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Building Dynamic Capabilities towards Innovation and Flexibility

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Abstract

In March 2020, most Higher Education Institutions worldwide quickly moved to online learning and work with only one week to prepare. While the pandemic forced us to do this quickly and without a well- thought-out plan, most of us met this challenge. The World Health Organization declared that COVID-19 was no longer a global health emergency on May 5, 2023, but many institutions had started the return to “normal” before then. This Organizational Improvement Plan begins with the vision that rather than retrenching back to “normal”, Ontario Polytechnic, a large polytechnic institution in Ontario, Canada, should be moving even further towards flexibility in teaching, learning and work to remain competitive in a complex and changing environment. It goes further to envision Ontario Polytechnic as an organization that is equipped to deal with future innovations, with the dynamic capabilities and innovation mindset to respond creatively and effectively to changes in the environment. In moving this culture change forward, this OIP outlines the importance of understanding social networks, both formal and informal, early and deep engagement of employees, who are seen as actors in the change rather than recipients of change and uses Kotter’s Modified 8-Step Change Management Model as a roadmap to change. The complementary application of both transformational and complexity leadership approaches is key to the success of undertaking a culture change as deep as this one.

Keywords: leadership, transformational, innovation, HyFlex.

Executive Summary

After the disruption of the pandemic, the higher education (HE) sector in Ontario is at a crossroads. Changing demands from industry and students, increased competition (both locally and globally) and a shrinking provincial funding model, mean that an innovation mindset is required to remain competitive (Anthony et al., 2020; DeKlerk et al., 2021). Ontario Polytechnic (OP; a pseudonym) is a large polytechnic institution in Canada that adapted quickly to online learning and work options during the pandemic. This was done rapidly out of necessity, and while the organization responded, not everyone bought into it; now that we are in recovery, OP cannot be complacent as the environment keeps changing.

The vision central to this inquiry is that OP becomes an institution that continually looks for opportunities to change, is prepared to support innovation, and consistently adapts to changing environments. This innovation mindset will set it apart from other higher education institutions (HEIs), providing a meaningful competitive advantage. The problem of practice that this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) addresses is how to lead an organization toward flexibility by changing the organizational culture and creating dynamic capabilities toward innovation. There are three aspects to this PoP: a) ensuring that faculty understand and support flexible delivery in the short-term, b) moving the organization towards flexibility permanently in learning and work, and c) building dynamic capabilities toward innovation so that OP is prepared with the innovation mindset to thrive through future disruptions.

My leadership position and agency as the Vice-President Academic and Students (VPAS) is outlined in Chapter 1. My leadership view is through an interpretivist lens, and this approach guides my philosophy that change cannot be imparted to employees from the top down but instead must include employees as significant players in the change. As a leader, I may influence employees, but they are also influenced by each other and how they individually assign meaning

to their surroundings (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Putnam, 1983). In this chapter, the PoP is framed in social network theory, speaking to the importance of relationships within an organization (Brass, 2012). Attention must be paid to both formal and informal social networks; at the same time, individuals and groups (nodes) with influence must be considered and leveraged (Lerman et al., 2016). The internal and external organizational context that OP is facing, which includes chronic underfunding by the government and a declining domestic market, is laid out in this chapter. This results in an increasingly perilous reliance on international students and a competitive landscape as everyone fights for the shrinking domestic and lucrative international markets. To add to the complexity, students demand more flexibility and control over their education (Abersek, 2016; Toth et al., 2022), and employees ask for flexible work approaches. The solution to this OIP is framed by the structural and human resources frame (Bolman & Deal, 2017) with a further breakdown of the human resource frame by applying Fullan's (2011) Six Secrets Model. The chapter concludes by introducing how complexity and transformational leadership approaches are used in a complementary way to address this inquiry.

In Chapter 2, I further explore the leadership approaches required to drive change by examining how complexity and transformational leadership can be applied to this inquiry. In alignment with my position as an interpretivist, I subscribe to Northouse's (2022) view that leadership is an interactive process where a leader affects and is affected by followers. As a leader addressing this inquiry, I apply transformational leadership (top-down) and complexity (multi-directional) leadership, emphasizing each at different points in the change process. These two leadership approaches are fundamentally different and, at some points, contradictory; however, when used symbiotically and in a complementary fashion, there is a role for both

approaches to support the change at OP (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Liden et al., 2009). Kotter's Modified 8-Step Change Management Model (Kang et al., 2022) is applied to the change at OP. This model was chosen after considering the type of change (third-order, organization-wide), the context (interpretivism and the role of employees as actors in the change) and leadership agency (Kezar, 2018). This chapter includes an analysis of the low level of change readiness at OP and uses Weiner's (2009) model as a framework to show how the organization is largely unwilling to change and is ill-prepared operationally and emotionally. I conclude the chapter by assessing three alternative solutions to address the PoP. Each alternative considers the importance of the Human Resources (HR) and structural frames (Bolman & Deal, 2017) and is developed through the interpretivist lens while considering social network theory. In order to determine the best course of action, each alternative is assessed against the following criteria: time, resources required, stakeholder engagement, the ability to build long-term capacity for innovation, alignment with the interpretivist stance and the complementary use of transformational and complexity leadership. The solution selected involves the creation of an Institutional Innovation Group (IIG) with representatives from across the organization, led by a dean who reports to the VPAS. This solution will meaningfully engage stakeholders from across the institution and build institutional capacity to innovate by rotating key employees through this purpose-built, innovation-focused team every three years.

Finally, Chapter 3 includes a detailed outline of the implementation process, monitoring and evaluation methods, as well as a knowledge-mobilization-focused communication plan. The Change Implementation Plan (CIP) is anchored in interpretivist principles and is guided by both complexity and transformational leadership approaches. The communication plan looks at both outward and inward communication. Applying an interpretivist lens, employees are a *part* of the

communication plan, rather than merely recipients of the plan, and therefore listening is just as important as communicating. The Monitoring and Evaluation plan takes an honest and open approach and includes both formative and summative data.

Evidence observed in the sector points to the fact that while virtually every higher education institution (HEI) quickly made the change to online delivery and virtual work in March 2020, many are attempting to return to their pre-pandemic “normal.” This OIP takes the position that the pre-pandemic normal should not be an aspiration, and continued flexibility and the capacity to continually innovate will be a competitive advantage in the increasingly competitive HE environment. While others start to take their “feet off the pedal” when it comes to flexibility, the vision behind this OIP is pedal-down and full speed ahead toward flexibility and innovation.

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Acronyms

HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
KMP	Knowledge Mobilization Plan
OIP	Organizational Improvement Plan
OP	Ontario Polytechnic
ORC	Organizational Readiness for Change
PoP	Problem of Practice
RO	Registrar's Office
VPAS	Vice-President, Academic & Students

Definitions

Hybrid learning: A learning experience that is designed to combine both online and in-person instruction (Johnson, 2021).

Hy-flex learning (also referred to as flexible learning): A learning experience that allows students to choose their mode of learning on any given day and move fluidly between attending classes in-person, synchronously online or asynchronously online as they see fit. (Beatty 2019).

In-person learning: Learning that takes place entirely within a physical classroom with one's peers and instructor physically present. In-person learning may use technology within the classroom, or technology available on-campus, to facilitate learning and students may be expected to use technology (e.g., Learning Management System (LMS), digital textbooks, laptop computer) to complete course assignments. All instruction takes place in a physical classroom context (Johnson, 2021).

Online learning: Learning where the learning experience is delivered via the Internet either synchronously or asynchronously (Johnson, 2021).

Chapter 1: Introduction

The post-secondary education sector in Canada is one where uncertainty and change are prevalent: change in the internal and external environment, a changing student both demographically and socially, and a workforce that has different values and beliefs post-pandemic (DeKlerk et al., 2021; Penrod, 2022; Wu, 2022). However, by their very nature, higher education institutions (HEIs) are stagnant, slow and even resistant to change, favouring the status quo over innovation (Buller, 2014; Kezar, 2004). These shortcomings of HEIs in terms of responding to change are attributed to organizational structures and governance models (Austin & Jones, 2016).

In this uncertain and increasingly competitive environment, the ability to innovate is more critical than ever (Anthony et al., 2020). To flourish in this environment, institutions must create a deep-rooted culture of innovation, where behaviours that drive innovation success come naturally (Anthony et al., 2020; Corbo et al., 2016; Serdyukov, 2017). This chapter includes a discussion of the internal and external factors affecting Ontario Polytechnic (OP; a pseudonym), the misalignment between the external environment and the current state at OP, and summarizes my positionality within this inquiry.

Leadership Position, Positionality, and Lens

As the Vice-President Academic & Students (VPAS) at OP, I am responsible for the Academic Division, the Student Services Division and the Registrar's Office (RO). In this role, I consider myself the head gatekeeper and academic quality officer, ultimately responsible for the quality of the programs and services that we develop and deliver, the faculty that we hire and how we support and develop them to be the very best teachers, and the admission requirements, and processes to ensure that we align the right students with the right programs.

I report to the President and have significant autonomy in my role. I am responsible for ensuring that my team aligns with and executes OP's strategic objectives, which include flexibility and choice for students and staff, a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, a focus on sustainability (both in our curriculum and our practices), and a commitment to innovation (OP, Strategic Plan, 2023-2026).

I consider myself the formal change leader for my team. While there may be informal change leaders amongst the various teams I lead, I am ultimately responsible for moving the change forward in my division (Cawsey et al., 2020). I am also the change initiator and, sometimes, a change facilitator (Cawsey et al., 2020). I have positional power within the hierarchy at OP; however, the transformation necessary at OP will require more than positional power; it will require a leader that can garner the trust and engagement of a large team (Oreg et al., 2011).

Leadership Lens Statement

Some think of leadership as a trait or characteristic that one is born with. I believe in Northouse's (2022) position that suggests that leadership is a process, or something that is derived from the many interactions over time between leaders and their teams. My leadership journey has been a process that started when I took my first position in higher education as a professor almost 30 years ago. I started in the classroom and have worked in or directly supervised almost every position within my portfolio – I have been a Chair, Dean and College Registrar. I have earned my position as the most senior academic leader at OP. While I possess *assigned leadership* because I occupy the position of Vice-President, I believe that I also possess *emergent leadership* because of the relationships and track record that I have established (Northouse, 2022). I am also influenced by Schein's (2017) view of leadership, which focuses on

the energy and momentum created by a group working together versus the steps an individual leader must take.

Complexity Leadership

Given the extent of change required, the fact that it will require engagement and buy-in across the organization, and the complex environment at OP (which will be described later in this chapter), I am drawn to a complexity leadership approach. Complexity leadership is a leadership framework that emerged in the wake of increasingly complicated organizational environments that require new ways of leading (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). In complexity leadership theory, leadership can occur anywhere within a social system (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) and it emerges through leader-follower interaction (Tourish, 2019). It is not a hierarchical framework, but rather a fluid arrangement where different individuals act and contribute as leaders at different times. This framework does not address "leaders" as individuals but instead speaks to "leadership" as being "embedded in a complex interplay of numerous interacting forces" (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007, p. 322). There are similarities between this model and the distributed leadership model, which was also considered. From a distributed leadership perspective, leadership responsibilities and influence are shared within an organization (Harris, 2021). Complexity leadership models include this concept of distribution of leadership, but go further to discuss an understanding of the behaviour of complex systems and how they organise (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017).

At the same time, I am also inspired by elements of transformational leadership, including the concept of motivating and influencing followers to reach their fullest potential (Northouse, 2022). While leadership needs to be distributed within the hierarchy, one person still needs to lead the overall vision for change and communicate the overall strategy (Basham, 2012), particularly in a change as transformational as the one being undertaken at OP. My

leadership approach will combine both complexity and transformational leadership approaches in a contextualized way. This will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

Interpretivism

As a leader, I am grounded in interpretivism. Ontologically, interpretivism presents employees as actors on a stage who are integral to what is happening at an institution and who construct their own meaning from their situation rather than watching what is happening from the sidelines (Mack, 2010; Packard, 2017). Interpretivism holds that individuals are in control of their destinies and that actions are not determined by outside factors, although they influence them (Morgan, 1980). At OP this means that change cannot be imparted *on* employees, they must be engaged as integral players in the change. I believe my success will rely on leveraging the power of social networks and using peer influence and the social capital of myself and others to garner buy-in.

Considering epistemology, the interpretivist paradigm postulates that not everyone receives or interprets information the same way; it considers individuality, the interaction between people and the role of individuals in creating their reality (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Putnam, 1983). The voluntaristic aspect of interpretivism must also be considered; employees' willingness to innovate must be viewed and understood at the individual level and the meaning individuals give to change actions must be contemplated. Packard (2017) points to the importance of this voluntaristic aspect of interpretivist institutions and the importance of sharing the “why” and not just “what” and “how” when attempting to garner support. Employees can choose to embrace change or not. Therefore, leadership must take the time to provide context and meaning to strategies in a genuine way. It will also be important to

be transparent, innovative and collaborative in presenting solutions to this problem of practice (PoP) (Govender et al., 2005).

Applying the interpretivist lens to OP leads one to the position that the change leader will not be able to "make" innovation happen. Leadership can influence employees, but the change must come from within. Leadership has no permanent status and is contingent on time and space (Hartley, 2010), meaning that different leaders can step up at different times. Govender et al. (2005) looked at the management of change at HEIs and pointed to the correlation between staff empowerment and engagement and organizational change. This makes employee participation throughout the change process critical. It also points to the influence that employees have on each other as the organization moves through change— sometimes having more of an influence on each other than leadership does.

Social Network Theory

Social network theory aligns with the interpretivist paradigm discussed above, and understanding how the social networks at OP work (and do not work) is an important consideration for leadership. Similar to interpretivism, the social network perspective focuses on the series of relationships amongst people within an organization (Brass, 2012). Social network theory refers to a "node" (also called a vertex or point), which can be an individual or group of individuals that are a part of a network (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011). How nodes group together, and their formation and boundaries are critical to understanding how organizations react (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011; Soda & Zaheer, 2012). Nodes group together to form networks, both formal and informal and social network analysis looks at patterns of connections between nodes to identify important actors and subgroups (Himmelboim et al., 2017). Given the context of

interpretivism discussed above, both individual nodes and their relationships are important considerations for moving change forward at OP.

The concept of social capital within networks must be considered. Social capital refers to the benefits derived from relationships with others (Brass, 2012). Individuals with high social capital can get things done based primarily on who they know. There are two aspects of this to consider at OP. Firstly, identifying employees with high social capital will be important as they will be beneficial if they are on board with the strategy. The opposite is also true, however. Individuals with high social capital, who are not supportive of the strategy, can get in the way of progress. These individuals have the social "muscle power" to step in front of the train and stop it from moving forward. Lerman et al. (2016) discuss the power of high-degree nodes – those whose influence can be underestimated by the institution. Considering these "high rollers" and how to engage them early will be critical. It will be important to identify individuals in both camps and use leadership approaches to influence them. At the same time, I will have to leverage my own social capital to increase my ability to influence in a positive direction.

Both formal and informal networks must be considered. Formal networks at OP include the Leadership Council, Academic Council, and program teams, to name a few. There are also many informal networks, including faculty communities of practice on various topics. Given that leadership can influence the structure of formal networks, strategies to ensure that they are composed in a manner that supports the vision must be considered.

Informal networks may be more difficult to identify and access, but they are important, and my leadership approach may be able to impact their effects. Hayati et al. (2018) look at leadership during strategy implementation from a social network perspective and find that leadership could face challenges in strategy implementation if a critical influencer (one with

significant social capital) is not supportive. Their work provides insights into how leadership can lessen the power of peer influence by expanding external social networks, in other words, offering competing influences and strengthening their centrality as leaders within informal networks. For OP, leadership approaches that influence informal networks are necessary.

This quote sums it up: "I have come to realize that the only way to inspire change, stir activity, or get anything done at all is to explore the hidden world of social networks" (Stephenson, 2005, p. 244). The quote "leaders do not need to know all the answers, but they do need to ask the right questions" (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997, p. 124) also seems relevant here, though with a caveat - leaders need to ask the right questions to the right people. At the core of the change at OP is a culture change and a change in values. Such changes mean that as a leader, I must introduce new values using a collaborative and participatory approach that gives stakeholders autonomy and input (Bystydzienski et al., 2017).

In summary, the formal and informal social networks at OP will play an important part in the success of transforming the institution. The structure of nodes deserves consideration, as does the position and role of key influencers with considerable social capital.

Organizational Context

Ontario Polytech (OP) is a large Ontario polytechnic institution underpinned by the values of excellence, innovation, community, diversity and respect (Ontario Polytechnic, Strategic Plan, 2023-2026). Employees expect a collaborative approach to decision-making, and consensus-building has traditionally been important. This approach, together with its size (over 2,500 employees) sometimes make OP a slow-moving organization.

OP recognizes the importance of innovation and, as such, is embarking on a transformational strategy that will change the entire institution. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant shifts in economic and social structures worldwide and forced HEIs to rethink

many aspects of their core business (Horváth et al., 2022; Maloney & Kim, 2020). The overnight shift to online learning in March 2020 was drastic, but it did provide insights into the time, space and human aspects of more digital learning (Horváth et al., 2022). OP plans to build on the pandemic lessons to help position itself in a stronger place by going from an institution that delivered primarily in-person learning to almost 40,000 learners, to one on the leading edge of flexible teaching and learning. Veletsianos and Houlden (2020) describe the flexible model that OP is heading towards as “education that is responsive to learner and societal needs, available in multiple formats, through multiple delivery modes, in multiple timeframes and locations” (p. 850). Flexible learning (or Hy-flex) is a delivery mode and only one aspect of flexible teaching and learning. Delivery modes will be discussed later in this chapter. Many, including Kotter et al. (2021), feel that the pandemic forced institutions to deal with trends that started long before the world had even heard of COVID-19. The shift toward flexible learning has been a long time coming and was explored by Brian Beatty at San Francisco University as early as 2005 (Beatty, 2019). However, higher education (HE) and OP had been slow to embrace it before the pandemic. To achieve this strategy successfully, leadership at OP will have to remove institutional barriers to change and create a culture of innovation.

Disruption in the Sector

This section includes a review of Ontario’s higher education (HE) sector and the significant disruptions it is facing, including a changing business model, employers who demand more from graduates and changing student demographics. Even before the pandemic, industry expressed concerns about the preparedness of graduates and their ability to meet workforce needs (Cummins et al., 2019). The labour market is demanding rapid upskilling, on-demand learning and soft-skills training to overcome the unrealized value of skills vacancies in the

Canadian economy, which amount to over \$25 billion (Conference Board of Canada, 2022). Employers are looking to HEIs to help them fill these vacancies quickly.

At the same time, HE has become a crowded global marketplace and learners have more options than ever; institutions need to compete more aggressively in order to maintain revenues (Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016). Microcredentials and other short programs are on the rise (Academica Group, 2021) and the prevalence and acceptance of online learning continues to increase (Johnson, 2019). This increase in online learning started before the pandemic and opens up a world of options (literally) to students.

Learners are also changing. Students born between 1980 and 1994 are entering institutions as digital natives (Prensky, 2001), meaning that they grew up with access to technology, are inherently tech-savvy (Margaryan et al., 2011) and are looking for post-secondary institutions that meet them where and when they want to learn. They have spent most of their lives immersed in digital technology and are comfortable with it (Gallardo-Echenique et al., 2015). These students do not need to memorize large amounts of data as they are permanently connected and are able to find it (Abersek, 2016). They also prefer teamwork and collaboration, have shorter attention spans and prefer learning with flexible, personalized and customized schedules (Toth et al. 2022).

Meanwhile, institutions face the same demand for flexibility from their workforce (De Klerk et al. 2021) and while remote work provides organizational benefits such as improved employee engagement and performance (Conradie & De Klerk, 2019), workplaces must deal with new challenges, such as creating an organizational culture without in-person rituals (Zajac et al., 2022).

To further explore organizational context, the next section of this chapter includes an exploration of the political, economic, social and technological (PEST) factors that influence the internal and external environments at OP.

External Environment

There are several macro- and meso- level external factors at play at OP. Politically, there are two pertinent factors: the chronic underfunding of post-secondary education in Ontario and the increasing reliance on international students. In Ontario, government funding for domestic students is at its lowest point since 2008 (Trick, 2017). In 2019-20, the amount paid by the provincial government to Ontario colleges fell by 10%. And Ontario now provides the lowest funding for full-time domestic students of all Canadian provinces (Auditor General of Ontario, 2021). This is further exacerbated by a mandatory 10% reduction in domestic student tuition imposed by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities in 2019 (Usher, 2021). To deal with these funding shortfalls, post-secondary institutions have turned to international enrolment to survive given that international tuition can be more than three times domestic student tuition (varies by program) and is unregulated by the government. Canada's international student population has grown six-fold over the past 20 years and tripled in the last decade alone (El-Assal, 2020). Public Colleges in Ontario received 68% of their revenue from international tuition in 2020/21 (Auditor General of Ontario, 2021). OP, like most other colleges in Ontario, relies heavily on international tuition. Any change in the geopolitical landscape that would make Ontario a less attractive market for international students would put OP in a situation of acute financial instability. There are worrisome signs already that Canada might lose its attractiveness as a destination for international students as it faces increased competition from countries like the United States and Australia (Nicole, 2020).

Economic factors are also impacting OP and the HE sector. OP is facing domestic enrolment challenges. Demographics partially explain these enrolment challenges as growth among Canadian-born students entering post-secondary institutions has stagnated over the last decade (Statistics Canada, 2021). Given the stagnation in the population of Canadian-born students, there are fewer graduates from Ontario high schools (Statistics Canada, 2021). However, the economy is also an important factor. In internal surveys of returning students that were expected to re-enrol in the fall 2022, but did not, the number one reason cited by students for not returning to their education was the strong opportunities in the job market (OP Internal Survey, 2022). A strong economy buoyed by gross domestic product (GDP) growth and low unemployment rates increases the opportunity cost of attending post-secondary education and puts a strain on enrolment. These enrolment and funding challenges have spurred a meso-level factor impacting OP's situation: increased competition between Ontario HEIs (Jafar, 2015). Given their domestic enrolment challenges, institutions are looking for ways to differentiate themselves and create a unique value proposition, leading to a competitive marketplace.

Perhaps the most significant external factors to consider at OP are social factors. The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant changes in social structures and practices (Horváth et al., 2022). As a result, students entering post-secondary education in 2023 have received almost half of their high school education online. While some are anxious to return to on-campus education and activity, many have adjusted to the online environment and now prefer it (Piper, 2022). A survey of OP students carried out in Winter 2022 found that only 20% preferred in-person learning, with 80% preferring to study either online or in a flexible format (OP Internal Survey, 2022). Social factors also impact OP as a workplace. OP has been primarily a virtual workplace since March 2020 and is now shifting to a hybrid workplace. The pandemic taught us

that productivity and employee effectiveness are not confined to rigid work hours within the physical walls of an organization. OP has no plans to return to a strictly in-person workplace but, at the same time, has no plans to become a strictly virtual workplace. Helping staff deal with the complexities of hybrid work arrangements and helping managers lead a transformational change in a hybrid work environment will be key to OP's success in achieving its vision. A significant portion of employee work-related learning occurs in informal social settings on the job (Tannenbaum et al., 2010), and the move to a hybrid workplace may stifle social interaction and the activities necessary for employees to be successful in quickly learning new roles as they lead their team to transformation (Zajac et al., 2022).

The final external factor to consider at OP is technology. While digitization was an emerging pre-pandemic trend, digital technologies have incredibly changed aspects of professional and social life (Ho et al., 2020). This digital transformation includes social media, mobile devices, data analytics, and artificial intelligence (Horvath et al., 2022). Digital transformation impacts how faculty design curriculum and learning materials, how they teach, and how students learn. Technology may also impact student motivation as it allows students to be more involved in learning (Horváth et al., 2022). However, faculty will need support to navigate their way through technological changes. Hybrid learning and work have also led to increased concern about the cybersecurity risks involved with employees and students accessing IT networks remotely, and some have warned that the cyber crisis caused by an increased dependence on information technology could easily escalate into a “new pandemic” (Mihailović et al., 2021).

Internal Environment

There are several internal factors to consider at OP, including financial resources, human resources (including labour relations) and organizational structure. Despite the financial strains of limited domestic funding and tuition freezes, OP is in one of the strongest financial positions it has been in since its inception 55 years ago. Like other post-secondary institutions in Canada, neoliberal forces drove OP to pursue other sources of revenue, namely international enrolment and external contracts. Given this context, financial resources will not be a constraint to change at OP; this includes strong IT resources and infrastructure.

There are also several human resources factors to consider at OP. One neoliberal force at play is the increasing reliance on contract (non-tenured) faculty. Approximately 60% of faculty at OP are contract (or contingent) faculty, who have little job security from semester to semester, often receiving teaching assignments right before the semester starts. As a result, contract faculty may feel excluded, undervalued and not fully engaged within an institution (Drake et al., 2019). Labour relations are a second important aspect of context to consider. The collective agreement for Ontario college faculty expired on September 30, 2021. After months of a problematic work-to-rule campaign by faculty, a strike was averted right before faculty were set to walk off the job. An arbitrator was appointed who recently settled contract negotiations; however, labour relations continue to be strained. Leading unionized faculty towards transformational change with this poor state of labour relations will be difficult. Govender et al. (2005) looked at the management of change at higher education institutions and pointed to the correlation between staff empowerment and engagement and the likelihood of success with the change. They also point to the importance of paying tremendous attention to staff feelings through the change factors. The human resources factors at play at OP must be considered as a part of the change process.

Although OP has a hierarchical governance model (Austin & Jones, 2016), faculty hold considerable power. While, according to the collective agreement, program delivery decisions are management decisions, faculty hold a certain degree of autonomy on how they deliver material and integrate technology. As a result, faculty resistance to any change initiative could make it difficult to move forward.

There are also equity issues to consider as we review context. Much has been written about the "digital divide" worldwide, and this is a critical part of the context for OP. The digital divide refers to unequal access to the internet and other technology. Tate and Warshauer (2022) point to three factors creating inequitable access to learning for students: a) physical resources such as space, hardware and internet, b) human resources including an aptitude for self-regulated learning and, c) social resources to support students at home. Expanding on this, to participate in flexible learning, students need robust and reliable internet and good technology (Lai & Widmar, 2021). Rural communities do not always have access to high-speed Internet, and not all students have a computer at home. Furthermore, as some students may not have a quiet space for online study or a room that they are willing to share when they are asked to share their cameras online. Students who cannot self-regulate may also struggle with the more independent nature of online learning. Socially, online classes reduce opportunities for resource sharing and interaction and some students need the layer of social support provided by peers (Broadbent & Poon, 2015). On the other hand, online learning may increase access for students with disabilities, anxiety disorders and other issues that make in-person learning difficult (Piper, 2022).

The digital divide when it comes to faculty is more about technical know-how than access, as most faculty have access to the technology they need. Faculty are divided into those who are comfortable with technology and those who are not. Reflecting on a post-COVID world,

Iyengar (2020) argues that "the Digital Divide is real, but digital technologies can be a great unifier if there is universal access to connectivity and digital tools" (p. 78). Just as digital technologies can be unifiers, unequal access to digital tools will divide and create inequity. One aspect of the transformational plan to be considered is how many students and faculty will be excluded because they do not have access to technology or the skills necessary to adapt to technological advances and how to ensure that principles of equity are applied.

In summary, OP is facing a complex organizational context that will impact its ability to execute the vision to inculcate innovation into the organization so as to position itself to excel in the current environment and build capacity to capitalize on future disruptions.

Leadership Problem of Practice

As previously noted, post-secondary education is complicated and is changing. As the environment continues to change and demands from industry and students evolve, an ongoing commitment to innovation is required. The current slow-moving structures and approaches are no longer valid. Therefore, the problem of practice (PoP) that this inquiry addresses is how to lead an organization toward flexibility by changing the organizational culture and creating dynamic capabilities toward innovation.

The concept of dynamic capabilities is important to this PoP. Helfat et al. (2007) use the term to refer to "the capacity of managers to create, extend or modify the resource base of the organization" (p. 3). The change vision at OP is more profound than the current shift to flexible learning. Shaping an organization with the capacity to embrace flexible learning is the current challenge, but building an organization that consistently senses and seizes new opportunities as they arise is the more significant challenge. This envisioned state for OP will be purposeful, calculated, strategically enacted, and long-lasting in comparison to the completely reactive

switch to online learning forced upon HEIs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This involves building dynamic managerial capabilities to address today's challenges and positioning OP as an innovative organization that continually senses, seizes and embraces new challenges.

To achieve this strategy successfully, leadership at OP will have to remove institutional barriers to change discussed in the organizational context and will need to build capacity within the management team to create a culture of innovation that continuously seizes new opportunities.

There are three main aspects to this Problem of Practice. The first is the faculty's understanding and support of flexible delivery. Flexible delivery (also called hy-flex) is a learning experience that allows students to choose their mode of learning on any given day and move fluidly between attending classes in-person, synchronously online or asynchronously online as they see fit. (Beatty 2019). Currently, there are some early faculty adopters of flexible delivery, but there are many skeptics among faculty. In the college system, where academic freedom is viewed differently than in universities, administrators theoretically have the right to dictate the mode of delivery. Theoretically, while this approach would align with the collective agreement, forcing faculty to teach in a flexible format against their will would not be ideal. Currently, less than 10% of courses are delivered in a flexible format at OP. The desired end goal for program delivery is to have 25% of courses in flexible format by fall 2023. This number was determined to be reasonable given the training and equipment required for flexible delivery.

According to data gathered internally at OP, students have embraced more bespoke delivery methods such as online and flexible delivery (Ontario Polytechnic Internal Surveys, 2022); however, many faculty are skeptical and slow to embrace it. When asked to consider flexible delivery instead of online or in-person in an OP internal survey, most (over 80%) of

faculty that responded are hesitant. When asked why they are hesitant, faculty are concerned with the additional workload associated with flexible delivery, technology challenges and privacy concerns related to the recording of classes. With 80% of faculty hesitant to deliver in the flexible format, the goal of 25% of courses delivered in the flexible format will be challenging. While Govender et al. (2005) point to the correlation between staff empowerment and engagement and the likelihood of success with organizational change, they also point to the importance of paying tremendous attention to staff feelings. The success of this change initiative will hinge on listening to key stakeholders. Initially, this PoP may appear to be about technology, but it is not. This PoP is about people, moving people to think and act differently.

The second aspect of this inquiry involves moving the entire organization towards flexibility permanently. OP's vision of flexibility will permanently change many aspects of the operation, including how space is utilized, how staff are hired and trained, the programs offered, and the IT resources required. This path to flexibility will be an internal battle between the past and the future (Grove, 1996). As a result, the entire organization will have to change. Institutions are by their nature rooted in norms, traditions and long-standing structures. So how do we reconcile this with the need to adapt and innovate? Tellis et al. (2009) postulates that corporate culture is the strongest driver of innovation within an organization.

The final aspect involves creating an organization that continually looks for and seizes new opportunities. It has been said that innovation is much like mutation, the biological process that keeps species evolving so that they can keep surviving (Serdyukov, 2017). Constant innovation, therefore, must be considered mandatory for the survival of any organization. However, unfortunately, the actual speed of educational innovations and their implementation is prolonged (Serdyukov, 2017). Serdyukov (2017) speaks to the importance of creating a fertile

environment (organizational structures and design) and of the human element (employees) in creating innovation. The importance of the human element is amplified by Helfat et al. (2007), who posit that institutions with managers who have better dynamic managerial capabilities can adapt and change more successfully than those whose managers have less effective or no dynamic managerial capabilities.

Achievement of the objectives of this OIP should result in a long-term and sustainable competitive advantage for OP. Enrolment should be positively impacted by meeting the changing needs of students. The organizational agility will also mean that better, more industry-focused programs that meet employer needs will be launched more quickly. Moreover, OP's flexible work environment should attract and retain the highest calibre of talent.

Framing the Problem of Practice

Framing the problem of practice helps to understand how to approach this inquiry and sets the stage for planning and developing solutions. According to Bolman and Deal (2017), "a good frame makes it easier to know what you are up against and, ultimately, what you are going to do about it" (p. 12). They identify how a framework should provide a roadmap, or a coherent set of ideas to simplify complex organizational processes. I explored several frames related to organizational change and innovation for this inquiry, including Bolman and Deal's model, the McKinsey 7S model, and Leavitt's Diamond model. I felt that there was not one to fully capture the nature of this PoP. As such, I will use an amalgam of two frames by looking at Fullan's (2011) model for meaningful, sustainable organizational change (The Six Secrets) together with the Four-Frames model by Bolman and Deal (2017). While Bolman and Deal's model (2017) is a comprehensive framework that provides a broad organizational perspective appropriate for a complex organization, it lacks appreciation of the importance of employee engagement and

shared participation in change (Wilson & Sy, 2021). With respect to this PoP and the context described earlier, Bolman and Deal's model (2017) is strengthened by including an appreciation of Fullan's model (2011), which emphasizes the importance of engaging all participants and developing a shared vision to support change.

Four-Frame Model

Bolman and Deal (2017) identified four frames that can be used to analyze and understand organizational processes, such as decision-making, strategic planning, communicating and approaching conflict. These frames have been categorized as *structural, symbolic, political and human resources*. The human resources and structural frames are most directly related to this inquiry.

The Six Secrets Model

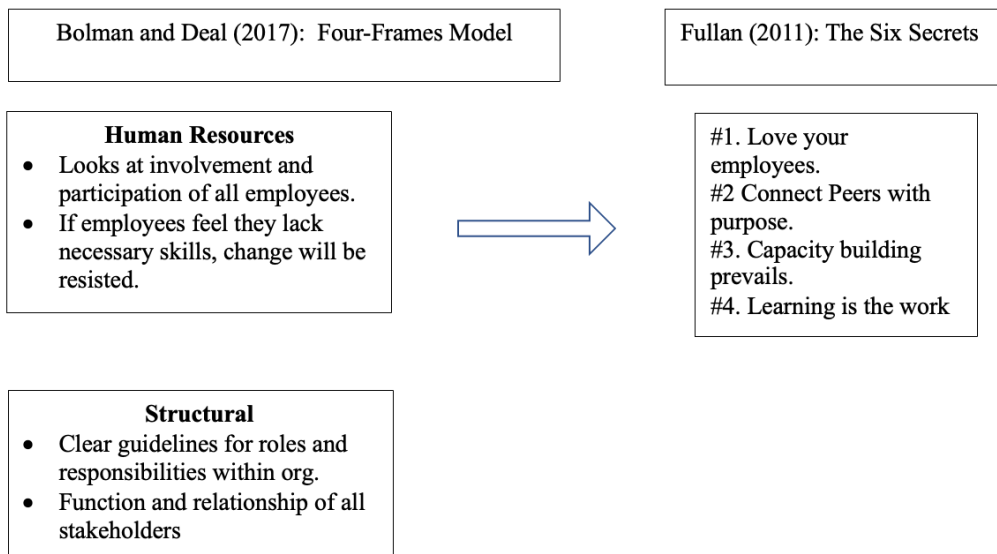
Fullan (2011) looks at how to translate change ideas into insightful, actionable and communicable change, in other words, how to make organizational change sustainable. Fullan's model involves six secrets of meaningful organizational change: (a) love your employees, (b) connect peers with purpose, (c) capacity building prevails, (d) learning is the work, (e) transparency rules, and (f) systems learn.

Fullan emphasizes stakeholders' roles and beliefs as the foundation for sustainable reform (Wilson & Sy, 2021). While not as comprehensive as the four-frames model, the focus on employee engagement and interaction makes it suitable given the interpretivist stance, social network theory and organizational context at OP. The two models are aligned in two areas. Figure 1 illustrates how the models align. The human resources frame is the one where there is the most alignment, but the structural frame also merits consideration. I address Bolman and Deal's human resources and structural frames, aligning Fullan's model with them.

As stated earlier, this PoP is centered on employees and their role in moving OP forward. Given this, human resources investments are important to access a motivated, talented and loyal workforce (Bolman & Deal, 2017). According to Bolman and Deal (2017), “the human resources frame centers on what people do to and for one another” (p. 113). This frame also considers the professional development and tools needed to develop the skills needed for change (Andrade, 2011; Bolman & Deal, 2017). Tierney and Lanford (2016) propose that creating an organizational culture that fosters innovation and creativity involves four conditions: diversity of people; skills and opinions; intrinsic motivation instead of external rewards; and autonomy of employees. Fostering a climate that supports these qualities requires an organizational commitment to inculcate them into specific management practices (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Figure 1

The Human Resources Frame and Secrets #1 to #4



Bolman, L. G. & Deal, T. E. (2017). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership*. (6th ed.). Jossey-Bass. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?docID=6715211>

Fullan. (2011). *The Six Secrets of Change* [electronic resource]: What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive. Wiley. https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/r0c2m8/alma991044434828205163

The first four secrets in Fullan's model also cover human resources. Compared to the four-frame model, Fullan's model shares the focus on capacity building but adds some emotional elements by recognizing the importance of employees' feelings of recognition and appreciation. Fullan (2011) also acknowledges that it is not only about the people in an organization but also about their relationships with each other and peer interaction (2020). Sirota et al. (2005) support the importance of peer interaction and speak to three factors that motivate employees – fair treatment, enabling achievement, and camaraderie. Related to the idea that individuals within teams should be connected through a relationship is the notion of trust between employees. Liou and Daly (2014) examine the importance of trust among players in a network. They examine three propositions. First that on high-performing teams, network members will have a close relationship. Second, the relationship among team members will be based on trust. And third, on high-performing teams, information is shared openly and accessible. They argue that when these three things are true – teams are engaged and high functioning.

A final important aspect of Fullan's model is secret #4 - learning is the work. This speaks to the integration of the precision needed for consistent performance using what is already known and the new learning required for continuous improvement (Fullan, 2011). The best standard practices must be entrenched enough to become second nature, freeing up energy to work on innovative practices.

In conclusion, drawing from both frames, there are several considerations for OP: (a) hiring the right people and enough of them and keeping the good ones from burning out, (b) investing in both new and current employees to ensure that they have the skills required, (c) listening to employees and ensuring that they feel engaged and empowered, and (d) creating a community of trust amongst employees.

The Structural Frame

The structural frame examines the social architecture of work and is concerned with optimizing processes and creating efficiency within organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2017). There are two aspects of structural design to consider: allocating work or *differentiation*, and coordinating the work done by different teams or *integration* (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

At OP, the organizational structure conforms to that described by Bolman and Deal (2017), which is vertical and linear with all areas feeding into a single center of authority. This traditional configuration is based on a clear division of labour and centralized authority and control. In this vertically coordinated approach, the control goes from the top down, with higher levels controlling and coordinating the work of subordinates (Bolman & Deal, 2017). While this structure provides stability and clarity, in complex environments like OP, this static organizational framework cannot provide the flexibility and agility needed to support innovation (De Mello et al., 2012). Instead of this rigid organizational structure, Biedenbach and Söderholm (2008) discuss the idea of a series of intentionally designed temporary project teams with a high level of flexibility to support innovation. The downside of this fluid approach to organizational structure, especially in an organization with a long history of a rigid organizational structure, is that chaos and uncertainty may ensue (Biedenbach & Söderholm, 2008). These risks could be mitigated with communication and by linking these temporary structures to a specific project. Temporary organizational structures aligned to specific projects allow the utilization of benefits from organizational flexibility and adaptability, reducing the risk of uncertain environments (Turner & Meuller, 2003).

This section examined Bolman and Deal's (2017) human resources and structural frames and tied them into aspects of Fullan's (2011) Six Secrets of Change. Organizational change in

very competitive environments leads to tension between two challenges of change discussed in this section: (a) the capability challenge, and (b) the structural challenge (Biedenbach & Söderholm, 2008). The human resources framework addresses capability challenges and the structural challenges can be addressed by developing a flexible organizational structure. Both the human and structural frames are considered when solutions are developed in Chapter 2.

Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

This section identifies three guiding questions related to this Problem of Practice. This PoP focuses on a gap between the current state and a future state that embraces flexibility and a dynamic capability for innovation. The questions below are designed to guide the research to identify possible solutions to this PoP.

Question 1: To what extent do the HR elements at OP support flexibility and innovation?

Students have embraced online and flexible delivery; however, many faculty are skeptical and slow to embrace it. When asked why they are hesitant, faculty are concerned about the additional workload associated with flexible delivery, academic integrity issues related to assessments that do not take place in a classroom, technology challenges and privacy concerns related to the recording of classes. The question goes beyond faculty. Are administrators ready to embrace flexibility and are they equipped with the skills and resources to manage in a hybrid environment; and what changes to training and hiring practices are required? Simply put, is OP's human capital structured to support this change?

To address this question, Lenihan et al., 2019, look at two elements of human capital. The *can do* – or the knowledge and skills required to do the job and the *will do* – or the attitudes and perceptions affecting employee willingness to cooperate. Both of these aspects will be important to OP. They go on to discuss the different human resources policies to address each aspect of

human capital and also discuss policies and interventions that provide organizations with tools and knowledge to support employees' motivation to change. The strength of human resources practices as they relate to faculty and administrators were not developed with flexibility and innovation in mind, and must be considered in this OIP.

Question Two: To what extent do structural elements at OP create an environment that supports and fosters flexibility and innovation?

Nadler and Tushman (1999) suggest that two categories of structural elements will make the transition to a more adaptive and innovative model possible. The first is *information technology*, which allows teams to connect with each other and with stakeholders external to the organization. They suggest that, if used correctly, information technology will also support greater collaboration and teamwork. The second structural element they suggest is the *innovative use of teams* as the foundation for a new organizational architecture. Their definition of "team" is broader than the traditional definition and includes how an organization defines and coordinates its people in a way that sustains the organization long-term, regardless of changes in the external environment, including leveraging the skills and opinions from diverse teams across the organization. The organizational structure at OP was designed for a stable environment and to prioritize clear lines of reporting and division of duties and has not undergone significant review or revision in decades.

Question 3: How to equip managers with dynamic capabilities to sense and seize future opportunities?

This question involves creating an organization that continually looks for and seizes new opportunities. It has been said that innovation is much like mutation, the biological process that keeps species evolving so that they can keep surviving (Serdyukov, 2017). Constant innovation,

therefore, must be considered mandatory for the survival of any organization. Unfortunately, the actual speed of educational innovations and their implementation is very slow (Serdyukov, 2017). Serdyukov (2017) speaks to the importance of creating a fertile environment (organizational structures and design) and of the human element (employees) in creating innovation. The importance of the human element is amplified by Helfat et al., (2007) who propose that institutions with managers who have better dynamic managerial capabilities can adapt and change more successfully than those whose managers have less effective or no dynamic managerial capabilities. While questions 1 and 2 relate to the immediate need for change; this question addresses creating an organization equipped to identify and capitalize on future disruptions.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

Helen Keller said, “the only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision”. This chapter includes an examination of the context at OP, or what we can see. Leadership vision is what will propel OP towards change.

Vision for Change

A vision conveys the purpose for the change, the strategy to achieve that purpose and what the future will look like (Cawsey et al., 2020). The vision central to this inquiry is that OP becomes an institution that looks for opportunities to change and is poised to support innovation and adapt to changing environments consistently. This innovation mindset will set it apart from other HEIs, providing a meaningful competitive advantage. The first opportunity to embrace this new way of operating is flexibility. OP is an institution where nearly all programs, prior to the pandemic, were delivered in-person in classrooms and labs, students had to come to campus to access almost every service, and employees worked in traditional workspaces daily. The future

vision is that OP becomes an institution grounded in flexibility and choice – for students and employees. This includes flexible delivery options for students, while never compromising academic rigour, and flexible work options for employees.

The Gap

The gap between the current and desired state is significant. The most significant gap is in organizational culture. Some employees at OP might say that it is already an innovative organization – we try new things and encourage creativity. However, a culture of innovation and an innovation mindset goes beyond creativity. As in many organizations, OP is subject to a disconnect between the belief that innovation happens and the actual practices of innovation (McLaughlin & McLaughlin, 2020). As espoused by McLaughlin and McLaughlin (2021), innovation must be intentional and requires deep subject knowledge and persistence. They assert that only creative ideas that have value or cause effective change are innovative. This is the gap that must be closed at OP in order for it to emerge as an organization deeply entrenched in innovation. To build an innovation mindset, one must believe that innovation is not an ability that employees possess innately but is a skill that can be learned, practiced and developed (McLaughlin & McLaughlin, 2020). In other words, an innovation mindset takes work, focus and resources.

Ferrara-Love (1997) looks at two ways to change an organization's culture: either encouraging the organization to buy into a new set of beliefs and values, or alternatively recruiting and socializing new members. Assuming that widescale recruitment of new staff is not realistic, encouraging a new set of beliefs and values (a new culture) amongst employees at OP will present leadership challenges.

Leadership Considerations

Academic leadership has always been challenging, but the role and influence of a leader are amplified during times of change (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). Leadership that includes intellectual stimulation, influence, and inspiration is required to support HEIs in these uncertain times (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). Both complexity leadership and transformational leadership will play a role at OP.

Complexity leadership theory regards leadership as a shared and fluid process where individuals and teams interact and learn from each other to produce the capacity to innovate and adapt (Avolio et al., 2009). Therefore, leadership functions are not considered to be restricted to one specific person (the VPAS). Instead, an environment conducive to creative thinking and innovation is created. One of the key premises behind complexity leadership theory is the notion of adaptive space. According to Uhl-Bien et al. (2007), "adaptive space is contexts and conditions that enable networked interactions to foster the generation and linking up of novel ideas, innovation and learning in a system" (p. 12). This space - sometimes physical, but not always - encourages people to freely explore, exchange ideas and debate.

Another important aspect of leadership that plays a role in this inquiry is transformational leadership. Peng et al. (2021) report that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on the success of organizational change by improving commitment to change, openness to change, and readiness for change, thereby reducing stakeholder resistance to and cynicism about change. Transformational leadership has been shown to create a climate within an organization that supports creativity and innovation (Elrehail, 2018). Transformational leadership focuses on engaging employees and working together to drive change (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

This innovation climate - opening space for employees to take chances - is important at OP. According to Bass (1995), "transforming leaders convert followers to disciples: they develop followers into leaders" (pg. 467). A transformational leader can identify individuals with high social capital and positionality within networks and influence them to influence others. Identifying innovation "disciples" and using them to drive innovation is an important notion, particularly given the interpretivist frame and influence of social networks.

Priorities for Change

There are two priorities for change at OP: a) moving quickly to a more flexible learning and work environment in response to external demands, and b) equipping senior managers with the skills to manage this change while at the same time building the organization's dynamic capabilities to seek out and embrace innovation continuously. As the VPAS, I am responsible for leading this change for my portfolio.

Chapter 1: Conclusion

Facing an increasingly complicated internal and external environment, Ontario Polytechnic has the opportunity to transform itself. One might say that it is more than an opportunity, it is a requirement to transform so as to maximize competitiveness. Framed by interpretivism and social network theory, this inquiry applies complexity and transformational leadership approaches to change the organizational culture and mindset by changing deep-rooted human resources practices and structural components.

Chapter 2: Introduction

Chapter 1 included a discussion of the dynamic and evolving post-secondary landscape and the organizational context that OP operates within and outlined a vision for change that would propel the academic and student services division at OP to the forefront of flexible learning and work. This chapter addresses the leadership approaches required to drive and guide the change forward by examining how complexity and transformational leadership contribute to this PoP. Kotter's modified 8-Step Change Model (Kang et al., 2022) is applied to this inquiry to drive change. Finally, in this chapter, I analyze change readiness and explore three alternative solutions, culminating in a discussion of the path that best aligns with the proposed change.

Leadership Approach to Change

Organizational change and leadership go hand in hand, and there cannot be one without the other (Burnes et al., 2016). While there are many definitions of leadership, I subscribe to the definition put forward by Northouse (2022); "leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to meet a common goal" (p. 6). One caveat to Northouse's definition is that leadership is not merely a process whereby an individual influences a group to meet a common goal but where the group influences each other and the leader (Mendes et al., 2016). Defining leadership as a *process* implies that leadership is not one-way or linear but instead interactive; a leader both affects and is affected by followers (Northouse, 2022). This view of leadership aligns with social network theory and the interpretivist stance presented in Chapter 1.

Change Context and Leadership Approach

Leadership occurs within organizational contexts (Osborn & Marion, 2009), and dynamic environments, such as the one at OP, require a leadership approach that includes relational and engagement skills (Simmons & Yawson, 2022). The change described in Chapter 1 is a third-

order change that will transform the very identity of OP (Tsoukas & Papoulias, 2005). Given the deep-rooted changes required, leadership must demonstrate thoughtful engagement of all staff to move the change forward (Kezar, 2018; Whittaker & Montgomery, 2022). Looking at the impact of leadership on cultural changes within organizations, Nadler and Tushman (1999) found that while a leader can impact culture from the top down, this unidirectional approach is not enough to transform the organization successfully and that bottom-up approaches (leadership from within the organization) are also required for a culture shift. It should be noted that while expressions such as “top-down” and “bottom-up” are hierarchical and do not align with my espoused leadership approaches, they are used hereto to align with the literature.

To respond to the complicated change context at OP, I apply transformational leadership (top-down) and complexity leadership (multi-directional), emphasizing each at different points in the change process. These two leadership approaches are fundamentally different and, at some points, contradictory; however, when used symbiotically and in a complementary fashion, both approaches have a role at OP.

Complexity Leadership

Complexity leadership theory regards leadership as a shared and evolving process where individuals and teams interact and learn from each other to innovate and adapt (Avolio et al., 2009). In this approach, leadership can occur anywhere within an organization (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007), and as the situation changes, different individuals act and contribute as leaders.

Innovation and new learning happen when the open space between employees is filled by interactions that lead to the development of new knowledge (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) and when the open space allows for the intersection of disciplines (O'Neill & Nalbandian, 2018). This

emergent approach to leadership involves teams informally allowing leaders from across the organization to emerge and coordinate team processes as needed (Hanna et al., 2021).

The influence of peers and the importance of social networks in change (Kenis & Oerlemans, 2008) must also be recognized; this aligns with social network theory. Senior leadership can only sometimes be on the ground as change is implemented, and staff will rely on each other to problem solve and for emotional and technical support as they work through change. Identifying peer leaders and leaning on them to support the vision and act as leaders will be necessary at OP, particularly given the interpretivist stance framing the change. Innovation emerges not from the vision of only one person but rather when employees themselves work through the issues they have to solve (Mendes et al., 2016). This inclusive approach will engage more marginalized stakeholders at OP and give all stakeholders the adaptive space necessary to think freely and boldly (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017). The change at OP will involve many intertwined areas of the college, including the academic area, facilities, Information Technology (IT), Human Resources (HR), the Registrar's Office (RO). This framework recognizes the interconnectivity and interdependence of these areas. To illustrate, a change to how academic programs are delivered will impact facilities (different types of classrooms) and IT (technology in the classroom); given this, at any point in the change plan, the role of the leader may shift from the academic area to IT, for example, as required to deal with this complexity. Other leadership frameworks did not allow this multi-directional, shared leadership and interdependence.

The concept of the leader building a *container* for change or building change capacity in others, rather than solely being responsible for change (Higgs & Rowland, 2005), is also relevant to OP and is supported by complexity leadership. Sharing leadership opportunities builds more

leaders within an organization. Higgs and Rowland (2005) found a link between a leader's ability to build capacity and their success in moving forward through complex change, where the change is so all-encompassing that leadership for the change cannot rest with one leader. In other words, as individuals throughout the organization are allowed to lead, the institutional capacity for leadership increases, as does its ability to manage complex change. This supports the dynamic capabilities aspect of this PoP.

Transformational Leadership

While the interactive and relational aspects of complexity leadership are essential, the shared and emergent model presented above may not be enough to propel change forward, particularly in the early stages of change. Innovation and adaptation require a transformational approach to leadership (Basham, 2012). Transformational leadership has been shown to have a positive and statistically significant impact on innovation by encouraging creative thinking and positively impacting organizational culture (Elrehail, 2018; Watts et al., 2020). Transformational leaders bring out the most in people, inspiring and motivating employees to look beyond their self-interest to exceed performance expectations (Bass, 1995; Elrehail, 2018; Howell & Avolio, 1993). Successful change leaders balance insight, vision and passion for action (Cawsey et al., 2020). Leaders described as transformational concentrate their efforts on longer-term goals and place value and emphasis on developing a vision and inspiring followers to pursue the vision (Howell & Avolio, 1993). Given the complexity of the change at OP and the extent of adaptation and additional work that it puts on employees, a leadership approach that articulates a vision pushes people to think beyond their self-interest and inspires them to move towards that vision will change the attitudes of followers so that they internalize and buy into the vision, especially the "why" behind the vision, thereby moving change forward (Marion et al., 2002).

As established in Chapter 1, trust and engagement will be critical to advancing OP's mission, and a transformational leadership approach will support the creation of a trusting environment and collective culture (Nienaber et al., 2015). In addition, by supporting individual self-awareness and acknowledging the importance of personal viewpoints, transformational leaders can move followers toward a new level of shared meaning (Bass & Riggio, 2006), which is particularly important at OP, given the interpretivist lens under which it operates.

In summary, complexity leadership will be used in conjunction with transformational leadership to address the change at OP. This approach reflects that leadership does not occur in isolation, and different approaches may be applicable at different times (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Liden et al., 2009). While OP will require a leader with the vision and influence to inspire, particularly in the early stages of change, many throughout the organization will have the opportunity to emerge as leaders at different times throughout this complicated change process; thus, both complexity and transformational leadership approaches have a role to play. The timing of how these leadership approaches are used in a complementary manner is discussed later in this chapter.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Leaders usually know what they need to change but only sometimes know how to get there (Cawsey et al., 2020). Cawsey et al. (2020) break down two aspects of organizational change – leaders must determine *what* to change, and then they need to determine *how* to lead their organization toward the change. Small, incremental changes are not enough to transform OP into an institution that embraces flexibility and innovation. A culture change like the one proposed at OP requires the introduction of new organizational concepts, values and assumptions

(Schein, 2017). This requires a collaborative, participatory approach to change where all organizational members can engage (Bystydzienski et al., 2017).

Choosing a Framework

Kezar (2018) asks us to consider the type of change, context, and leadership agency in choosing a framework for change. The type of change at OP is a third-order, organization-wide change (Cawsey et al., 2020). Looking at Kezar's second consideration, organizational context, the labour context described in Chapter 1 creates an emotional environment that leaves employees feeling anxious and distrusting management. Liu and Perrewé (2005) note that change elicits emotional responses as employees try to make sense of the change. They also espouse that employees' emotions change through time and are more malleable early in the change process. They suggest that front-line employees should be allowed to play an important role in the change process right from the beginning: these aspects and an alignment with interpretivism point to an inclusive change approach that engages all stakeholders early. In terms of Kezar's third consideration, leadership agency, as Vice-President Academic & Students (VPAS), I am responsible for the change within the academic and student services team at OP. While I have the agency to make a top-down approach feasible conceptually, the factors discussed above point to the importance of a more distributed approach to leadership to support an inclusive environment.

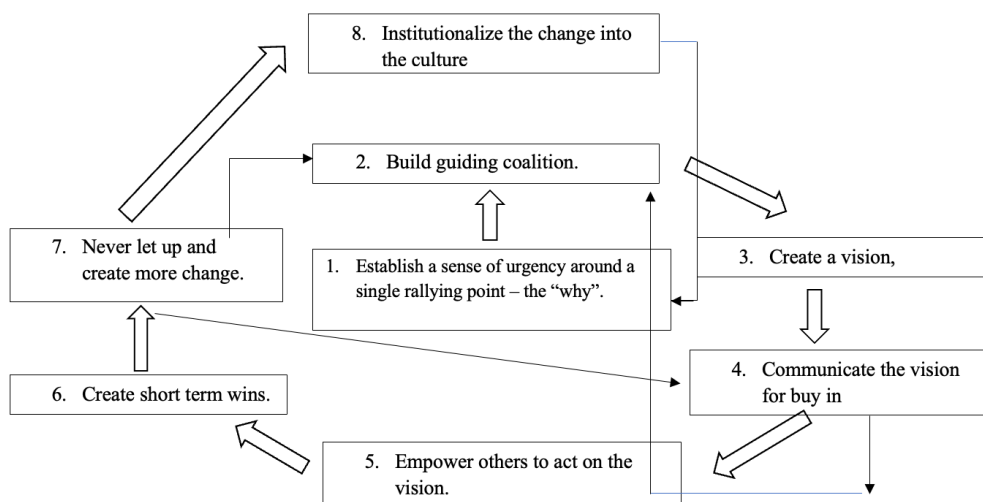
Kotter's Modified 8-Step Change Management Model

After exploring several change theories, I applied a modified and accelerated version of Kotter's 8-Step Model (Kang et al., 2022) to this PoP. Kotter's original model is a tried-and-true model that has been referenced and applied many times, including in HE applications (Kang et al., 2022; Odiaga et al., 2021; Wentworth et al., 2020). The original model is linear, with

sequential steps. The positive aspects of Kotter's original model make it applicable to the change at OP. For example, Step 2 involves building a guiding coalition, which is crucial given the prevalence of formal and informal networks and the importance of engaging stakeholders early, as described above. Step 4 focuses on communication which will be a crucial factor given the importance of trust in moving this change forward, as described in Chapter 1. At the same time, the limitations of Kotter's original model must be considered. It is a linear model that does not contemplate that change management projects do not always, or even often, operate in a straight line and that sometimes steps are not executed sequentially; backpedalling may be required. Kotter redesigned the model in 2014 (Odiaga et al., 2021) to address some limitations. Figure 2 depicts a modified version of Kotter's model, with the larger arrows indicating the linear progression, while the slim lines indicate returns to earlier steps as needed.

Figure 2

Kotter's Modified 8-Step Change Management Model



Note: A modified version of Kotter's 8-Step model developed based on the work of Kang et al., 2022; Odiaga et al., 2021

The first step now includes a "big opportunity" or a singular rallying point (Odiaga et al., 2021). This rallying point is the "why" for the change. For change to be successful, people need to know and understand why they are being asked to change (Wells, 2007). The modified model recognizes that a sense of urgency must be accompanied by understanding and accepting the rationale behind the change. This is particularly important at OP, given the context described in Chapter 1. The second significant difference in the model is that the steps are no longer linear, and there is a recognition of the non-sequential nature of change. Kang et al. (2022) applied Kotter's model to a change project in the engineering department of a university. In the first stages of the project, they applied the model linearly. Later recognizing that the change project was more complex than they thought, they used Kotter's model emergently. Strategies were considered improved upon as the process went along; in other words, it is acceptable (and sometimes desirable) to take two steps back before moving forward. The model makes room for appreciative inquiry and ongoing individual and collective reflection on the change process (Cawsey et al., 2020). This modified version of the model better fits the context at OP and reflects the importance of engaging stakeholders honestly and transparently.

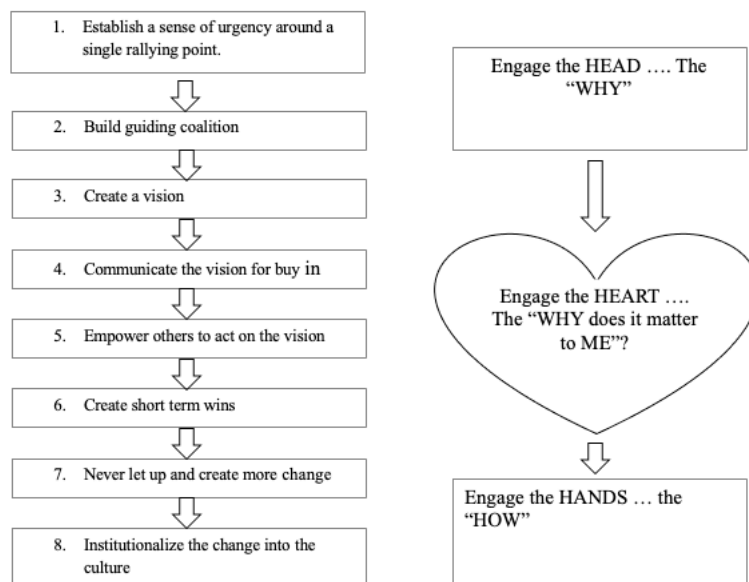
Stakeholder's Perspective

Looking at the change from the perspective of change recipients, Kotter et al. (2021) discuss the concept of human's desire to survive in the face of change. People do not fear change; they fear the loss associated with it (Buller, 2015). Humans inherently see change as a threat, and our survival instincts overwhelm us and direct us to avoid the threat - run away from it. Kotter et al. (2021) coin this the "survival channel," Employees in this space are stressed and unable to deal with the threat, leaving them either running in circles, withdrawing or freezing. Many stakeholders at OP are currently in this state – anxious and unable to respond. Humans in this

state respond by making fast decisions – not always the right ones. Kotter et al. (2021) discuss another less dominant channel – the "thrive channel." In this state, humans are not dodging threats but are looking for opportunities. The anxiety in the survival channel is replaced with emotions like passion and excitement; humans in this state are more likely to collaborate and innovate.

Figure 3

Engaging the head, the heart and the hands.



The question is, how do I shift this team from a state of survival to thriving? Kotter et al. (2021) speak to the importance of solid leadership (versus competent management). Leaders must communicate a compelling vision and engage not only "heads" with rational arguments but "hearts" with strong communication strategies. Part of engaging the "heart" is helping the team understand and buy into why the change makes sense. These arguments support the transformational and complexity leadership models discussed above. Once the rational argument is made illustrating why change is needed, employees must see why the change matters to them – if it matters to them, they will shift from striving to thriving. If these two things happen,

employees must be equipped to move the change forward. Figure 3 aligns these concepts to the modified Kotter model.

From Change Management to Change Leadership

Kotter's model, as described above, engages stakeholders' minds and hearts, clearly establishing the case for a need for change, thereby ensuring that stakeholders embrace the change (Buller, 2015). Table 1 summarizes Kotter's model and aligns transformational and complexity leadership with it.







Transformational leadership provides a top-down leader-led approach to identifying and mobilizing toward a vision in the early stages of change. Then, later in the process, the bottom-up model of emergence enables the team (rather than directing it) and allows for interactivity and creativity (Marion et al., 2002). Günzel-Jensen et al. (2018) look at the effectiveness of a two-pronged leadership approach to drive innovative behaviour and emphasize the importance of not focusing on only one leadership style. When used together to address this inquiry, complexity and transformational leadership styles complement each other, with one taking a primary role at times while the other is less dominant and vice-versa.

The first three steps of the model involve creating an opportunity or urgent reason to change, creating a coalition of the willing, establishing a vision and mobilizing the team behind the vision. Transformational leadership's influential, inspirational and motivational aspects apply at these stages and align as the dominant approach. As the change process moves forward (steps 4 to 6), the focus is on implementation – communicating, action and planning for wins. I argue that the shared perspective of complexity leadership is the dominant leadership framework in these steps. The innovation, creativity and shared perspective of complexity leadership are more aligned with moving the team forward. This shift in leadership approach will be communicated

to stakeholders. For example, as outlined in the communication plan discussed in Chapter 3, Employee Town Halls will be used to share broad messages. These forums will start with messages such as, “you have heard my vision, now we would like to hear from you” and “you are the stakeholders that we will rely on to move this change forward.”. Communication is discussed further in the next chapter.

Table 1

Leadership Approaches to Change

Kotter’s Step	Considerations	Dominant Leadership Approach	Complementary Leadership Approach
1. Establish a sense of urgency	Leadership may have a sense of urgency, but faculty do not feel it. Leadership have not convinced faculty that change is required.	 Transformational	 Complexity
2. Form a powerful guiding coalition	While formal networks have been considered, informal networks have not. Powerful coalitions of resistance have started to emerge.		
3. Create a vision	The vision may have been created too early and in a top-down manner. Leadership must keep an open mind to the vision being altered as change emerges	 Complexity	 Transformational
4. Communicate the vision for buy-in	More communication needs to occur at all levels, and it can’t be top-down only, communication has to come from emergent leaders		
5. Empower others to act on the vision	Change agents must be empowered to enable action for change to move forward, different leaders must step up	 Complexity	 Complexity
6. Plan for and create short term wins	Short term wins can create an excitement, a grassroots movement that will maintain the commitment of stakeholders and fuels cultural change (Bradt & Leverage, 2014; Kotter, 2014). This has not happened because faculty do not see themselves in the change yet.		
7. Never let up and create more change	For change to be sustainable, it must create new culture norms (Kotter, 2014). OP must establish structural elements, such as policy, to support the change (Farkas, 2013).	BOTH	BOTH
8. Institutionalize the change into the culture	Once, achieved the transformation has to be continually evaluated and refreshed (Kotter, 2014).		

As change is institutionalized, a new or modified vision may have to be established based on feedback in the later stages. A transformational approach may be required again to harness the team. This symbiotic approach to leadership offers OP the vision and directive required to

catapult the change vision forward in the early stages and the engagement and involvement required in later stages to empower and engage the team and institutionalize the change indoctrinating it into the corporate culture.

In summary, in this section, Kotter's modified model has been applied to the change at OP, demonstrating how transformational and complexity leadership could be used together in a complementary fashion to move change forward.

Organizational Change Readiness

Organizational readiness for change (ORC) has been shown to be one of the most critical factors driving employee support for change initiatives (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Armenakis et al., 1993). For change to occur, a state of readiness must be created to align organizational members' beliefs and perceptions towards the change with those of the leaders (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). In this section, Weiner's (2009) model is applied to assess ORC at OP. Weiner (2009) speaks about two ways to look at readiness for change: employees must be both psychologically and behaviourally prepared to act; in other words, they must be both *willing* and *able* to enact change. Another way of looking at this is that employees must be committed to implementing organizational change and confident in their shared abilities (Weiner, 2009). In addition, Weiner (2009) describes three aspects of readiness: (a) change valence, or how much the change is valued within the organization, (b) change efficacy, or whether individuals believe that the organization is capable of the change, and c) contextual factors, such as organizational culture, and how they support or deter change.

Change Valence

Many employees at OP question the value of moving towards flexible learning, and an environment of shared values which embraces flexibility needs to be created. Many faculty question the pedagogy behind flexible delivery, which has been called "the worst of both

worlds” by some. Some feel that when we work to give students “choice,” we are making it too easy for students and are turning our backs on rigour and standards.

In terms of flexible work, while employees embrace hybrid work and the ability to work remotely, they still need to embrace the proposed changes to the work environment that accompany this, such as hoteling offices versus permanent offices. There are some innovators and champions of these approaches, but they are the minority.

Previous experiences affect individual and organizational readiness for change (Cawsey et al., 2020), and some at OP have experience with initiatives that were instituted because they were “good for students and good for employees” and that, in the end, meant more work for employees, with only modest improvements for students. The last significant innovation at OP was the implementation of a new enterprise resource planning system (ERP) for the institution eight years ago that included a new student information system. This major college-wide initiative involved changes to business processes in virtually every business unit over two years. For the academic unit, the new system was touted as one that would benefit students and faculty. While the new system does provide some benefits, the functionality, customization and agility that the previous system provided were lost in many cases. The institutional memory of this experience runs deep and has resulted in some skepticism about change.

Change Efficacy

The second measure in Weiner’s model looks at whether the organization believes they have the capacity to change, which can be defined as a combination of managerial and organizational capabilities that allow an organization to respond quickly and effectively to changing environments (Judge & Douglas, 2009). There are two aspects to this question at OP – does the organization *actually* have the capacity to change, and do employees *believe* that the

organization has the capacity to change? If past behaviour is an indicator of future behaviour, OP has demonstrated the capacity to change when forced to. In March 2020, when the World Health Organization declared a pandemic, OP quickly mobilized to offer all learning and services online; including an HR and technology transformation. This lasted until September 2022, when in-person activity slowly began returning. Using enrolment (the highest enrolment in OP's history was Winter 2022) or revenue (OP posted the largest surplus in its history in 2022) as indicators of success, OP has clearly demonstrated the capacity to change when forced to act quickly.

However, an employee-centric view of change provides a different and perhaps more salient view (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). While by financial measures, the organization thrived through the abrupt change presented by the pandemic, employees generally feel overwhelmed, underappreciated and hesitant to take on more changes. At faculty and employee roundtable discussions, most want to return to the "way things were before the pandemic". Employees are change-fatigued, exhausted by change and feel that future change will be challenging. Internal HR data at OP indicates a high number of mental health leaves for employees. Change fatigue has been linked to lower engagement, higher intention of employee turnover and lower organizational commitment (Cox et al., 2022). This situation will present challenges as OP prepares to introduce more change.

Organizational Culture and Change

Contextual factors, such as organizational culture, impact ORC (Weiner, 2009); a culture that embraces innovation and risk-taking supports organizational readiness and is necessary for successful change (Olafsen et al., 2021). Organizational culture includes many internal and external relationships and guides employee actions, shared values and accepted behavioural

norms (Al-Ali et al., 2017). Senior leadership at OP encourages innovation, and thoughtful risk-taking and innovation are front and center in the organization's strategic plan. However, these behaviours are not normalized throughout the organization at OP. Employees expect a collaborative approach to decision-making, and consensus-building is important; this sometimes makes innovation difficult. As a hierarchical organization with clear lines of approval, many layers of approval are required for employees before a change can be made. For managers leading innovation, the risk of failure is perceived as high – risk to social capital within the organization (in other words, “how will people see me if my idea fails”) and risk to their careers. As with many institutions, there are stories of managers who tried, failed and then had to leave the organization. For these reasons, there is a misalignment between senior leadership's support of innovation and how employees feel about innovation. Some managers are willing to take on the innovation risk, but the norm is a more risk-averse approach. Table 2 summarizes ORC at OP. This table was scored based on my informal observation and conversations with stakeholders over the past six to 12 months.

Table 2*Organizational Readiness at OP*

Aspect of Readiness Weiner (2009)	OP Rating: 1 (low) to 5 (high)
Change Valance: does the organization value the change?	Rating: 2 While there are some change advocates, many do not believe in the vision. Faculty need to be convinced that flexible delivery makes sense pedagogically. Previous experience with major change has been negative.
Change Efficacy: does organization think it can perform the change?	Rating: 2 Change recipients are change fatigued. Faculty are tired of change and concerned that flexible delivery is complex, and they must have the required skills. In addition, employees have questioned our capacity in terms of IT systems.
Contextual Factors: Does the organizational culture support the change?	Rating: 3 Senior leadership supports and promotes innovation and risk-taking, but these norms have yet to infuse the organization, and there is risk hesitancy among employees.

Emotional Readiness for Change

Kubler-Ross (1969) developed a model to map the progression of emotions that individuals experience when coping with a major change (see Appendix A). The majority of employees at OP are somewhere between denial and frustration. This information was gathered by observing and speaking to stakeholders at OP over the past six to 12 months. Employee state of mind is essential for successful change management. Leadership must recognize this and approach employees with compassion and fairness to move the team along the curve (Chavan & Bhattacharya, 2022). The transformational and complexity leadership approaches described earlier in this chapter align with the emotional support required for employees.

In summary, while ORC does not guarantee the successful implementation of change, the current lack of change readiness at OP will present challenges (Engida et al., 2022). The organization is largely unwilling to change and is ill-prepared operationally and emotionally while operating in a culture not conducive to change. Given that OP's ability to bring forth innovation and transformation is largely determined by internal readiness for change (Engida et al., 2022; Lyman & Daloisio, 2018), a sweeping change solution will be required to move OP to a state of readiness.

Strategies and Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

The problem of practice addressed by this inquiry involves leading an organization towards flexibility; this involves flexibility in program delivery, service delivery and how employees work. As the VPAS at OP, I have the agency to lead this transformation and develop the organizational capability to identify and respond to future disruptions. Effective and continual innovation at OP will require new policies, procedures and systems, and a change in organizational culture (Brown, 2014). Appendix B summarizes the immediate and long-term

changes required at OP. The immediate changes involve program and student service delivery and policies that govern hybrid and remote work. The longer-term changes involve creating a culture of innovation and the dynamic capacity to innovate. These changes will involve mostly the HR and structural frames (Bolman & Deal, 2017), as described in Chapter 1. Thinking back to the questions guiding this OIP, in order to move this change forward HR policies with respect to hiring, training, and employee engagement will be impacted, the organizational structure will have to adapt to support innovation, and an intentional approach to supporting dynamic capabilities will have to be undertaken. These guiding questions form the backdrop to the solutions developed.

Each solution will be assessed against the following criteria: time, resources required (financial resources are not a constraint at OP, but human resources are a challenge given how stretched the team is and how difficult it is to hire new people), stakeholder engagement, the ability to build long-term capacity for innovation, and alignment with the interpretivist stance and the complementary use of transformational and complexity leadership.

Solution One: An Institutional Innovation Group

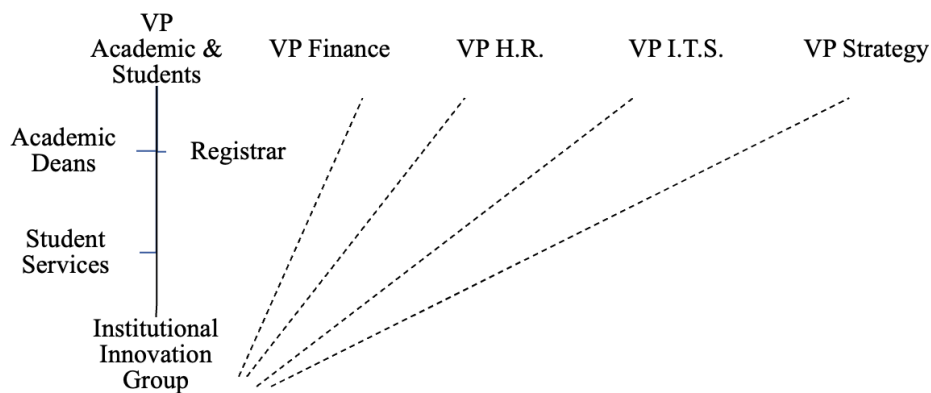
The first proposed solution involves creating a multi-disciplinary Institutional Innovation Group (IIG). This group would include people from all of the pertinent stakeholder groups (some outside of my portfolio) and report to the VPAS. The group would have a formal mandate to develop strategies to address and implement the changes needed. Innovation within organizations comes from individuals who introduce and implement new ideas (Van de Ven, 1986); therefore, pulling together a multi-disciplinary team of innovative individuals from across OP with a singular focus will amplify their impact. In addition, this team will have the autonomy to develop and implement their ideas; this decentralized approach encourages innovation (Calantone et al.,

2010). As discussed in Chapter 1, when looking at the structural frame, Biedenbach and Söderholm (2008) support the idea of a series of intentionally designed temporary project teams with a high level of flexibility, such as the one described here, to support innovation.

Representatives from across the institution would be seconded from their home position to sit on this group for three years. A three-year term was chosen because it is long enough for an individual to have an impact on the project, and also long enough to attract a strong backfill for the home position. From my division, the group would include faculty, student services representatives and administrators. Figure 4 depicts the new organizational structure in this solution.

Figure 4

Institutional Innovation Group



In addition, I would work with the other Vice-Presidents to select representatives from HR, ITS, Facilities and other stakeholder groups. These representatives from other divisions will maintain a dotted reported relationship with their home VP while working on this project. Individuals chosen for this group would be those who are leaders and innovators within their division, and a permanent Dean of Innovation would be appointed to lead this team and would report to me. Having the team report directly to VPAS ensures that it is closely tied to and

supported by the President. The dotted lines represent the dotted line reporting relationship between members external to my team and their home division.

Time

This group can be mobilized reasonably quickly, as the members are all current employees. We would not have to post these positions as the team would be selected based on skill sets. It would take some time for the group to get to know each other and establish a mandate and work plan, but the team is already familiar with the culture and environment at OP, and work can start quickly. There may be time involved in filling the home positions of individuals moved into this group, however, this will not impact the scope of this OIP.

Resources

This solution would have a negative impact on resources across the institution, given that individuals would be seconded onto this team, meaning the home team would lose high-performing individuals and have to backfill them. The financial impact is estimated to be approximately \$500,000 - \$750,000 per year, comprised mostly of the cost of backfill and the incremental salary for individuals brought into the IIG. OP has a generous budget surplus, and this will be easily manageable. However, it is not solely about dollars. The impact of the loss of talent within home positions is not quantifiable, but must be considered. The negative impact on home teams throughout the organization, including areas of my portfolio, could result in resentment from other Vice-Presidents who are losing good people to support this initiative. On the other hand, individuals who are selected for this team would be provided with a unique opportunity to collaborate, lead and innovate, all within the protection of a secondment – a valuable professional development opportunity. These leaders would return to their home positions and contribute to innovation within that team.

Stakeholder Engagement

With this option, stakeholder engagement would be high given that the group has representatives from across the institution, and people on this team would still have ties to their home division. For example, the faculty representatives on the IIG would return to their faculty teams to gather input and share proposed solutions. Every stakeholder group would have a voice throughout the process through their representative on the team. Involving many individuals across the organization will produce more innovative ideas and solutions (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2010). Putting stakeholders on this team full-time for three years will lead to a deep understanding of stakeholder needs and will give them a meaningful voice. This high level of engagement aligns with the interpretivist stance and is supported by the complexity leadership approach. Consideration must be given to resentment germinating in the home unit toward the individuals chosen for this group. This possibility will need to be managed quickly and in collaboration with the home unit leadership.

Impact on Capacity to Innovate

Changing the organizational structure to add a team solely focused on innovation will positively support the capacity to innovate (Labitzke et al., 2014). This team will be focused on innovation rather than working on it "off the side of their desks." Often, high-performing employees are given additional projects, but their day-to-day jobs continue. This solution allows for specific training and gives people the adaptive space (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) to innovate as a part of a cross-disciplinary team.

The decision to structure this group with a three-year mandate was made to support the organizational capacity to innovate. While the dean is in a permanent position, other team

members would come into this team focused on innovation and then would return to their home division to infuse that energy back.

EDI Considerations

Team members will be individually selected for this solution. The desire is to pull together individuals with a predisposition toward innovation. Individuals will also be chosen for their social capital and ability to influence peers (Bass, 1995). This presents some limitations from an EDI perspective and may result in subjective decision-making, with privileged leaders making decisions for others (Tamtik & Guenter, 2020). It will be important to reflect on the social location of the individual responsible for hiring (me: a white, middle-aged female) in relation to that of the individuals interested in this work. This must be acknowledged, discussed, and contested to constructively break down barriers in this hiring process (Abawi, 2020).

Summary of Solution One

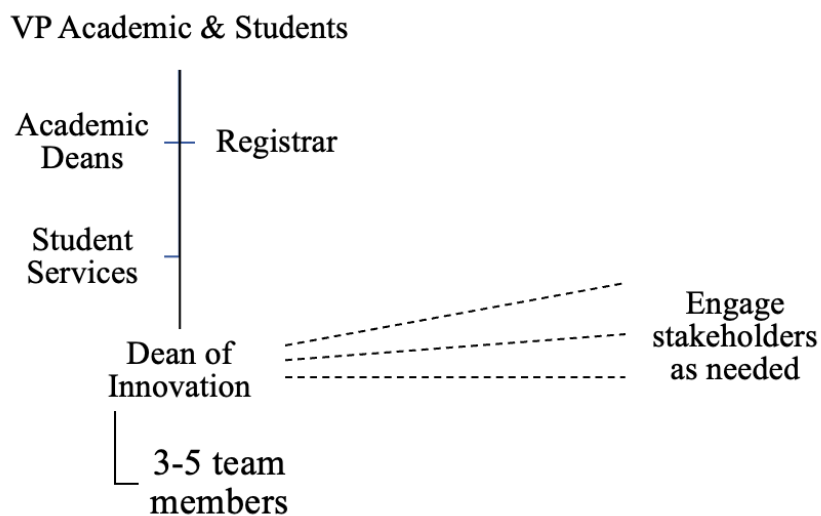
The key benefits of this solution are that it can be mobilized quickly and with broad stakeholder engagement. As well this solution builds long-term capacity by spreading opportunities to learn and participate throughout the organization every three years. While the dollar cost of this solution is reasonable, the impact on resources will be high because top performers will be removed from home teams, leaving the rest of the organization depleted. This could cause resentment from other Vice-Presidents which must be addressed. The multi-disciplinary approach allows leaders from across the organization to step up and lead at various times, supporting the complexity leadership approach. It will be important for the VPAS to focus on EDI principles when selecting the team to curtail any unrecognized biases.

Solution Two: Create a new Innovation Division within the Office of the VPAS

The second option explored is to create a permanent new division within the VPAS portfolio, headed by a Dean of Innovation (a newly created position). This division will be comprised of new positions in the organization and will be structured specifically to support innovation, sheltering them from the pressures of ongoing operations (Labitzke et al., 2014). The difference between this solution and the previous one is that this option includes a small, permanent team that fully reports to the VPAS that is tasked with engaging stakeholders from across the organization as needed, while Solution One includes a permanent dean but a team that also takes on three-year roles on this team and maintains a dotted line reporting relationship to their home team, and eventually returns to their home team. Figure 5 illustrates the organizational structure of this solution.

Figure 5

New Innovation Division



Solution two puts more control within the hands of the VPAS as the entire team will fully report to her, with no dotted line reporting to another division. This option also provides a more

consistent approach compared to the three-year mandate of Solution One, described above, given that it is a permanent team.

Time

This solution will take longer to mobilize. The department is brand new, and job descriptions will have to be developed, rated for salary and then recruited; this includes posting and interviews. The first to be hired will be the Dean of Innovation, who will then recruit other team members. Given that these are new positions, OP policy is that they will all have to be posted internally and externally, meaning that the time required to mobilize will be higher than with Solution One.

Resources

This solution will put less of a strain on the institution's resources, given that new permanent positions are being created. The financial impact is estimated to be about the same as the first solution, comprised of salary for the new hires. However, divisions will not be backfilling positions or losing talent for three years with this project (unless someone applies for one of these new positions), which puts less of a strain on the institution.

Stakeholder Engagement

With this solution, stakeholders will be engaged as external participants rather than by inviting them to participate in an innovation group as in Solution One. Engagement will be broader because more stakeholders can be engaged, but it will not be as deep given that stakeholders are not directly on the innovation team; they are brought in as needed. This may set up an "us" versus "them" scenario, which goes against the interpretivism paradigm. A guiding team of stakeholders who are opinion leaders and influencers is essential to successful change management (Calegari & Turner, 2015). While this solution does have a guiding group, it is not

truly a cross-institutional group leading the team – it is a small group leading the change, with intermittent involvement of others. On the positive side, this solution avoids creating an undercurrent culture of resentment, possible with Solution One, given that no individual is selecting of members.

Impact on Capacity to Innovate

This solution limits the impact on the organizational capacity to innovate. The work is contained within one small group (the VPAS portfolio), and while there will be significant capacity built within that group, the impact on the organization is far less than with Solution One given that there are no members from any other team included in this new department. The capacity-building impact of this option will be deep (within the VPAS portfolio) but not broad (across the whole organization).

EDI Considerations

The EDI considerations of this solution are positive. These positions will be posted, and individuals will apply for them. OP has robust hiring practices to address bias, and as long as they are followed, the opportunity for bias is reduced. This solution allows people who may have yet to be considered to step up and apply for positions, broadening opportunities. Also, given that stakeholder engagement is broad, more individuals can be involved in the change, supporting equity.

Summary of Solution Two

This solution puts less of a strain on the current talent pool at OP by creating a brand-new division focused solely on innovation while at the same time providing more control for the VPAS and supporting EDI. However, it is a solution that will take more time, limit stakeholder engagement and have a lesser impact on the OP's long-term capacity to innovate. In addition,

given that the core team working on innovation is small, it is less supportive of complexity leadership approaches and not as aligned with the interpretivist stance.

Solution Three: Hire an External Consultant

The third option considered is to hire an external consultant with specific expertise and experience in planning and implementing change. Even organizations with significant financial reserves, like OP, need more resources to pursue all new ideas and, even more importantly, cannot afford the distraction from core operations (Silver & Mitchell, 1990). As well, organizations are often tied to the status quo and the historical way of doing things; bringing in external expertise can help extricate them from these status quo traps (Cawsey et al., 2020) and bring in fresh perspectives.

Time

This solution can be the quickest if an external consultant is chosen with availability as a priority and given tight timelines to work within. It will take some time for a consultant to develop an understanding of the culture and environment at OP; however once immersed in the organization, an external agency can devote all of its resources to this project, thereby reducing timelines. An external consultant also has experiences and exemplars from past work that they can draw on to expedite work. OP has a roster of external consultants that have done work for us before that may be appropriate for this work, possibly reducing the time required.

Resources

This solution will be more expensive in terms of upfront dollars than the other two solutions examined but will not put an additional strain on internal resources, keeping them free to focus on core operations. There will be resources required to manage the consultants, but

considering that human resources are the most depleted resources at OP at this time, the resource requirements of this solution are much less than the other two options presented.

Stakeholder Engagement

Any external consultant will prioritize stakeholder engagement as a part of their methodology; however, the engagement will be led by an "outsider" versus an internal colleague, which could limit buy-in. Consultants often provide a prescribed, pre-packaged procedure for change and may therefore be insensitive to an organization's culture (Cawsey et al., 2020). Stakeholders need to feel that their input has been heard, valued, and incorporated into the change plan (Calegari & Turner, 2015); this may be more difficult with an outsider. As discussed earlier in this inquiry, the role of trust in the change management process is important to consider, particularly one involving a culture change (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Building the same trust as an internal employee will be challenging for an external consultant.

Impact on Capacity to Innovate

This solution will have a negligible impact on the organization's long-term capacity to innovate as much of the work will be completed by individuals outside of the organization, who will walk away with much of the learning after the project is complete.

EDI Considerations

The importance of completing this work through an EDI lens can be expressed to the consultants who will be mandated to incorporate practices in their engagement methodology and execution.

Summary of Solution Three

External consultants may be able to assist internal agents but cannot replace them (Cawsey et al., 2020). This solution will enable OP to respond quickly and leave organizational resources free to focus on core operations. In addition, an external group will bring in fresh perspectives and approaches. However, stakeholder engagement will be limited, and there will be a negligible impact on the institutional capacity to innovate. This solution is not aligned with the interpretivist stance, where all participants are “actors” involved in the change. With this solution, employees are on the outside watching the stage. This solution also does not address complexity leadership, as it will be difficult for others to step up and lead with an external consultant in charge, nor does it support transformational leadership as the external consultant may be seen as the leader of this process, not allowing my vision to guide and inspire the team.

Evaluating the Solutions

All three solutions are feasible solutions to address the situation at OP, and each presents benefits and limitations. Solution One, the creation of an Institutional Innovation Group, is the solution that presents the most opportunity for OP. Solution Two, the Dean of Innovation model, was discounted because it is a siloed approach that isolates change within the VPAS portfolio and does not foster the deep involvement, engagement and buy-in from across the institution required for success. Solution Three, the external consultant approach, was also discounted because it involves individuals outside the organization who will have difficulty understanding organizational norms and creating a trusting environment. This approach will also leave the organization only a little further ahead in terms of the dynamic capacity to innovate. In Table 3, the options are summarized, showing the criteria discussed earlier, along with my ratings for each of these.

Table 3

Comparison of Solutions

Solution	Time	Resources Required	Stakeholder engagement	Building long-term capacity	Aligns with Interpretivism	Aligns with Transformational and Complexity Leadership	Total Score
Innovation Group	4	1	5	4	5	5	24
Dean of Innovation	1	3	4	3	4	4	19
External Consultant	5	4	2	1	1	3	16

Note: 1= the lowest score in the category; 5= the highest score in the category

Solution One brings together stakeholders from across the institution with different backgrounds and ways of looking at things, addressing the problem in a multi-disciplinary way that offers extensive stakeholder engagement. This approach will create the most buy-in across the institution, thereby increasing the likelihood of success. The capacity to innovate will also be spread across the organization as different individuals participate in this group.

Chapter Two: Conclusion

This chapter began with my discussion of a complementary and symbiotic leadership approach that uses both transformational and complexity leadership to address this inquiry. A leader with the vision and influence to inspire is required at some stages of the change, the early stages in particular, to garner buy-in and engagement. As the change process transpires, a more multi-directional leadership style, like complexity leadership, allows leaders throughout the organization to emerge. Kotter's Modified 8-Step model was applied to this problem of practice, providing a path to move the organization from the "why" for the change to the "how," allowing for a non-linear approach as needed.

I conclude the chapter by exploring and evaluating three solutions to this PoP. Given the lack of change readiness and the interpretivist lens, which places emphasis on the individual and

their interpretation of the situation around them, an approach was chosen that meaningfully engages stakeholders from across the organization and that builds the institutional capacity to innovate by pulling employees from across the institution to focus on innovation.

Chapter 3: Introduction

The leadership PoP at Ontario Polytech is how to lead an organization toward flexibility by changing the organizational culture and creating dynamic capabilities toward innovation. As the VPAS, I have the agency to lead the academic team toward this vision. After exploring three alternatives, the approach chosen was the creation of an Institutional Innovation Group, with representation from key stakeholder groups, that engages employees across the organization and builds the institutional capacity to innovate. In this chapter, I use Kotter's (1996) 8-Step Change Management Model to develop a Change Implementation Plan (CIP) framed by the interpretivist stance and guided by a complementary leadership approach that uses both transformational and complexity leadership principles. In addition, I outline a communication plan to build awareness and engagement and describe an approach to monitoring and evaluating the change.

Change Implementation Plan

As described earlier, the change vision at OP takes it from being a relatively slow-moving institution where virtually all learning and work took place in-person to one that embraces innovation, starting with flexibility in learning and work to respond to the current environment described in Chapter 1. It does not stop there. The change must be deeper so that OP becomes an organization where innovation becomes a part of the culture, ready for future disruptions. By reflecting on the guiding questions in Chapter 1, I consider human resources and organizational structure elements to support change, and ways to ensure that deep rooted dynamic capabilities toward innovation are built at OP.

Although nearly 70% of all change projects fail (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Kotter, 1990), one factor that increases the likelihood of success is an implementation plan (Cole et al., 2006). The Change Implementation Plan (CIP) developed for

OP aligns with the interpretivist framework. It relies on a bottom-up approach to execution that involves stakeholders as important actors in the change. It considers and plans for their expected reaction, increasing the likelihood of success (Morgan, 1980; Packard, 2017). This approach allows for appreciative inquiry and ongoing individual and collective reflection on the change process (Cawsey et al., 2020). This CIP is aligned with the third-order change nature of this change (Tsoukas & Papoulias, 2005). This deep organizational change requires the thoughtful engagement of all staff to move the change forward (Kezar, 2018; Whittaker & Montgomery, 2022). Finally, the culture shift at OP requires a collaborative, participatory approach to change where all organizational members can engage (Bystydzienski et al., 2017).

Implementation Timeline

OP's new Strategic Plan (2023-2026) is a significant driver for this implementation timeline. The Board of Governors approved the Strategic Plan in December 2022, which has been shared with senior leadership and was released to the broader OP community in February 2023. The first step in this CIP is to engage and get buy-in from my fellow Vice-Presidents and the President. I expect to achieve that at which point, the next step is the formal announcement of the IIG in September 2023. The work of the IIG starts in January 2024 and runs for 3 years as outlined in the plan. A detailed Change Implementation Plan (CIP) is included in Appendix C and will be referenced throughout this document.

Short-, Medium- and Long-Term Goals

The deep-rooted changes at OP will take some time. Table 4 summarizes the short-, medium- and long-term goals to support the change plan and aligns the goals with leadership approaches and organizational frames described earlier in this inquiry.

Table 4*Short-, Medium- and Long-Term Goals*

	Kotter Step	Timeline	Goals	Outcomes	Frame & Leadership Approach
SHORT-TERM	1. Establish a Sense of Urgency	February 2023 to September 2023	Create a need for change and rally the institution around change.	Engagement and buy-in from senior teams.	Structural Frame Transformational Leadership
	2. Create a Guiding Coalition		Obtain formal approval and funding for the IIG. Identify important social networks and influencers with significant social capital.	Organization-wide awareness created through the institutional launch of an IIG.	
	3. Develop a Vision and Strategy	September 2023 to December 2024	A strong vision is launched, supported by well-developed plans built on extensive stakeholder engagement.	Institutional engagement	HR frame
MEDIUM-TERM	4. Communicate the Vision		Plans are made (with extensive stakeholder engagement), and the work of the Plan begins.	Leaders from within the organization start to emerge.	Transformational Leadership and Complexity Leadership
	5. Empower change				
	6. Generate short-term wins		Working groups start to execute.		
Re-evaluate, re-set and repeat the steps above if needed					
LONG-TERM	7. Consolidate Gains	January 2025 to September 2026	Institutionalize the plans that have been made	Plans that work become policy and best practices to share within the organization.	Structural Frame and HR Frame
	8. Anchor new approaches			Permanent changes to process and structure are made.	Transformational Leadership and Complexity Leadership

These goals may be adjusted as the change process unfolds in response to stakeholder input. While Kotter's model is sequential, a break in the sequence of steps may be required, and earlier stages may have to be revisited (Kang et al., 2022; Pollack & Pollack, 2015).

The timeline includes a two-pronged complementary leadership approach that recognizes that different leadership approaches are required at different stages (Günzel-Jensen et al., 2018). The CIP also recognizes that to effectively meet the challenge at OP, solutions must address both human resources and structural frames (Bolman & Deal, 2017), as discussed earlier in this OIP.

Short-Term Goals. February 2023 – September 2023 (7 months)

Short-term goals for the first six months of this CIP align with Kotter's Step 1 and Step 2 and involve creating a sense of urgency and building a guiding coalition (Kotter, 1996). For the change to be successful, data shared with employees must support the fact that if nothing changes, institutional performance will be negatively affected (Garvin & Roberto, 2005). Institutional performance measures include enrolment, financial performance and outcome measures such as graduation rates. By the end of this stage, the organization should be broadly aware of the goals of the CIP, understand why the achievement of this CIP is critical for ongoing success, see themselves as a part of the change plan, and understand the role of the IIG in achieving the objectives of the CIP. In this stage, employees with innovative mindsets and the collaborative skills required are identified to join the guiding coalition. The guiding coalition should be chosen considering power, expertise, credibility and leadership (Garvin & Roberto, 2005). While I, as the VPAS, will choose the team with input from others, equity and social justice are essential considerations that will be discussed later in this chapter.

While Kotter's work usually refers to a single guiding coalition, this change's wide-spread reach, the change's depth, and the range of stakeholders, more than one guiding coalition

will be required (Pollack & Pollack, 2015; Sidorko, 2008). While the IIG will be the primary guiding coalition, others will be struck throughout the process. For example, a guiding coalition of faculty may be established to focus on flexibility in teaching and learning. While faculty representatives may be in other guiding coalitions, a separate faculty group will be beneficial at specific points in the change. In summary, two key benchmarks must be achieved in the short term; the need for change must be recognized across the institution and the composition of the IIG, the primary guiding coalition, must be established.

Medium-Term Goals. September 2023 – December 2024 (1 year, 3 months)

Once the need and guiding coalition(s) have been established, medium-term goals involve developing a vision and strategy, communicating that vision, empowering people to act on it, and generating short-term wins (Kotter, 1996). While the overall vision has been established in the Strategic Plan, the IIG will consult widely to develop an implementation strategy built around significant stakeholder engagement. This strategy (which will probably include several sub-plans as outlined in the CIP) will include support for faculty in flexible delivery and support for managers regarding flexible work. Given the relevance of the human resources frame discussed in Chapter 2, an HR plan that includes a hiring plan and a professional development plan will also be developed as a part of this stage.

At this point in the change process, working groups (as described in Appendix B) will start to execute plans. My role as a leader will be to remove roadblocks, change any structures that impede progress along the plan and encourage innovative ideas (Kotter, 1996). This will require a transformational leadership approach. As plans are executed, short-term wins will demonstrate the viability of change to build momentum (Kotter, 1996). The IIG will share wins widely to influence the behaviours of those skeptical of change. To recapitulate, in the medium

term, a vision must be developed collaboratively and shared, a plan developed through cross-institutional working groups, and execution of some key strategies in the Plan should have begun.

Long-Term Goals: January 2025 – September 2026 (almost 2 years)

As outlined in Appendix B, at this point in the process, there may be a need to backtrack to some previous steps, and the CIP may need to be adjusted. For example, faculty may not embrace flexible delivery and resist it, or students may oppose it. If this happens, we may have to move back to Step 1 or 2 to encourage more engagement and stakeholder input, and perhaps a change in execution may be required. An evaluation plan will be discussed later in this chapter, and the CIP may continue as anticipated, or adjustments and backtracking may be required. If no changes are required, the work of the IIG starts throughout the organization.

Large-scale change takes a long time to complete, and the temptation to let up before the change is institutionalized will be detrimental to the ultimate success of the change (Kotter, 1996). This is particularly true at OP, where the change involves building the capacity to innovate institutionally.

Key Success Factors

Several factors are critical to the successful execution of this change at OP; however, the three most critical success factors are the composition and engagement of guiding coalitions, communication and the continued support of senior leadership.

Composition and Engagement of Guiding Coalitions

The “human factor” is critical in organizational change (Hoover & Harder, 2015), in particular, stakeholder commitment to the change (Appelbaum et al., 2017). The first guiding coalition that is critical to success is the IIG itself. Determining who should be seconded to this

group, and selecting the dean in particular, will be important decisions that could impact success. The dean will have to be an individual with an innovation mindset who possesses the social capital to influence networks (Arena & Uhl-Bien, 2006). The dean will establish direction (under the guidance of the VPAS) and motivate people (Kotter, 1996). Organizational and cultural change will only be successful with the strong drive and dedication of this leader, who has to understand and interpret the vision of the VPAS and translate it for the institution (Wentworth et al., 2020). One of the most important tasks of the dean is overseeing the composition of the IIG and ensuring that membership includes representation from across key stakeholder groups and considers equity. Equity is considered in more detail below.

Communication

The importance of communication in organizational change processes has long been established (Dempsey et al., 2022; Lewis & Seibold, 1998; Lewis, 1999). Lewis and Seibold (1998) point to communication as an important variable in predicting the outcome of organizational change and link communication to innovation and the perception of innovation, the adoption of innovation, the formation of attitudes regarding organizational changes, employee's resistance to change and the organization's ability to cope with change. Many organizational change strategies fail due to shortcomings in internal communication (Lewis, 1999). Change-related communication is among most often cited change drivers (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). Communication will be discussed later in this chapter, but it warrants mention here as a key factor to success.

Continued Support from the Senior Executive Team

While the Senior Executive Team supported the vision and the creation of an IIG, their continued support is critical to success, primarily because of the resources required to fund the

CIP, which are significant given that an entirely new team will be established. Currently, financial resources are not an issue at OP, but circumstances may change, and continued commitment will be critical to success if financial resources become more restricted. Human resources are a critical resource to consider. This CIP will impact all areas of the organization, slowing down and negatively impacting some teams by removing innovators to put them on the IIG. In order to move this CIP forward, other areas of the institution will have to give up some key employees to the project. While this could be an opportunity for those teams to grow internal talent or bring in new talent, it may slow them down in the short term. The Senior Executive team must continue to see the big picture and support this initiative, or success could be at risk. I will be responsible for keeping the Senior Executive team engaged and supportive and ensuring that seconded employees are not pressured to support their “home” divisions while working on the IIG.

Understanding the Role and Reaction of Stakeholders

As outlined in Chapter 2, several stakeholder groups will be considered throughout this inquiry, each with a role to play. Key stakeholders include faculty, students, academic administrators, ITS, Human Resources, the Registrar's Office, Facilities, and Finance. These stakeholders may have competing views toward the changes required, their necessity, and the approach to achieving them. How intensely stakeholders react to change is a factor of how much change they expect in their positions and how aligned their goals are with the goals of the change (Peltokorpi et al., 2008). For example, faculty may feel that flexibility can be achieved by better scheduling in-person classes rather than offering flexible delivery. Given their fiscal lens, the Finance Department may have more cost-effective approaches to the change. Even with these competing stakeholder interests, Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) stress the need for strategic

consensus. Achieving this consensus will require leadership grounded in open communication and trust (Nienaber et al., 2015) aligned with the leadership approaches outlined earlier in this OIP.

Equity and Social Justice Implications

Several equity and social justice implications must be considered throughout this CIP. Change efforts are more likely to succeed when they include and integrate all layers of the organization (Foster-Fishman & Watson, 2018). A commitment to social justice can be seen as “the search for a fair (not necessarily equal) distribution of what is beneficial and valued as well as what is burdensome in a society” (Singh, 2011, p. 482). The under-represented voices at OP include employees who face inequality because of their access and knowledge of technology, their physical limitations (flexible delivery requires the mental dexterity to teach in-person and online at the same time) or their cultural background and lived experiences that make it more difficult for them to speak up. This inclusive change requires all of these stakeholders to become “actors of change” (Foster-Fishman & Watson, 2018, p. 51) and requires that I, as the change leader make intentional efforts to ensure that they are included. Some examples of how this can be achieved are through intentional outreach to underrepresented groups to ensure they feel safe to come forward and contribute, the use of inclusive language in communication, and the application of an equity lens when choosing participants for the IIG. Culture change at OP will only happen if all voices are sought after and heard.

Potential Limitations and Challenges

Even the most carefully planned change projects will face limitations and challenges. Two key challenges that could impact the successful execution of the change plan at OP are shifting priorities and change fatigue.

Shifting Priorities

Just as environmental changes led OP to this new vision, more unexpected changes could create unanticipated obstacles. Chapter 1 outlined the external forces impacting HEIs and the disruption they have caused and will continue to cause. The uncertainty in government funding continues, for example. To illustrate this risk, the Ontario provincial government has signalled support for private colleges instead of public colleges, like OP, by recently directing funding for trade education to private colleges, shutting out public colleges (Government of Ontario, 2023). Any major change in funding or other aspects of the external environment would require the complete focus of the organization to navigate and could challenge this change plan.

Change Fatigue

The most considerable risk is change fatigue. Like the rest of the world, employees at OP have been dealing with the changes required to survive the pandemic. Unfortunately, the required "pivots" have left the institution tired and depleted. In an organization that is change fatigued, individuals are more likely to perceive change as challenging to accomplish, hurting organizational change outcomes (Cox et al., 2022). Focused employee engagement using the tools built into the CIP described above, will help overcome change fatigue (Ace & Parker, 2010) and mitigate the effects of change fatigue.

To summarize, I have outlined a comprehensive Change Implementation Plan to achieve OP's objectives in this section. The CIP capitalizes on launching a new Strategic Plan, outlining a vision for flexibility and innovation. Given the interpretivist framework under which OP operates, the CIP is collaborative, considers stakeholder engagement, and is guided by a complementary leadership approach that uses both transformational and complexity leadership

principles. Finally, this section outlined factors critical to success and key challenges OP could face and discussed the importance of social justice when implementing change.

Communicating the Need for Change and the Change Process

Communication is vital in any change initiative (Beatty, 2019), and according to Ford and Ford (1995), the change process actually occurs *within* communication. In other words, communication does not support change, communication *drives* change. The context at OP, namely, the cultural changes necessary, the interpretivist backdrop and the leadership approaches described earlier in this inquiry, is an important factor to consider when developing a communication plan. The communication plan to support this CIP must engage stakeholders early and often (Kotter, 1990), address sensemaking so that staff at OP can assign meaning to it based on their own experiences (Kezar & Eckel, 2002) and support trust between recipients of change and change leaders (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). From the interpretivist perspective, the communication plan below takes a meaning-centred view of organizational communication (Johansson & Heide, 2008). Reality is constituted through the words, symbols, and actions that members invoke (Putnam, 1983) and every word, story, and ritual matters.

In this section, I address how to build awareness of the need for change within OP and discuss a communication plan built on Whelan-Berry and Somerville's (2010) view that change-related communication must be two-way and support both outward and inward (listening) communication. Next, I present a knowledge mobilization plan summarizing knowledge and information transfer flow through the change process. Finally, I discuss possible communication challenges and how to overcome them, including a plan to ensure that all voices are heard.

The Role of Trust in Communication

Trust is an important consideration in a change project as pervasive and complicated as the change at OP. In the context of this inquiry, I define trust as the willingness to be open, transparent and vulnerable in communication (Norman et al., 2010). Trust and openness in communication have been associated with more positive attitudes about change amongst employees, higher levels of cooperation and an increased likelihood of success in dealing with significant organizational changes (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Conversely, poor communication can lead to mistrust and mutual suspicion (Savolainen et al., 2014). In order to be seen as trustworthy, communication must be both timely and accurate (Yousafzai et al., 2005). As a leader, it will be important to listen, openly and without judgment, to employee concerns throughout the change project. It will also be important to work to ensure that under-represented voices are listened to (Cook-Sather, 2020). The loudest voices cannot be the only voices. This will be discussed further later in this chapter.

In a trusting relationship, there is no room for unfulfilled promises; they may placate resistance in the short term but will lead to a relationship breakdown in the long term (Savolainen, 2008). Therefore, as a leader, it will be important to be clear as concerns are expressed that not all issues can be addressed; there will be some initiatives asked for by employees that cannot be accommodated. The communication strategies described below have been developed to support these considerations.

Communication Planning to Support Change

Knowledge mobilization activities bridge the gap between research and practice and move concepts from theory to reality (Fenwick & Farrell, 2011). In the context of this communication plan, knowledge mobilization is about getting the right information to the people

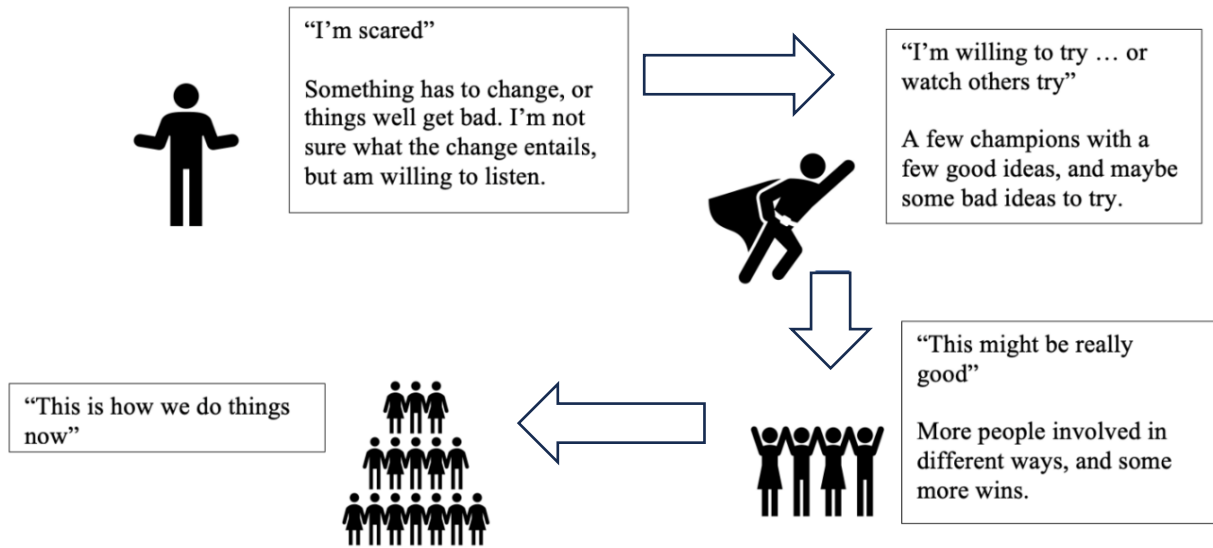
that need it in a format that makes sense to them at the right time to influence decision-making (Simeonov et al., 2017). Knowledge mobilization activities for OP are summarized in a Knowledge Mobilization Plan (KMP), found in Appendix D.

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Although OP is in a strong financial situation at the moment, the context described earlier supports the fact that this may not always be the case; the main message that needs to be imparted to employees at OP is that change is necessary, and if OP does not innovate and embrace flexibility, enrolment will suffer, revenues will drop, and the organization will not be as financially viable as it currently is. The KMP must then take employees from this fear and apprehension through to excitement about some of the changes and a willingness to try, all the way to institution-wide support for the change. Figure 6 depicts a high-level path along the Knowledge Mobilization Plan, and a more detailed Knowledge Mobilization Plan for OP is outlined in Appendix D, supported by the Communication Plan, which follows Figure 6.

Communication Plan

The communication plan devised for OP, listed in Table 5, includes strategies for outbound and inbound communication (listening). It considers employees as drivers of change as they receive communication and derive meaning from it. While multiple mediums are used, the plan is grounded in the principle that face-to-face communication has a greater impact than any other medium (Klein, 1996) because it allows for two-way communication and feedback (O'Connor, 1990). Three levels of communication are included: corporate level (communication from the corporation to employees), team level, and leadership communication (individual communication between leader and employees). Communication strategies change through the eight steps of Kotter's model.

Figure 6*Knowledge Mobilization: From Scared to Excited*

As outlined in Table 5, Kotter's eight steps have been grouped into three tiers: awakening and rallying the troops, empowering the team to act, and evaluating, adjusting, and institutionalizing. In the first tier, communication acts as an important driver by sharing why the change is needed, as well as providing an opportunity to share the vision for the change and strategies for achieving the vision broadly (Kotter & Heskett, 1992) while at the same time assessing how receptive employees are to change (Frahm & Brown, 2007). This allows change leaders to address points of resistance (Schein, 1981). However, Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) point out that more than sharing a vision is required. Specific change actions must be communicated, and employees must connect those actions with achieving the vision, or they will resist change just as much as they would have had they not accepted the vision.

Table 5*A Communication Plan for OP*

Kotter's 8-Step Model	Communication Objectives	Outward Communication Strategies and Channels	Inward Communication/Listening Strategies and Channels
Awaken and Rally Steps 1 - 4 Establish a sense of urgency around a singular rallying point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help employees understand the "why." • Obtain input and alignment on the vision – where are we going? • Share the vision broadly. • Help employees see themselves and their role in the change and are receptive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honest communication that lays out the reason why the change is important. • Top-down approaches to help employees understand the change and to provide consistent messages. <p>Channels: Town Halls, Videos, Newsletters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster trust by providing opportunities for employees to identify points of resistance. • Foster trust by listening openly, without judgment. <p>Channels: Department meetings (smaller to allow for more open communication), Roundtables, Faculty forums, targeted emails</p>
Empower and Act Steps 5 and 6 Empower others to act and create short terms wins to start the momentum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the wins. • Identify barriers and offer solutions. • Help employees see the progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the progress and achievements – share stories. • Have faculty share their wins. • Use students to communicate the benefit from their standpoint. • Identify influencers and make sure they have key messages. <p>Channels: Faculty and program meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to individual stories – to identify the short-term wins and barriers. • One-on-one communication to listen to individual challenges. <p>Channels: One-on-one meetings</p>
Evaluate, Adjust, and Institutionalize Steps 7 and 8 Keep the momentum going and institutionalize the change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let people know that this is how we do things now – this is becoming our norm. • Let people know that we perhaps did not get everything 100% right – that is ok. Adjust and continue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization-wide updates on the status of the project. • Continue to communicate the vision • Honest depiction of the challenges • Continued emphasis on innovation – it does not end here. <p>Channels: Town Halls, Video Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees must be allowed to talk about failures openly and without judgement – humble inquiry. • New norms must be set. <p>Channels: Forums/Roundtables</p>

In the first tier, corporate-level and team-level communication will be used at OP to ensure the organization is receptive to change. In addition, corporate-level communication, such as Town Halls and videos with senior management espousing the "why," will be used to ensure everyone is receiving the same message. Finally, regarding inward communication, it will be important for change leaders to foster trust by listening genuinely and allowing employees to share their feelings safely. These intimate conversations are best channelled through one-on-one meetings.

In the second tier of the change project, the focus is on empowering the team to act and creating short-term wins. Howell and Higgins (1990) discuss the importance of project champions who "distill creative ideas from information resources and then enthusiastically promote them within the organization" (p. 138). This concept will be particularly relevant to OP, where social networks are important. Project champions, or influencers, can help articulate a vision for innovation to their peers in a way that administrators cannot. These project champions can come from within the Institutional Innovation Group but, ideally, should also come from stakeholders across the organization. Heide et al. (2018) posit that an organization's capacity to communicate effectively and strategically comprises the many sub-processes between coworkers, managers and other stakeholders daily. Therefore, it will be essential to identify influencers and ensure they are armed with relevant messages to share with others in their network. It would also be helpful to use students (the ultimate targets of change) to share key messages from their perspective.

In the final tier of the plan, communication is used to institutionalize change. Some might be tempted to slow down communication for fear of repetition, as change agents often underestimate the amount of communication necessary. Kotter (1996) espouses that repetition's

importance is often underestimated. It is also important to note that at this stage, inward communication (listening) becomes more critical as change programs are evaluated and adjusted. Schein's (2013) concept of humble inquiry will be necessary at this stage of the communication plan. It will be important to seek feedback with genuine interest and without preconceived assumptions and judgment. This approach will support stakeholders' feelings of trust and open dialogue about ways to improve. Leadership must be open to the notion that success may not be achieved the first time - hence the model's iterative approach to change. At this stage, corporate-level communication will be used to share status updates and success stories and to repeat the vision and action plan, so the team does not let up. Team-level and individual-level communication will be used to receive feedback humbly and without judgment. Table 5 outlines a high-level communication plan for OP. It outlines objectives and strategies at various steps of the change plan.

Communication Challenges

There are two important communication challenges at OP. The first challenge is the power and importance of informal networks to influence in either a positive or negative direction, and the second challenge is giving a voice to underrepresented groups.

Informal Communication Networks

Much of the communication described above is formal and delivered by various organizational stakeholders based on their institutional position. However, given the social network frame at OP, informal social networks play an important role also by providing either positive or negative influence on others within the organization. Therefore, identifying influencers and using them to amplify messages in a peer-to-peer and informal way should have a positive impact (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011; Soda & Zaheer, 2012). Lewis and Seibold (1998)

found that employees who were open to change had several things in common: strong relationships with their managers who were very communicative in informal settings, managers who were geographically close, and managers who provided access to information. Keeping these informal networks close could help spread the word with more skeptical employees.

Conversely, influencers who do not agree with change or the messages espoused by management could harm communication. Hayati et al. (2018) look at leadership during strategy implementation from a social network perspective and find that leadership could face challenges in strategy implementation if a critical influencer (one with significant social capital) is not supportive. Identifying, neutralizing, and swaying these influences will be important as a leader.

Unmuting Underrepresented Voices

With the communication plan above, I outline the importance of using both formal communication and informal influencers to share the message. At OP, these influencers with high social capital and the loudest voices tend to fall within a distinct demographic category: white, middle-aged people. A large segment of stakeholders at OP do not fall within this group and may feel they need a voice in shaping institutional policy (Cook-Sather, 2020). For example, older faculty could face ageism as they may need more physical capability to teach in a flexible mode and may feel uncomfortable expressing their concerns to their manager or at Town Halls. Staff from cultural backgrounds where open expression is less prevalent may fear retribution if they go against senior management, especially in large open forums. Hancock and Lubicz-Nawrocka (2018) argue that “creating the space to have honest conversations is essential to nourish a collaborative ethos of mutual engagement and learning” (p.3). In order to have these honest conversations, underrepresented voices need to have a place at the "table" and feel safe enough to express themselves. It is my role as the change leader to create this safe space. A safe

space is created when I expose my vulnerabilities and admit publicly that my privileged position as a white, tech-savvy woman in a position of power leaves me with hidden gaps in how I see things. This radical critical consciousness is necessary in order to bring about the social change necessary to address marginalization and inequity (Sarid, 2021). However, admitting to hidden gaps must also lead to a plan to overcome them.

Complexity leadership discussed earlier in this OIP plays a role here. While I do have a responsibility to listen openly and provide the opportunity for open conversations, I do not have to lead all of the conversations. Choosing emergent leaders from within underrepresented populations to lead change communication at various times will help give them a "voice" and help others feel more comfortable expressing themselves (Cook-Sather, 2020). Giving intentional room to leaders from underrepresented groups to provide outward communication and be the conduit for inward communication will be an important part of the change at OP.

This section has outlined the importance of outward and inward communication in moving OP toward innovation and flexibility. It also discussed the inter-related nature of communication and how employees receive communication but also drive change with their interpretation of communication. Monitoring and evaluation of communication will ensure that stakeholders receive intended messages. This will be discussed in the next section.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

While there is significant evidence that most change programs fail (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008; Neumann et al., 2018), a formal and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) contributes to the ultimate success of a change program by providing ongoing assessment and input to any adjustments necessary during the execution of a change plan (Neumann et al., 2018). While often used interchangeably, monitoring and evaluation each

measure different aspects of a change project. *Monitoring* focuses on collecting data and tracking goal accomplishments on an ongoing basis (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). This can be seen as a formative process – to inform the change process along the way. In contrast, *evaluation* reviews overall performance and provides the leader with relevant information on a project's status using a summative view (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). In this section, I discuss a monitoring and evaluation plan to support this change initiative, including formative and summative assessments. In addition, the section includes a discussion of how the M&E plan informs adjustments to the change initiative, as required.

Formative and Summative Evaluation

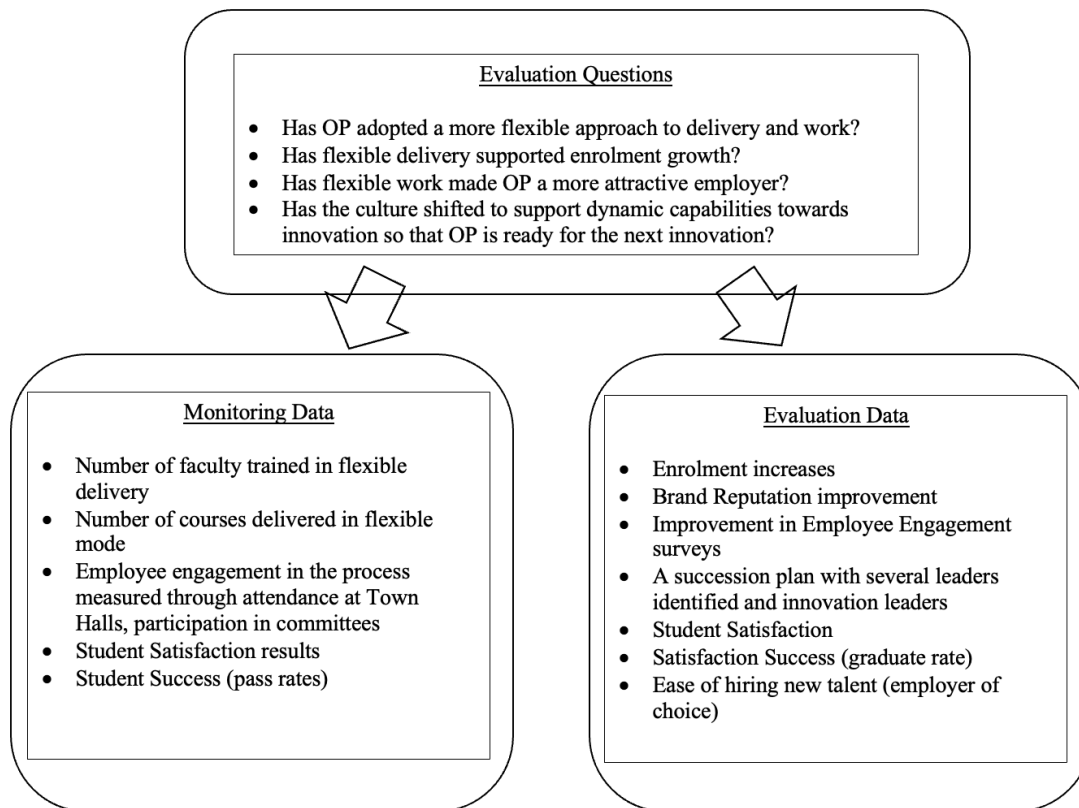
Monitoring plans are early warning systems intended to alert managers to deviations from the original objectives of a program during its implementation (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). One aspect of monitoring is formative evaluation, which happens during the development process of an initiative. It provides live and on-the-ground feedback during implementation, designed to fine-tune the implementation plans in-process (Neumann et al., 2018). Formative evaluation occurs at regular intervals and seeks to uncover both positive and negative aspects of the change implementation (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). As such, formative evaluation can be used to redirect efforts if needed and communicate success and short-term wins (Neumann et al., 2018), an important aspect of Kotter's 8-Step approach. Conversely, summative evaluation is conducted to determine the overall success of a program, leading to a terminal evaluation of the program (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). Summative evaluation is retrospective and looks back at data with a deeper analysis. The goal of summative evaluation is to measure the overall success of a change program by assessing whether it achieves the predetermined goals set out for the program (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

Evaluation Questions

Monitoring and evaluation work together to answer evaluation questions that examine the impact of a change initiative and whether the plan was appropriate, effective, efficient and sustainable (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Figure 7, adapted from Markiewicz and Patrick (2016), summarizes the evaluation questions which will be used to determine the success in moving OP towards flexibility and innovation and the data that will be monitored throughout the change plan (monitoring data) and at the end of the three-year plan (evaluation data) to answer these questions.

Figure 7

Monitoring and Evaluation: How They Work Together



Monitoring Plan

Cawsey et al. (2020) note that “change leaders need to select key measures that will track the change process” (p. 755). The data points described in this M&E plan were selected as key benchmarks that need to be hit to achieve success at the end of three years. These data will be used to chart ongoing progress for redirection and adjustment if required, but positive aspects will also be shared as small wins to motivate and sustain the change effort (Mento et al., 2002). Table 6 summarizes the proposed monitoring plan. In this plan, the approach taken to monitoring is participatory in that it engages participants in the evaluation process (Chouinard, 2013). This approach is aligned with interpretivism, it asks us to consider the evaluation methods used, whose voices to include and how to include them (Greene, 2000).

In a genuinely participatory approach, stakeholders decide what to measure and how to measure it (Chouinard, 2013). In a modified participatory approach, stakeholder input is sought and considered because their input is a significant contributor; involving stakeholders increases the chances of buy-in to the findings and appropriate use of the information uncovered (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). However, there are some benchmarks set by management that are non-negotiable. Given that senior leadership usually initiates a change project, setting evaluation benchmarks is a task generally reserved for them (Neumann et al., 2018), however integrating input from a broad cross-section of stakeholders in evaluation supports the social justice aspects of this inquiry by giving individuals from across the organization a voice in evaluation (Guijt et al., 1998).

The formative data will be gathered regularly and shared with the IIG and among other employees. In a participatory fashion, stakeholders will be encouraged to suggest other interesting data points.

Table 6*Monitoring and Evaluation Plan*

	Monitoring Data	Measurement Tool	Timing	Who will be responsible
FORMATIVE	Number of faculty trained in flexible delivery	Scheduling data	Semesterly	Chairs Dean, IIG
	Number of courses delivered in flexible mode	Scheduling data	Semesterly	Chairs Dean, IIG
	Employee engagement in change	Attendance at Town Halls Engagement in Committees	Semesterly	Dean, IIG
	Other data as determined by participatory process	Focus groups To be determined by participatory process		
SUMMATIVE	Enrolment increases	Enrolment data	Semesterly	Institutional Research Dean, IIG
	Brand reputation improvement	Brand surveys Focus groups	Annually	Director of Marketing
	Employee engagement surveys	Employee engagement survey	Annually	HR
	Succession plan with innovation leaders identified	Focus groups Succession Plan	Annually	HR Senior Executive
	Ease of hiring	Vacancy Rate Days to fill positions	Bi-annually	HR
BOTH	Student satisfaction	Course Assessment Surveys	Semesterly	Institutional Research
	Student success	Graduation Rate	Semesterly	Institutional Research

A dashboard with formative data points will be set up so it can be monitored regularly. It will be the work of the IIG to review and share summative data and develop action plans to

address any issues identified in the process. The summative data will be collected and analyzed annually and then summarized at the end of 3 years. The IIG and the VPAS will review the annual summative data. If the data points to concerns, the IIG will be responsible for creating an action plan. Summative data will be shared with senior leadership and the Board as well. In addition, some data, such as student satisfaction and graduation rate, will also be tracked as a part of the formative and summative evaluation.

The data gathered above combine "hard" and "soft" metrics. Hard metrics include quantifiable data such as attendance at training and the number of sections delivered in flexible mode. Soft metrics include more subjective data like employee engagement, brand reputation measures and data gathered at focus groups. A "hard-soft" balance (Neumann et al., 2018, p. 130) is necessary in order to get a complete evaluation picture (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007).

Barriers

Internal politics and competing agendas can be barriers to effective M&E, and no matter how robust the process, the findings of M&E can be obstructed by poor communication, a lack of transparency and fear of what is coming next (Neumann et al., 2018). An important aspect of evaluation to consider is the notion of humble inquiry. Schein (2013) espouses the value of seeking feedback with genuine interest and without preconceived judgment, where a leader intentionally adopts an inferior status to encourage open and honest feedback. Given the deep emotions at play with a significant culture shift, this leadership position may encourage open conversations and feedback as a part of the evaluation process.

Responses to Monitoring and Evaluation Findings

The regular monitoring processes described above will provide the opportunity to refine the change plan. Identifying potential issues early through a robust M&E process means

mitigations can be developed and implemented early. Examples of possible hurdles identified through the M&E process and the planned response are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7

Responses to Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring data	Anticipated barrier	In-process mitigation and response
Number of faculty trained in flexible delivery	Faculty fearing and not accepting flexible delivery and refusing the training.	Identify more faculty champions for peer-to-peer support. Understanding whether we have the right faculty champions in place.
	Faculty indicating that they need to be given more time for the training.	Ensure that training is prioritized and remove other tasks not aligned with current strategic priorities.
Number of courses delivered in flexible mode	Technology problems with flexible delivery leading to fewer classes being delivered in flex mode.	Work with IT to ensure equipment is sufficient. Increase training for faculty.
	Scheduling problems with flexible classroom	Request an increase in the ITS budget, if necessary
Employee engagement in change	Employees not interested in the change and not wanting to participate in it.	Need to circle back to Step 1 of the process to ensure that the vision has been shared and the need for change communicated. May need to slow the change down to give employees more time.

In this section, I identified a robust M&E plan that includes stakeholder feedback and engagement in the process. An open and honest approach to evaluation is necessary so that leadership does not hear only what they want to hear during the process. The section also identified examples of data received through M&E that will require mitigations and changes to the plan.

Chapter 3: Conclusion and Next Steps and Future Considerations

In concluding this OIP, there are several next steps and future considerations. The leadership challenge addressed in this inquiry is a fundamental culture shift, which takes time. The culture at OP will not radically change in the three years covered by this OIP, but a movement towards a culture change should become evident. The current leadership challenge addressed in this inquiry is to apply transformational techniques to share a vision and rally a team behind it. With a new Strategic Plan to guide us, OP is a fast-moving train, and the first challenge is to help people board the train. My role will then be to step back and, through complexity leadership approaches, let other leaders take the helm, both to support their leadership capacity but also for broader engagement. The loudest voices will jump to the forefront, and it will be necessary to make sure that everyone has a voice. As a leader, this will require a balance between drive and patience.

By the end of the three years covered in this change plan, OP will have gone from an institution that offers primarily in-person learning and work to one that offers flexibility and choice to both consumers and employees. This flexibility should support increased enrolment, brand reputation and an improved value proposition for future employees. In addition, the succession plan should reflect dynamic capabilities towards innovation by identifying leaders through the IIG who can apply that innovation mindset elsewhere. The summative evaluation after three years will no doubt show progress but will also surely indicate that there are opportunities to adjust the plan and the approach.

My vision is that the IIG will be re-struck for another term with a new membership (allowing current members to return to their home position to share their learning). At that point,

more leaders will have had the opportunity to engage in innovation, leaving OP in a better place to tackle future challenges.

Anecdotally, many HEIs that leapt quickly to flexible learning and work have started to retreat because of the challenges outlined in this OIP, including faculty resistance and hurdles put up by organizational structures. OP continues to move forward with flexible approaches to learning and work, and this OIP outlines a vision and plan to take it even further. With the pandemic mostly behind us, the vision of this OIP is not to return back to pre-pandemic structures and approaches but rather to continue to innovate and build the capacity to innovate so that OP is prepared for the next inevitable disruption.

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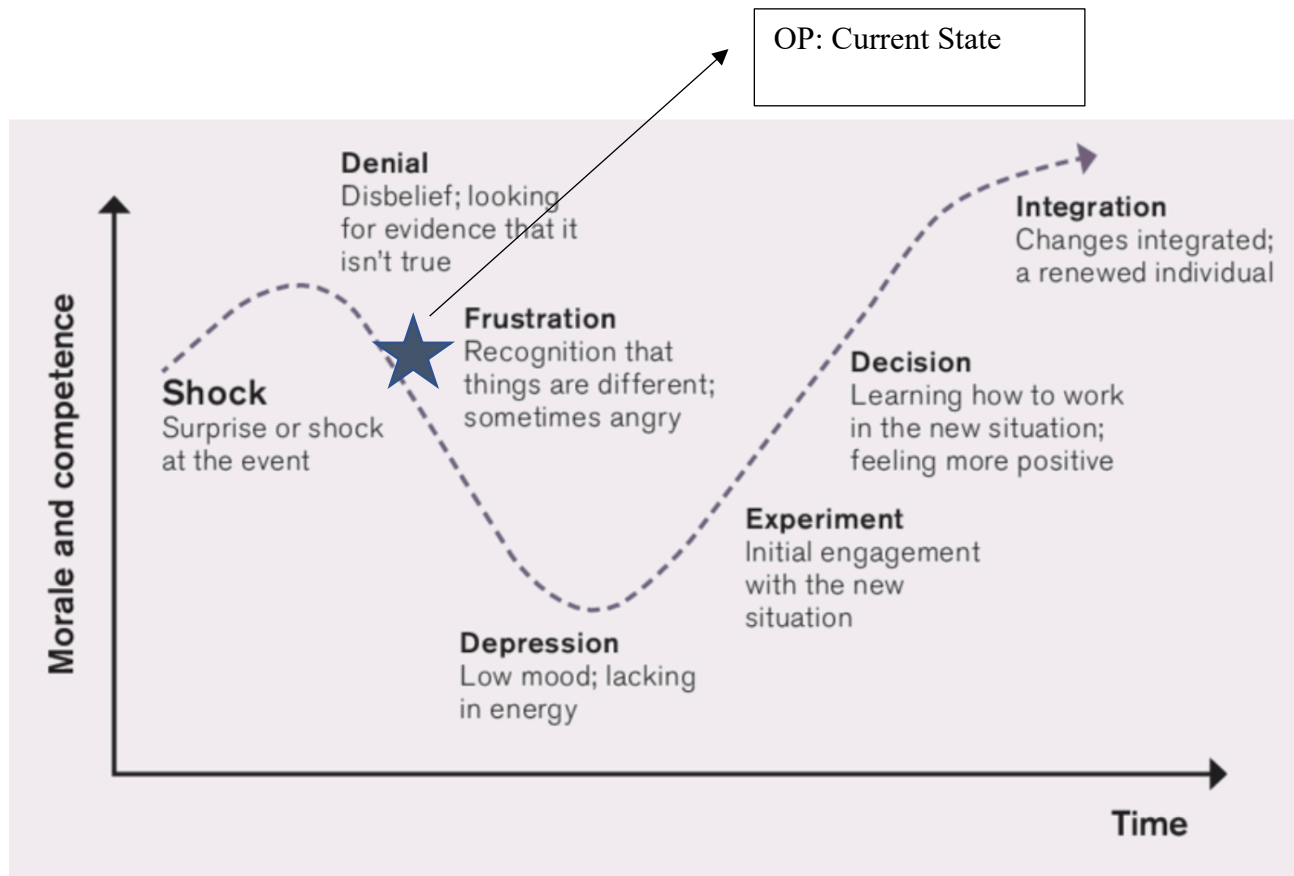
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Appendix A: The Kuebler-Ross Change Curve



Source: Kubler-Ross, E. (1969) *On Death and Dying*. Macmillan

Appendix B: What needs to change?

What needs to change	Current state	Desired end state	Stakeholders	Frame
Program delivery	<p>Pre-pandemic: the vast majority of delivery was in-person.</p> <p>During the pandemic: the institution shifted to primarily online delivery.</p> <p>Post-pandemic: students are demanding flexible learning</p>	Program delivery that provides students choice, with flexible, online, hybrid and in-person options.	Faculty ITS Scheduling Human Resources (to support hiring and training)	HR
Student services delivery	<p>Pre-pandemic: all services were delivered in-person.</p> <p>During the pandemic: all services delivered online.</p> <p>Post-pandemic: students are demanding flexible service delivery</p>	A new balance of in-person and virtual service delivery to meet the needs of students	Employees ITS Human Resources Facilities	HR Structural
Faculty and school/divisional offices	<p>Pre-pandemic: Everyone worked in person. We had school and divisional offices that were opened and staffed during business hours. Everyone had a permanent office location.</p> <p>During the pandemic: everyone worked from home.</p> <p>Post-pandemic: we need to develop a new model</p>	A new model of work that still meets the needs of our students, but that allows for flexibility, while not compromising team dynamics and effectiveness.	Employees ITS Human Resources Facilities	HR Structural
Long-term capacity to innovate	A culture with senior leadership support for innovation but where innovation was not embraced throughout the organization	An organization with the dynamic capabilities to recognize and respond to disruptions with innovation	Employees Human Resources	HR

Appendix C: Change Implementation Plan

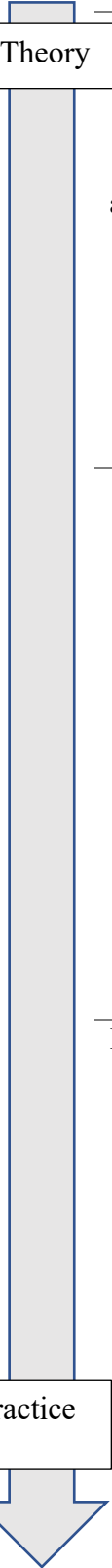


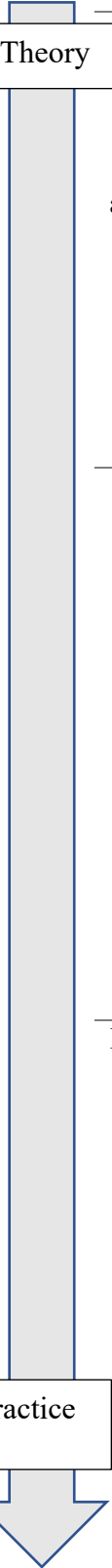
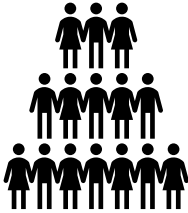
Timeline	Goals	Strategy	Tactics	Accountability	Outcome
	December 2022: Strategic Plan (2023-2026) is approved by the Board and rolled out to the Senior Executive Team				
February 2023	Kotter: Stage 1: ESTABLISH A SENSE OF URGENCY	Launch Strategic Plan for Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize round-tables for sharing the Plan Provide SLT with the opportunity to ask questions Ask SLT to develop a plan for launching Strategic Plan with their respective teams 	VPAS	SLT buy-in and engagement A plan created for organization-wide awareness
March 2023		Launch Strategic Plan for the Academic Leadership Team (ALT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLT to launch the Strat Plan to the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) VPAS will be present and involved, but SLT will lead this Ensure that ALT sees itself in the Strat Plan 	Senior Leadership Team	ALT buy-in and engagement
April to June 2023		Garner support from other members of the Senior Executive Team (SET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IIG is a cross-institutional group and will require the support of other Vice-Presidents Obtain formal budget approval for the IIG 	VPAS	SET buy-in and engagement

Timeline		Strategy	Tactics	Accountability	Outcome
June 2023 to Sept. 2023	Kotter: Stage 2: GUIDING COALITION	Determine membership for IIG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an initial assessment to summarize the skill set required • Identify membership for IIG • Garner support from other Vice-Presidents • Second, the Dean first, who can then help fill other positions • Focus on team building to create a cohesive team 	VPAS	<p>The best talent within the organization has been seconded to work on the IIG.</p> <p>Social influencers throughout the organization have been identified</p>
Sept. 2023	Kotter: Stage 3: DEVELOP VISION & STRATEGY	Formally launch Institutional Innovation Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication institution-wide to announce IIG 	VPAS IIG Leadership	Institutional awareness
Sept. 2023 – Dec. 2023		IIG Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IIG institution-wide consultation on IIG Plans 	VPAS IIG Leadership	Institutional engagement and buy-in
January 2024 – June 2024		Develop IIG Plans Collaboratively	<p>Several plans will have to be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching & Learning Plan • Hiring and Training Plan • Technology Plan 	VPAS IIG Leadership	A strong vision, supported by well-developed plans, built on extensive stakeholder engagement

Timeline	Goals	Strategy	Tactics	Accountability	Outcome
June 2024 – Nov. 2024	Kotter: Stage 4: Communicate	Communicate the plans and form working groups to support each Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch an institution-wide communication plan to share the IIG plans Pull together working groups to engage employees in plan development 	VPAS IIG	The organization understands IIG plans, and individuals see themselves in them.
June 2024 – Nov. 2024	Kotter: Stage 5: Empower Change	Start the “work” of executing plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working groups start to execute plans <p>Some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training launched for employees. A more flexible approach to Student Services is launched – for example, more flexible student advisement or registration processes. 	VPAS IIG	The organization starts to see change
Nov. 2024	Kotter: Stage 6: Generate Wins	First Flexibility and Innovation Showcase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A showcase to provide innovation champions to share their work and be recognized 	VPAS IIG	Change leaders are recognized, and employers who are slower to adapt become interested in change.

Timeline	Goals	Strategy	Tactics	Accountability	Outcome
EVALUATE and RE-SET if NEEDED. We may have to repeat previous steps if the broader organization needs to be more engaged in the change.					
Jan. 2025 – Sept. 2026 Could be later – if back-peddalling through previous steps is required	Kotter: Stage 7 and Stage 8: Consolidate and Anchor	Institutionalize the plans that have been made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans that work become policy and best practices to share within the organization. • Permanent changes to process and structure are made across the institution 	VPA IIG	Innovation is starting to spread through the organization as more people become enticed by the champions' successes.

Appendix D: Knowledge Mobilization Plan

	Kotter's 8-Step Model	What? to communicate	Target Audience	Messenger	How	Evaluation	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Theory</div> 	Awaken and Rally Steps 1 - 4 Establish a sense of urgency around a singular rallying point.	To respond to changes in the sector and in demographics, OP must innovate to continue to thrive. Flexibility is critical in this new environment.	All employees Students The Board of Governors	Vice-President Academic and Students	This message will come across clearly in the Strategic Plan. Town Halls	This will be achieved if the majority of employees are ready to embrace the change, want to join working groups.	
		Empower and Act Steps 5 and 6 Empower others to act and create short terms wins to start the momentum.	The IIG has been established and wants to hear your ideas. Pilot projects need to be shares, particularly the successful outcomes.	All employees Students The Board of Governors	Vice-President Academic and Students IIG leaders Informal peer leaders	This message will be shared via various channels to ensure everyone hears it, including newsletters, meetings, social media, video updates.	The level of change acceptance and the number of change champions will be an indicator of success.
		Evaluate, Adjust, and Institutionalize Steps 7 and 8 Keep the momentum going and institutionalize the change.	The changes made the IIG need to be shared and normalized. New practices and approaches need to become everyday practices.	All employees Students The Board of Governors External stakeholders	The Board Senior Leadership	This message will come from more formal channels such as Annual Reports, and the external website	This will be achieved if enrolment increases, OP become an employer of choice by employees, employee engagement increases and brand reputation increases.
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Practice</div> 		At this point, successes can be shared externally to impact the brand image.					