



Change Management – Best Practices for Risk Mitigation

Dr. Roger A. De Noyelles, LCSW
Director of Psychological Health
107th ANG

Introduction



The current Department of Defense budgetary cuts and force reduction initiatives will likely impact most, if not all, Air National Guard Wings.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide suggestions for best practices to assist impacted airmen with the forthcoming transitions and to reduce the risk of increased suicidal and/or homicidal reactions to these reductions.

Introduction, Cont.

- Change is the only constant in our lives
- Organizations change frequently and for a multitude of reasons
- Change creates individual and organizational stress
- Change management techniques can reduce organizational and individual stress

Overview



- Assist leadership in guiding individuals and the wing as a whole through change
- Overview of change
- Identify individual and organizational issues
- Strategic approaches to build resilience and adapt to change

Food for Thought



Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.

~James A. Baldwin

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.

~Charles Darwin

Organizational Changes



- Downsizing
- Reorganization
- External mandates
- Leadership change
- Adding new personnel and teams
- Financial difficulties



Factors to Consider

- Communicate reasons for the change
- Trust is essential
- Encourage positive and productive attitudes
 - i.e., “Prepare for the Worst; Hope for the Best.”
- Individual reactions vary
 - Change Analysts
 - Receptive Changers
 - Reluctant Changers
 - Change Resisters

Stages of Employee Acceptance



- Denial
- Defense
- Discarding
- Adaptation
- Internalization

Implementing Change

- Create an atmosphere for change
- Communicate details of change
 - Why, What, When, Who
- Develop training needed to implement change
- Consider organizational culture and how change will affect the culture

Airmen at Risk



- **Full-Time Technicians or AGR**
 - Primary income and benefit source may be threatened
- **High Tenure Airmen**
 - Airmen counting on military retirement and benefits, which could be lost
 - May not be eligible for early retirement plans, if offered



What to Look For

- **History of Violent Behavior**
- **History of Depressive Symptoms and Suicidal Thoughts or Attempts**
- **Substance Abuse History**
- **History of Reckless or Impulsive Behavior**
- **History of Military Disciplinary Action or other Legal Action**



What to Look For

- **Hopelessness and/or Helplessness about the Future**
- **Social Isolation**
- **Romantic Relationship Problems**
- **No Stable Civilian Employment**
- **Financial Problems**
- **Stress Related to Deployments**
- **Combat Experiences (PTSD Symptoms)**

Best Practices...



The following are Best Practices that may assist in moving the wing through change and the mitigation of increased risk of suicide and/or homicidal behavior.

Assessing Effects of Change



- Tools
 - Airmen Needs Questionnaire
 - Unit Climate Assessment
 - Support Resiliency Inventory
- CAIB/IDS
 - Assist with executive direction
 - Identifies challenges and considerations for implementation
 - Identifies training needs

Mitigate Effects of Change



- Strengthen Comprehensive Airman Fitness
 - Mental, Social, Physical, Spiritual
- Build psychological wellbeing, social support, fitness, spiritual resilience



Best Practices...



- **Involve the CAIB/IDS (if functioning) in planning and implementation**
 - Benefit information
 - Community social support programs
 - Job/Career support
 - Job Fairs/Resource Fairs

Best Practices...



- Educate leadership
- Squadron-Level Suicide Prevention Coordinators
 - Implement unit-based suicide prevention training to fulfill annual requirement
- Enlist VA, State Directors of Psychological Health (DPH), and Military and Family Life Consultants (MFLCs) to provide additional resources as needed

Finally...



- **Commanders encourage “Mission Readiness” - remain mission focused and get the job done!**
- **Professionalism throughout the change**

Questions?



Where to Seek Help

- Airman & Family Readiness Office: 716-236-3411
- Chaplains Office: 716-236-2395
- Commander/Supervisor
- Veterans' Crisis Line, 24/7 800-273-TALK (8255), option 1
- Wing Director of Psychological Health BB: 716-534-4209
- Physician
- VA/Vet Center 716-862-7350
- www.MilitaryOneSource.com 800-342-9647 (24/7)
- www.WingmanProject.org

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- Crime Classification Manual: A Standard System for Investigating and Classifying Violent Crime – Douglas, J.E.; Burgess, A.W.; Burgess, A.G; Ressler, R.K. (1992)

WDPH Contact Info



Dr. Roger A. De Noyelles, LCSW-R
107th ANG– Director of Psychological Health
Bldg. 202, Office 100
2665 Johnson St., Niagara Falls, NY 14304
Office: (716) 236-2401
Mobile: (716) 534-4209
Email: (roger.denoyelles.ctr@ang.af.mil)