

# Force Field Analysis

## Understanding the Pressures For and Against Change

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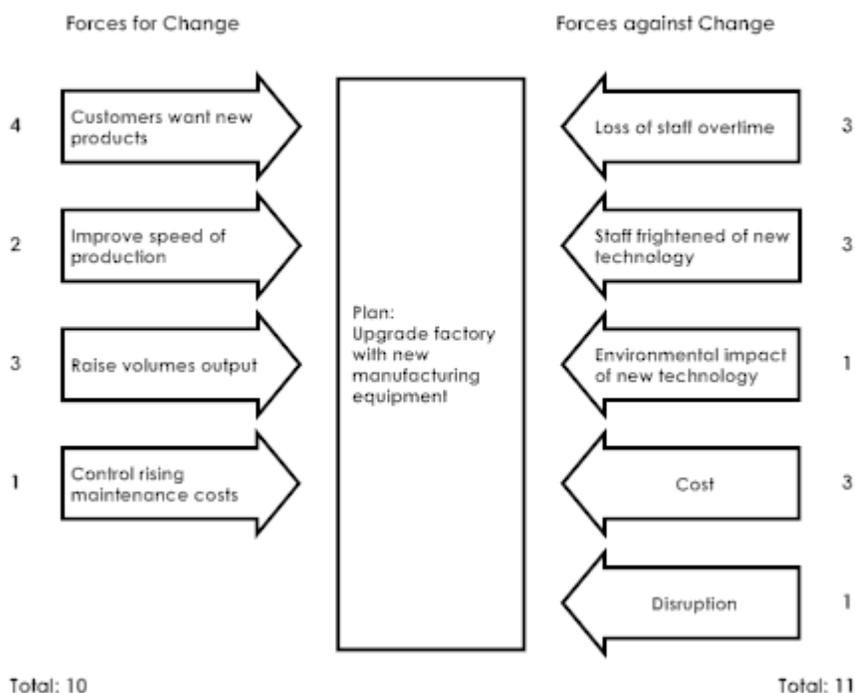
Force Field Analysis is a useful technique for looking at all the forces for and against a decision. In effect, it is a specialized method of weighing pros and cons. By carrying out the analysis you can plan to strengthen the forces supporting a decision, and reduce the impact of opposition to it.

### How to Use the Tool:

- Describe your plan or proposal for change in the middle.
- List all forces for change in one column, and all forces against change in another column.
- Assign a score to each force, from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong).

For example, imagine that you are a manager deciding whether to install new manufacturing equipment in your factory. You might draw up a force field analysis like the one in Figure 1:

**Figure 1:**  
Force Field Analysis



Once you have carried out an analysis, you can decide whether your project is viable. In the example above, you might initially question whether it is worth going ahead with the plan.

Where you have already decided to carry out a project, Force Field Analysis can help you to work out how to improve its probability of success. Here you have two choices:

- To reduce the strength of the forces opposing a project.
- To increase the forces pushing a project.

Often the most elegant solution is the first: just trying to force change may cause its own problems. People can be uncooperative if change is forced on them.

If you had to implement the project in the example above, the analysis might suggest a number of changes to the initial plan:

- By training staff (increase cost by 1) you could eliminate fear of technology (reduce fear by 2)
- It would be useful to show staff that change is necessary for business survival (new force in favor, +2)
- Staff could be shown that new machines would introduce variety and interest to their jobs (new force, +1)
- You could raise wages to reflect new productivity (cost +1, loss of overtime -2)
- Slightly different machines with filters to eliminate pollution could be installed (environmental impact -1)

These changes would swing the balance from 11:10 (against the plan), to 8:13 (in favor of the plan).

### **Key points:**

Force Field Analysis is a useful technique for looking at all the forces for and against a plan. It helps you to weigh the importance of these factors and decide whether a plan is worth implementing.

Where you have decided to carry out a plan, Force Field Analysis helps you identify changes that you could make to improve it.