

Coping with Workplace Change and Transition

Washington State Employee Assistance Program

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Workplace change is a process involving themes of *Loss, Uncertainty, and Control*. The change process is experienced in phases and fluctuates greatly. Understanding what people experience and need in response to change is an important part of developing effective ways to plan to cope with and manage the transition.

The three Phases of Transition may look like –

<i>PHASE 1, ENDING</i>	<i>PHASE 2, EXPLORATION</i>	<i>PHASE 3, NEW BEGINNING</i>
Old responsibilities change or end. This stage may include:	Temporary state between old and new. This stage may include:	Renewal and realignment. This stage includes:
Shock and disbelief	Depression	Acceptance
Denial	Confusion/chaos/uncertainty	Hope
Over-reaction	Lagging productivity	Creativity
Anxiety	Bargaining	Personal resilience is seen
Sense of betrayal/anger	Guilt	Recognition of new opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New job training begins • Competence may vary while learning
<i>WHAT PEOPLE MAY SAY IN PHASE 1:</i>	<i>WHAT PEOPLE MAY SAY IN PHASE 2:</i>	<i>WHAT PEOPLE MAY SAY IN PHASE 3:</i>
"It won't affect my job."	"Nobody knows what anyone else is doing."	"Will I ever be able to master this new job?"
"I've heard this before - I don't know what everyone is so upset about."	"I don't know which end is up!"	"I wonder if this way would work even better."
"This is craziness!"	"We missed another deadline!"	"It feels like I just came out of a long, dark tunnel."
"When they see what a mess this causes, they'll be sorry."	"Did you know those guys were on the Internet?"	"When you get used to it, it isn't half bad."
"I can't believe this is happening to me!"	"Sometimes I think I know where I'm going, and sometimes I just feel lost."	"It's funny how upsetting it all was. It feels like ancient history now."
"What is going to happen to my family?"	"Come on. We've got to find a solution!"	"Whew! I am a survivor!"
"This is so humiliating!"		
"How am I going to get back on my feet again?"		