



The REDUCE Framework for Persuasion: A Tool for the Aware Stage of Father Inclusion

During the Aware stage, leadership or other staff might resist efforts to be more father inclusive. This resistance can take the form of any one or more of five barriers. Your challenge will be to persuade staff to move past their resistance.

If you encounter any of these barriers, use the **REDUCE framework**.¹ This **evidence-based** tool describes each barrier and how you can persuade staff to move past it. This handout will increase your knowledge about each barrier and what to do to help staff move past it.

R: Reactance

- Barrier: Staff overtly or covertly push back against father inclusion.
- What to Do:
 - Don't tell people what to do.
 - Allow for agency and encourage them to convince themselves (self-persuasion).
 - Get them to shape what happens. Bring staff together to discuss father inclusion and the issues associated with it. (This can also uncover whether you face any of the other four barriers!). Start with seeking to understand where they're coming from and showing compassion for their position. (Until they know you care about their thoughts, they won't work with you.) Ask them for solutions that will help your organization become more father inclusive. To facilitate this, you can:
 - Give them a menu of ideas to choose from or that spark other ideas.
 - Have them complete the [Father Friendly Check-Up™](#). Simply taking this free assessment will raise staff's awareness about the value of becoming more father inclusive and give them ideas to choose from.
 - Highlight the disconnect between their thoughts and lack of action around father inclusion. One way to do this is to ask what they'd tell someone in the same situation to do.

¹ This framework is described in [The Catalyst: How to Change Anyone's Mind](#) by Jonah Berger, Ph.D. The framework leverages evidence from the cognitive and behavioral sciences and how to use persuasion to reduce or eliminate these barriers.

E: Endowment

- Barrier: Staff have a bias to maintain the [status quo](#), even when there's agreement that it would be good to be father inclusive—an intention to include fathers but no action. Staff might have the [loss aversion](#) that often accompanies thoughts about the impact of change.
- What to Do:
 - Highlight the cost(s) of doing nothing. Show how ignoring fathers hampers your organization's ability to pursue its mission. Show how including fathers has benefits that far outweigh maintaining the status quo. Explain what staff and the organization will lose by doing nothing.
 - Use tools like [Father Facts™](#) that has research on the benefits of father inclusion. Use the research related to a part of or your entire mission that shows them they have much more to gain by including fathers. If your mission addresses the prevention of child abuse and neglect, for example, provide research on how present, involved fathers reduce this risk and how absent, uninvolved fathers increase it.
 - Use the Corroborating Evidence of similar organizations that have made the change to include fathers. (See more on Corroborating Evidence below.)

D: Distance

- Barrier: There's a large gap or distance between you and other staff in whether to include fathers or when there's agreement to include fathers but reluctance to completely commit to it.
- What to Do:
 - Dial down the size of your ask. Asking for too much can create distance in the first place or increase distance where it already exists.
 - Ask for less than what you ultimately want around father inclusion and get a commitment to do it.
 - Example: Start small with resources your organization can distribute that don't require much funding or staff time (e.g., [brochures or tip cards](#) on a variety of topics and [vital topics guides](#) that aid staff in discussions with families about the benefits of father involvement in the lives of children).

U: Uncertainty

- Barrier: There's a lot of uncertainty and ambiguity among staff around including fathers and you face the [risk aversion](#) that often accompanies uncertainty.
- What to Do:
 - Inform staff about resources/tools that will increase certainty, eliminate ambiguity, and lower risk. Tools include:
 - Subsequent videos in the [Stages of Father Inclusion](#) series.
 - Once in the Prepare stage, design one or more trials/experiments/pilots that will result in easy, quick wins around father inclusion.

C and E: Corroborating Evidence

- Barrier: Staff have strong attitudes about not including fathers or need more [*social proof*](#) about the value of father inclusion.
- What to Do:
 - Provide evidence that helps them see other individuals and organizations like them are changing/have changed to include fathers—that they’re getting left behind by not including fathers.
 - Use multiple examples of father-inclusive organizations that are as similar to your organization as possible (e.g., mission, type of organization, community, and families served) but independent of your organization including:
 - Examples of partners or other organizations in your community that have become more father inclusive
 - [*Partner Success Stories*](#) and [*Stories of Impact*](#) videos from partners of National Fatherhood Initiative®.