

Coping with the Emotions of Uncertainty and Change

Change is inevitable. Managing stress, adjusting, and thriving during change are all options.

We thrive during periods where we have knowledge and control over the future. But nearly every day we find ourselves in positions where we lack enough control and predictability to feel completely at ease. This past year has been an unusual period of change and uncertainty. If there is anything we can be sure of, it is that change is always around the corner.

Each of us will have a unique response to change and uncertainty. Some may thrive during chaotic times. Others may struggle. Regardless, most of us will have an emotional reaction to change that, left unmanaged, can get in the way of our ability to endure and bounce back. Some of the responses include:

- Denial and avoidance of the change
- Anger, frustration, or anxiety
- Confusion and a desire to control the change
- Feeling burned out or overwhelmed
- Accepting and adjusting to the change



We may experience a variety of emotions as we adjust through the change process:

- **Physical symptoms:** Sleep disturbance, decreased energy, changes in appetite, aches and pains, problems with memory and concentration
- **Changes in behavior:** Relationship conflicts, social withdrawal, lower productivity, lower motivation, impulsivity
- **Changes in mood or emotions:** Sadness, worry, anxiety, negativity, loneliness

For confidential support, free of charge, contact Caterpillar's **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**:

☎ 1-309-820-3604

🌐 EAP.cat.com

☎ 1-866-228-0565

🌐 CaterpillarEAP.com

For global access numbers by country



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Managing the Emotions of Change

Since change is a normal part of our lives, ignoring or avoiding change is not a reasonable solution. Since change destabilizes our sense of predictability and control, avoiding an emotional reaction to change is also not possible.

The good news is most of us cope with the emotions of change naturally, if we practice basic resilience behaviors.

1. Recognize and acknowledge the change and your emotional reaction to it.
2. Early on, seek as much information as possible about the change. Ask a lot of questions.
3. Anxiety, worry, and even anger are normal, but should be expressed in constructive ways. Don't lash out. Talk it out with those close to you or those who know more about the change.
4. Develop and practice resilience:
 - Manage your time. Balance work and personal time.
 - Engage in pleasurable activities, including those that are challenging.
 - Take care of your health. Eat a healthy diet. Exercise. Manage any chronic health conditions. Get plenty of rest, particularly during the most challenging periods of a change.
 - Stay socially active with friends, family, and coworkers. Don't isolate yourself when stressed.
 - Find ways to relax and unwind that work for you. Disconnect from electronics and the media. Relaxation and mindful meditation are helpful for many.
 - Maintain a positive, healthy outlook. Be a source of optimism and positivity. Focus on what you can control. Avoid negative or catastrophic thinking. Stay focused on the present rather than worrying about the past or future.
5. Get active to embrace the change. Make it yours to overcome and control. Help create the new normal.
6. Be patient with yourself. Adjusting to change takes time and can be an unpredictable process.
7. If you continue to struggle to settle after a change, seek the support of Caterpillar's Global Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is a **free, confidential** resource available to all full- and part-time Caterpillar employees and their immediate family members worldwide.

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