always there inside the resistance." What appears to be reluctance may in fact be the very place where divine invitation is active, urging us toward deeper awareness and transformation.

Harvard's Immunity to Change model (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) reveals that many people unconsciously resist what they consciously claim to want. Edmondson's (2019) work on psychological safety shows that in unsafe cultures, resistance often masks protection. The Transtheoretical Model of Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983) confirms that readiness is a stage-based process—not an event. Habash (n.d.) echoes this in Meeting the Resistance, describing how resistance is "the gateway... into something greater, if I allow myself to remain there and be for a while." In other words, when we stop rushing to dismantle resistance, we can enter into the truth it's guarding.

In other words, resistance is often not defiance—it's wisdom waiting to be accepted and understood.

The most transformative leaders don't force change—they face what's showing up with grace. That requires humility, presence, and a willingness to ask:

- What fear is beneath this resistance?
- What truth is trying to speak that I am avoiding?
- How can I create space for that truth without making it wrong?

Practice: Releasing Resistance as a Leader

1. Create Space Before Strategy – Ask how the last change affected your team emotionally—not just operationally.
2. Host a "Truth Circle" – Create a safe space for fears, frustrations, or unknowns.
3. Shift Your Language – Instead of "Why are you resisting?" ask "What would help this feel safe, clear, or worthwhile?"

Resistance isn't a dead end. It's a mirror. It reflects where something deeper is asking for

care, not control. When we meet resistance with compassion instead of command, we don't just change processes—we witness people change. And people, when safe, seen, and nurtured, transform themselves and everything around them.

References

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