

REFORM OF TEACHER EDUCATION – THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

- Vision for a Reformed System (2012)
- Timeframe for Reform
- Institutional Responses
- Outcome (2018)
- Recommendations for the Future
- Challenges
- Unintended Consequences
- Change is Ongoing!

VISION FOR A REFORMED SYSTEM

(SAHLBERG I REPORT – 2012)

- “The Review Panel’s vision for the structure of ITE provision in Ireland is that by 2030 Ireland will have a network of teacher education institutions based on a small number (six) of internationally comparable institutes of teacher education. Each of these institutions will offer research-based teacher education (for all levels) in internationally inspiring environments, provided at Masters level initially or through CPD. Each will also offer further professional development services on the continuum ranging from early childhood to in-service training of teachers and leaders”.



TIMEFRAME FOR REFORM

- The proposals for reform were predicated within the (Irish) Higher Education Authority's *Strategy for Higher Education to the Year 2030*.
- ITE institutions were incentivised to start the reform immediately and to try and complete it within a five-year timescale.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES

- Some institutions embraced the challenge of change and recognised the potential for a new and exciting future.
- Others were cautiously supportive.
- A few were unenthusiastic.
- And a very small number did not engage or cooperate.

OUTCOME – REVIEW IN 2018 – (SAHLBERG 2 REPORT - 2018)

- Considerable Progress over the five year period
- Restructuring completed in three clusters; under way in two; and one cluster did not accept initial proposal.
- Not all centres have full ITE provision from early childhood to further education
- A strong research base (staff and students) and greater links between theory and practice
- Evidence of greater emphasis on numeracy and literacy
- Greater emphasis on school placements

OUTCOME – REVIEW IN 2018 –

(SAHLBERG 2 - 2018)

- Strong, committed and consistent leadership in the successful clusters
- Significant investment of finance, time and resources by HEA and co-operating universities
- For many staff the experience was positive – for others it was stressful and challenging
- Vast majority of academic staff now have a doctorate
- Team impressed by high calibre of students
- Continuum of ITE, Induction and CPD in all clusters

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE (SAHLBERG 2018)

- National HE authorities should aim at creating a self-improving professional ITE system where the centres of excellence would have more autonomy from state level central administration
- Develop greater cross-sectoral collaboration across the centres.
- State should publicly recognise and support good work
- Create incentives for the centres of excellence to reach their strategic goals sooner
- Further emphasise the understanding of research-based ITE among teacher educators and students

Challenges

- The structural reform happened at a time of many changes in ITE and in Higher Education
- HR and IR Challenges
- Some challenges relating to legal ownership of properties
- “Status” issues for some academic staff
- Implications of University Autonomy
- New demands on students
- New demands on co-operating schools
- Change coincided with reduction in starting salaries of teachers.

Unintended Consequences

- Two year consecutive Masters programme financially untenable for some students leading to a fall in demand for consecutive programmes, especially among STEM graduates and non-traditional students
- One cluster refused to accept the proposed reform
- One College continues to be directly funded by Ministry

Unintended Consequences

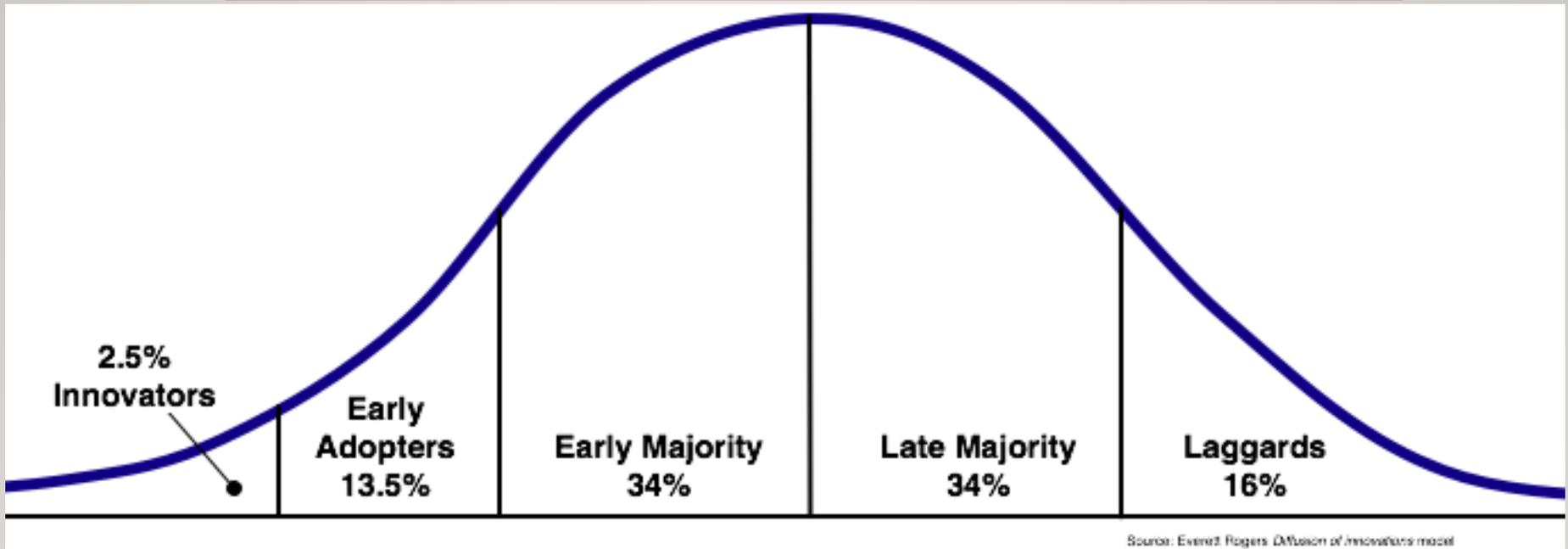
- Varying Level of Qualifications – some graduate with a Bachelors; some with a Masters;
- Increased imbalance between Supply of and Demand for Teachers
- Teaching profession continues to attract predominantly white, middle-class, Irish speaking females.
- Should the DES continue to control entry to primary and some post-primary ITE programmes, while others are not controlled?
- Questions regarding longer term funding for ITE programmes, now that they are integrated into universities ?

The Challenge of Change

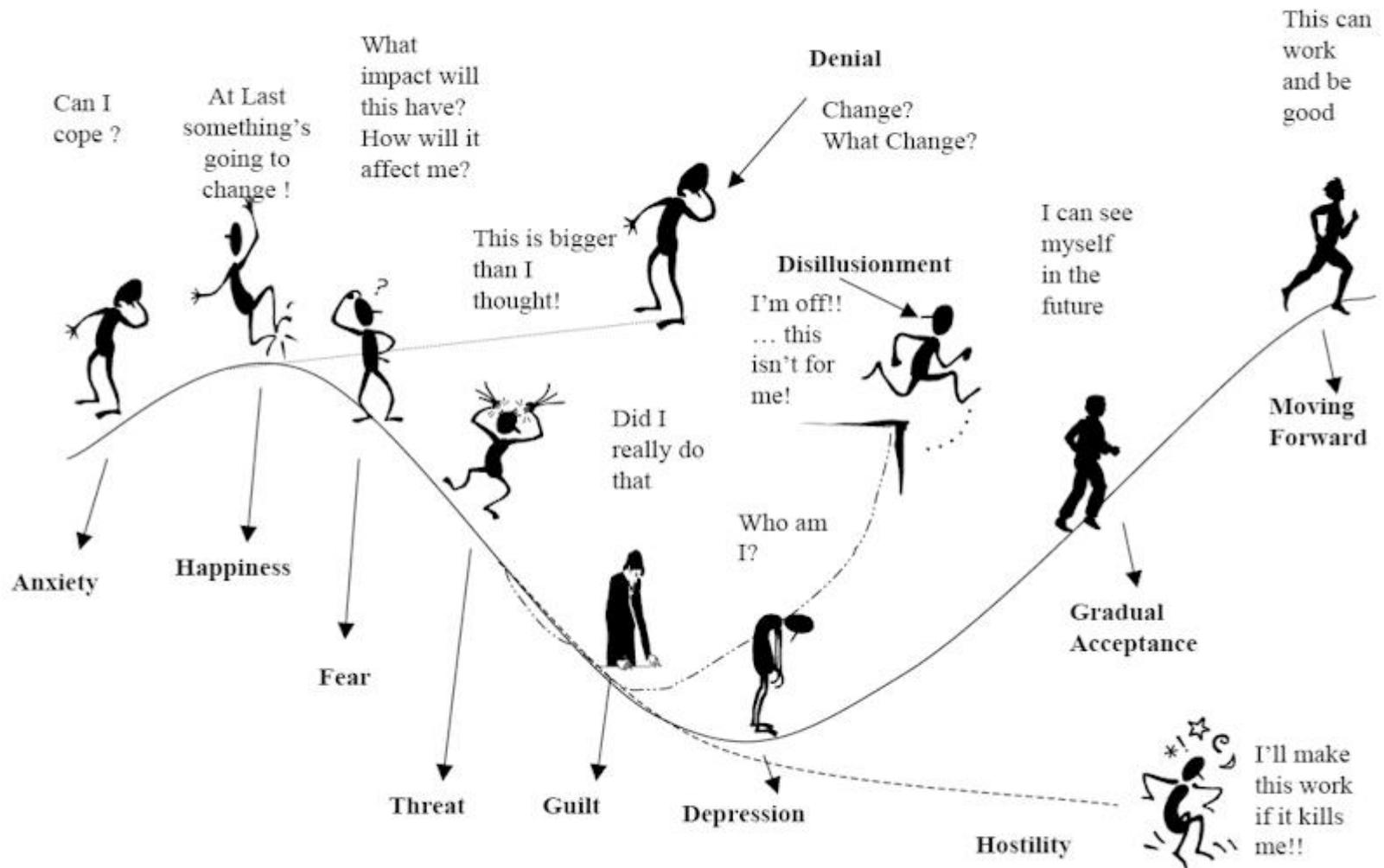
“There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries ... and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it”. (Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1532))



ROGERS INNOVATION ADOPTION CURVE



The Process of Transition



LEADING CHANGE

“Effective leadership is essential for successful organisation development and change management. The ability to manage change is a key characteristic of a transformational leader. Transformational leaders must be visionary, proactive, creative, innovative and supportive of alternative viewpoints”.

(D. Empey, S. Peskett and PD. Lees, *Medical Leadership*, 2002).

MANAGING CONFLICT IS AN ESSENTIAL ASPECT OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

- Resistance to a new initiative can actually be highly instructive. Conflict and differences can make a constructive contribution in dealing with complex problems. (Michael Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, 2000)
- “Often those who resist have something important to tell us. People resist for what they view as good reasons. They may see alternatives we never dreamed of. They may understand problems about the minutiae of implementation that we never see from our lofty perch atop Mount Olympus.” (H. Maurer, *Beyond the Wall of Resistance*, 1996)

Change!

- **Nothing endures but change** (Heraclitus 540-480 BC)
- **For change is perennial and will not stop this year or next** (Investment in Education report Ireland 1965).



Thank You