

Institutional Culture Change Process: Assessment of Student Learning

Cia Verschelden

Ruth Dyer

M. Duane Nellis

Patricia Marsh



Higher Learning Commission Annual Meeting; Assessment of Student Learning
Track; Tuesday, April 12, 2005 from 8:15-10:00 a.m. (double session)

Kansas State University

- Setting the context for K-State
- Our desired institutional change

Flow of the Presentation

- Context of K-State and desired institutional change
- SWOT analysis + *activity*
- Early adopters + *activity*
- Resistance/advocacy + *activity*
- Command for change vs. “grass roots” change
- Break
- Humor + *activity*

Flow of the Presentation

- Action plan + *activity*
- Summary/conclusions + *audience insights*
- Learning Outcomes Assessment
 - Worksheet to complete and return to the presenters
- Adjournment

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the presentation,
you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate your knowledge of some critical steps in an institutional change process.
2. Identify the strengths, challenges, pockets of resistance, and advocates related to the desired change at your institution.
3. Demonstrate your understanding of the importance of the flexibility that makes local self-determination (and, therefore, ownership) possible.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the presentation,
you will be able to:

4. Outline an action plan that you can begin to implement within the next three months and that includes five to seven action steps.
5. Reflect upon at least one image that you can smile inside about when the going gets tough.

K-State's Desired Institutional Culture Change

- In 2002, K-State identified the **assessment of student learning** as a culture change initiative.

S.W.O.T.*

S—Strengths

W—Weaknesses

O—Opportunities

T—Threats

**Source: Raymond Haas, ACE Fellows Program, August 2003*

S.W.O.T.*

S—Strengths

W—Weaknesses

Internal



Management
Information
Systems

O—Opportunities

T—Threats

External



Environmental
Scanning

**Source: Raymond Haas, ACE Fellows Program, August 2003*

Advanced S.W.O.T. Analysis

- Use Taxonomies
- Search for Matches*
 - **Leverage** = Opportunity/Strength
 - **Constraint** = Opportunity/Weakness
 - **Vulnerability** = Threat/Strength
 - **Problem** = Threat/Weakness

**Source: Louis E. Boone and David L. Kurtz, Contemporary Marketing, The Dryden Press, 1995, page 175.*

Advanced S.W.O.T. Analysis

- “Opportunities” are statements about the external environment, and not “things we can do.”
- Look for Weaknesses in Strengths.

Advanced S.W.O.T. Analysis

Taxonomies for the **External** Environment

- Social/Cultural
- Political
- Competition
- Technology
- Economy

Taxonomies for the **Internal** Environment

- The Organizational Chart
- Functional Analysis
- The 7 “P’s” in Service Marketing
- Search for New Paradigms

Advanced S.W.O.T. Analysis

Taxonomies for the **Internal** Environment

- Functional Analysis
 - Teaching, Research, and Service
 - Production, Finance, Human Resources, and Marketing
- The 7 “P’s” in Service Marketing
 - *Product, Promotion, Price, Place, Participants, Physical Evidence and the Process of Service Assembly*

S.W.O.T. @ K-State

Strengths

- Student-centered research institution
- Strong commitment of faculty to teaching and learning
- Decentralized organizational structure
- Accredited programs already conducting this type of assessment

Weaknesses

- Faculty time/efforts already committed
- Limited resources for this effort
- Decentralized organizational structure
- Most programs in Arts & Sciences unfamiliar with this type of assessment

S.W.O.T. @ K-State

Opportunities

- Increased accountability from public & legislature
- Students familiar with outcomes based learning
- Expectations from HLC accrediting agency

Threats

- Reduced state funding
- Other institutions use Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) as marketing tool
- Expectations from HLC accrediting agency

Handout #1

- Please take the next 5 minutes to work on this handout.
- Pair/Share for the next 4 minutes

K-State's Desired Institutional Culture Change

- In 2002, K-State identified the **assessment of student learning** as a culture change initiative.

Identify Leaders

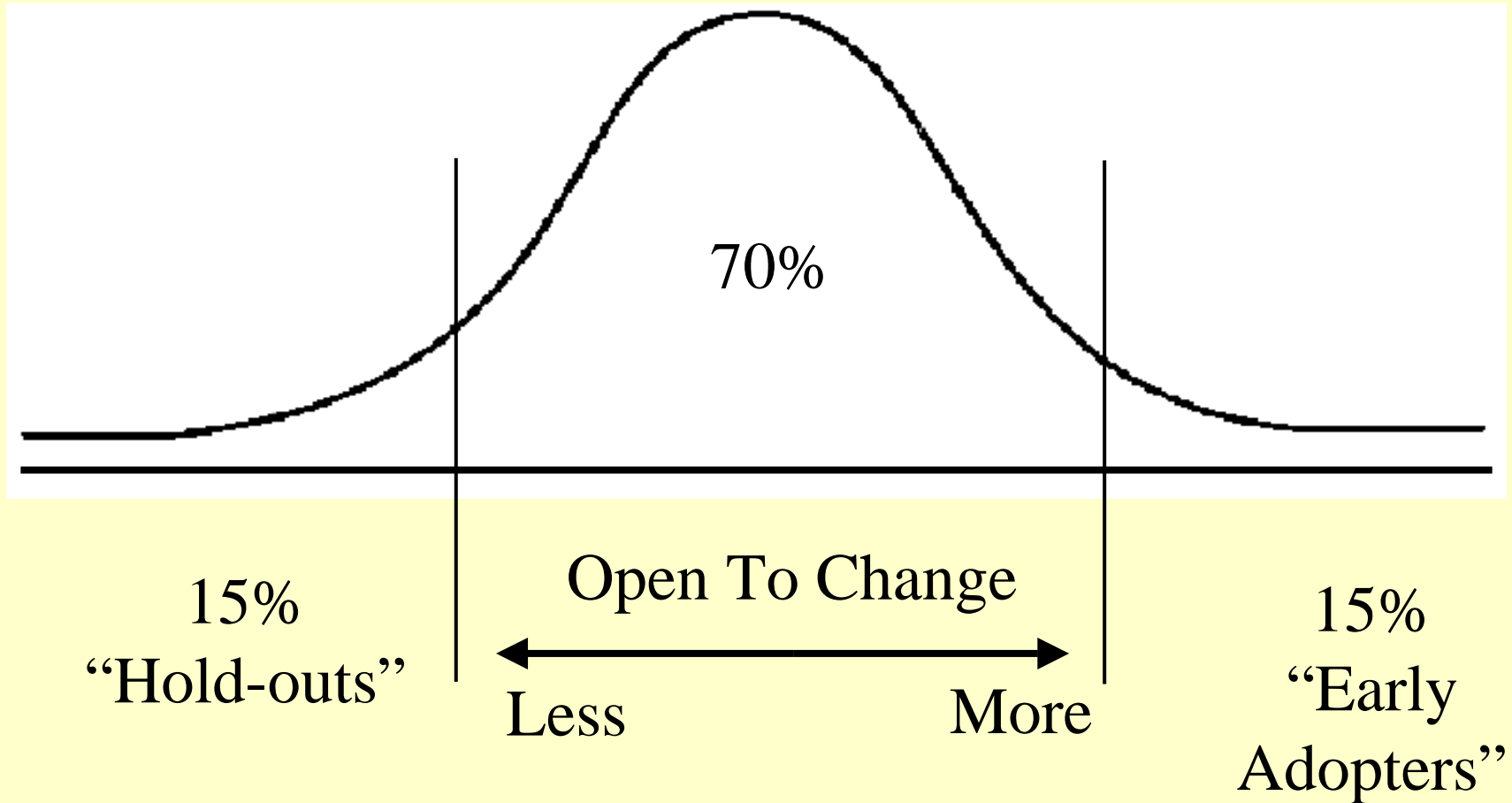
At K-State, we decided that the leaders needed to be faculty ...

- with reputations for excellence in teaching,
- who have the respect of other faculty, and
- who are considered trustworthy and credible.

Reasons why institutional culture change never gets off the ground:

- The Dean of _____ will never buy it!
- The Arts & Sciences faculty will resist this change just like they always do.
- This is just another edict from the top – the faculty will rebel!!
- The faculty in the College of _____ will sabotage all our efforts.

Attitudes Toward Institutional Change



Copy of Normal Curve from:

<http://www.mnstate.edu/wsson/ed602lesson7.htm>

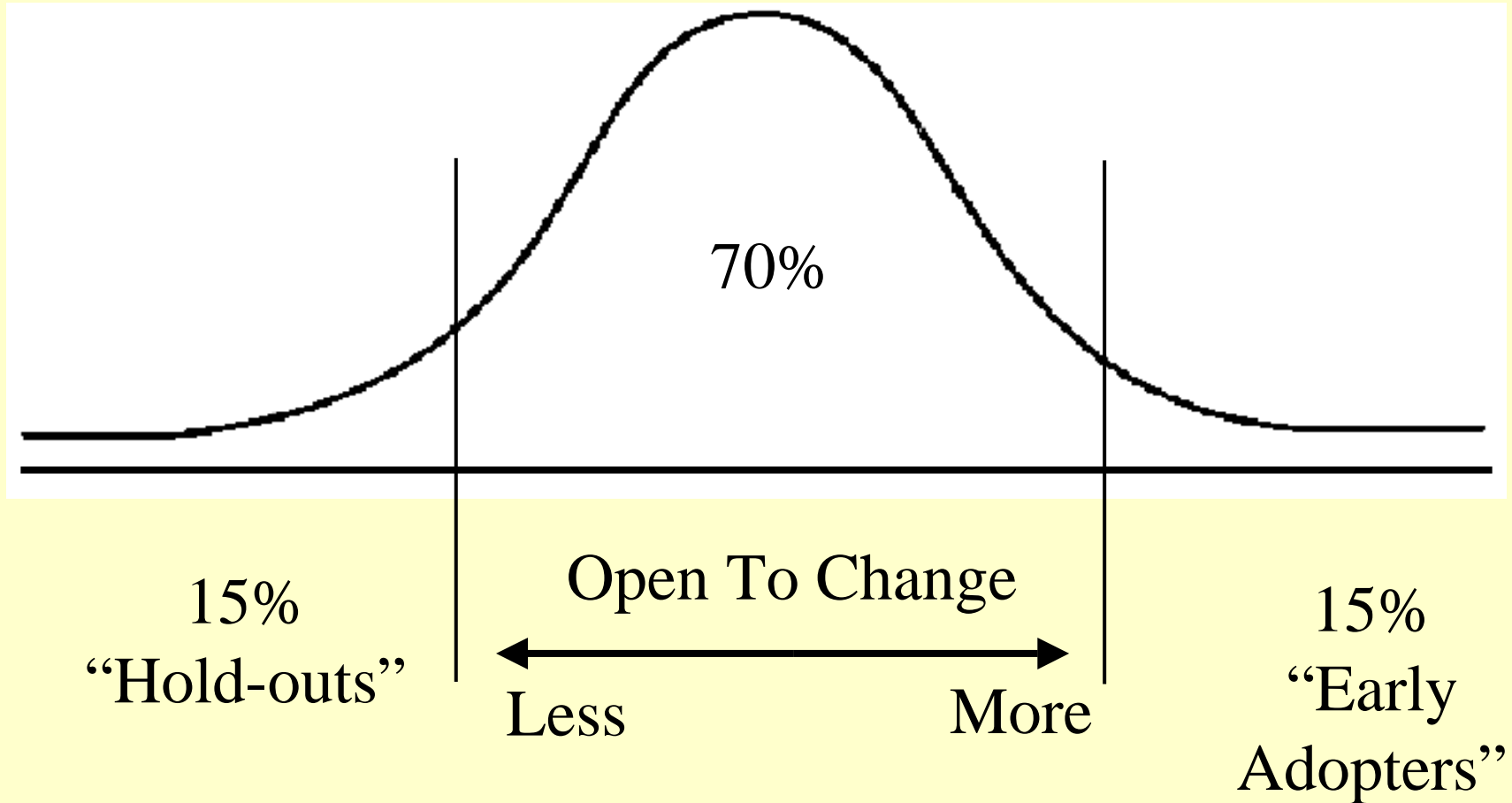
“Early Adopters” Approach

- Decide from the beginning that you will not lose one moment of sleep or one ounce of energy worrying about the “hold-outs.” Then...
- Identify faculty members who have expertise or interest in assessment of student learning.
- Ask them if they would be willing to help create some models for other faculty.

‘Early Adopters’ Approach

- Begin working with those who are ready to begin.
- Invite others to join as the work continues.
- Have so much fun and be so productive that other people actually ask to join.

Attitudes Toward Institutional Change



Copy of Normal Curve from:

<http://www.mnstate.edu/wsson/ed602lesson7.htm>

Handout #2

- Please take 2 – 3 minutes to complete the handout.
- Pair/Share for the next 4 minutes

Resistance & Advocacy for Institutional Change

How to Recognize Resistance:

- “We’ve always done it this way.”
- “This won’t work because . . .”
- “This new change is too complicated to implement.”
- “This is just another administrative initiative that will go away once the next ‘big’ initiative comes along.”

Resistance to Assessment:

- “Is assessment worth the time and effort?”
- “Ignoring assessment will help it go away.”
- “This is just another way to identify programs for elimination or down-sizing.”
- “We will find deficiencies in our programs and then will be penalized for them.
- “This is the No Child Left Behind Act applied to higher education.”

See paper for more examples

Resistance to change, any change, does and will exist

- Expect it.
- Attempt to identify the sources of resistance.
- Respect and affirm the reasons that people feel resistant.
- Talk with people one-on-one or in small groups about their feelings.
- Work around pockets of resistance that seem to be (at least for the foreseeable future) unmovable.

See paper for more examples

Advocacy

- Change is here to stay, and I am doing my part to help.
- I would rather be part of the solution than a contributor to the problem.
- This change will bring us closer together (e.g., increase communication & collaboration among colleagues)
- Share enthusiasm about the change.

Assessment is worthwhile, because it will:

- Improve our students' learning
- Help to improve our teaching strategies
- Increase communication & collaboration across our academic units
- Enhance our recruiting efforts for students and faculty

Handout #3

- List all potential stakeholders in the change effort.
- Identify potential resisters & advocates.
- Identify reasons for resistance to or support for the change.

Command for Change from Top

VS.

“Grassroots” Change

Even when the immediate mandate for change comes from external sources communicating through the university administration,...

real culture change happens when the process is defined and developed by faculty with faculty leadership.

Critical balance:

- Enough **uniformity** (of reports, for instance) for reasonable institutional processing;
- Enough **flexibility** so that departments and units can feel ownership and some sense of control over their own management.

<http://www.ksu.edu/apr/manual/template/index.htm>



Paradox of Individual Involvement in Institutional Change

- Has to be “all about me” for each participant.
- Cannot be “all about me” for any one person.
- People have to be given credit where it is due.
- It has to not matter who gets the credit.

BREAK

9:10 – 9:20 a.m.



Humor/Perspective

- Keep a few images handy to conjure up when things are not going so well...

Should I take the plunge or not??





And why
should I
care??

An experiment in transpecies adoption...





I told you, I don't know that one!!

They're
talking
about
me – I
know
they
are!!



That's my academic freedom you're talking about!!



Here come the _____ ...



If I stay really still, maybe they won't notice me...



Wow! Now that was hard work!!





Handout #4

- Please take approximately 2 minutes to answer the question at the bottom of the handout.

Creating an Action Plan

- What is the status of your institution's change process?
 - Is the proposed change a new process for your institution?
 - Are you resurrecting a previous process?
 - Are you revising an existing process?

Creating an Action Plan

- Think about the steps that can be taken at your institution to initiate the change process.
- Who are the necessary or key players?
- What issues must be considered for each step?

Example: K-State's Action Plan

Action Statement/ Step	Necessary Players	Notes of Caution, Potential Issues
Early adopters	Faculty with interest and/or expertise	How to expand involvement to other faculty.
Establish policy & procedures	Faculty representatives throughout the institution	Policy must not be too complicated or burdensome; embed into current practices.
Develop models	Professionals in the area you are wanting to change (e.g., Assessment)	Try to leverage current culture; avoid edicts; build in flexibility

Summary & Conclusions

Audience Insight

Group Discussion

- What is your desired institutional change?
- Where are the strongest resisters?
- Who are your best advocates?
- What action steps are you planning?

Group Discussion

- Share one positive experience from this presentation.
- What have you learned today that you can take back to your institution?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the presentation,
you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate your knowledge of some critical steps in the change process.
2. Identify the strengths, challenges, pockets of resistance, and advocates related to the desired change at your institution.
3. Demonstrate your understanding of the importance of the flexibility that makes local self-determination (and, therefore, ownership) possible.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the presentation,
you will be able to:

4. Outline an action plan that you can begin to implement within the next three months and that includes five to seven action steps.
5. Reflect upon at least one image that you can smile inside about when the going gets tough.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

- Please complete the Learning Outcomes Assessment form.
- Complete forms may be left at your table or given to one of the presenters.

Thank You

Contact Information:

- Cia Verschelden (cia@ksu.edu)
- Ruth Dyer (rdyer@ksu.edu)
- M. Duane Nellis (dnellis@ksu.edu)
- Patricia Marsh (pmarsh@ksu.edu)
- Conference presentation and handouts are available on the web at:

www.ksu.edu/apr/resources/workshops.htm#events