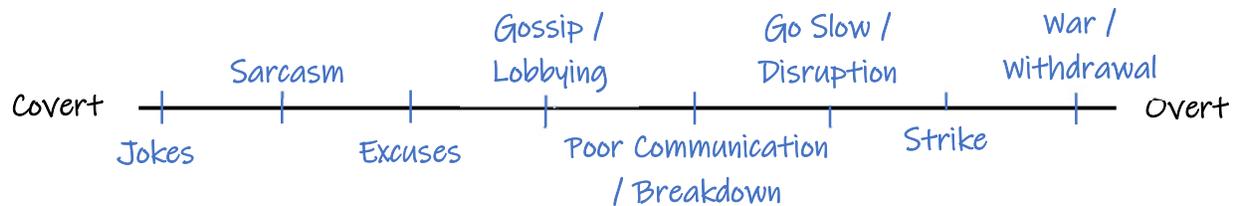




The Deep Democracy Resistance Line



The Resistance Line is a continuum whereby actions start as covert and escalate to being overt. Being on the Resistance Line is an indicator that one disagrees with the popular view and not saying openly what needs to be said. The longer people remain on the Resistance Line, the greater the risk of issues becoming explosive.

The Resistance Line can be used as a diagnostic tool to detect where a person, group, and/or organization is positioned in relation to the status quo. Stages may not necessarily emerge in the order stated. The stages of resistance are:

Jokes – Jokes on the Resistance Line have an edge. They're often a reaction to feeling controlled or directed.

Sarcasm – If the joke is not heard, it tends to become more barbed and sarcastic. Sarcasm becomes a way for people to express feelings that need to be expressed.

Excuses – When any behavior repeats more than three or four times, it suggests that the behavior is no longer based on conscious, rational logical processes, but has emotional, irrational, and unconscious roots. Ongoing excuses signal that underlying issues need to be addressed.

Gossip/Lobbying – Gossip and lobbying take the conversation out of the group as people try to influence others outside the meeting. Since not everyone is aware of the behavior, it is part of the Resistance Line.

Poor Communication/Breakdown – During poor communication or communication breakdowns, people, parties, sectors, or divisions stop talking to one another.

Go Slow/Disruption – People perform tasks with a lack of speed or deliberate sabotage that reflects their unwillingness.

Strike – If not addressed, the go-slow phase heightens and leads to a strike. During a strike, people refuse to work. We are now in overt resistance activity.

Withdrawal/War – If there is no satisfactory response to strike behaviors, if the minority's voice is still unheard, and if the issue is sufficiently important, people will withdraw or, as a last resort, go to war. War may be open warfare or terrorism. By this stage, all contact between the parties has broken down.

Content lightly adapted from the Deep Democracy CoResolve Level I Participant Guide.



Deep Democracy

The Lewis Method of Deep Democracy was created by Myrna and Greg Lewis to help South African organizations recover and heal from the traumatic legacy of apartheid. Deep Democracy offers concrete, proven methods that support decision making, problem solving, and conflict resolution. The techniques surface undercurrents, engage all voices, and work through differences to resolve seemingly impossible-to-solve issues. Today, the Lewis Method of Deep Democracy is practiced on six continents through a network of certified trainers and practitioners.

