

# The Politics of Change: Scaling Up

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## **A Primer on Change Setting Up a Cycle of Innovation**

Step 1. Creating a compelling case for change using both qualitative and quantitative evidence to tell the story

Step 2. Selecting the first target

Step 3. Setting meaningful goals and measuring progress toward achieving those goals

Step 4. Identifying and using available capacity

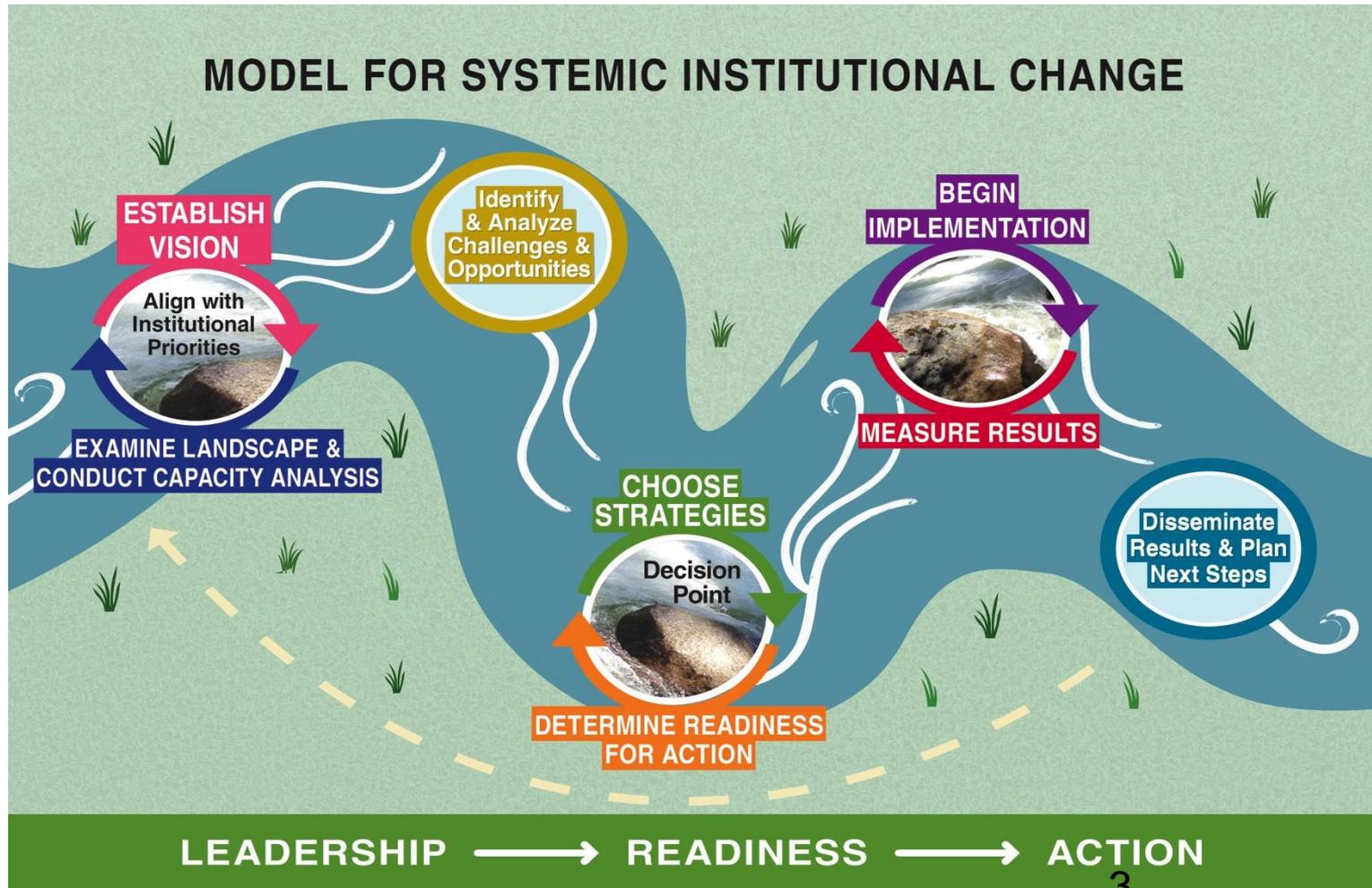
Step 5. Making connections that reinforce and expand the effort and its impact; adapting as needed

Step 6. Learning from the experience, rebalancing and applying the lessons learned; revising your case

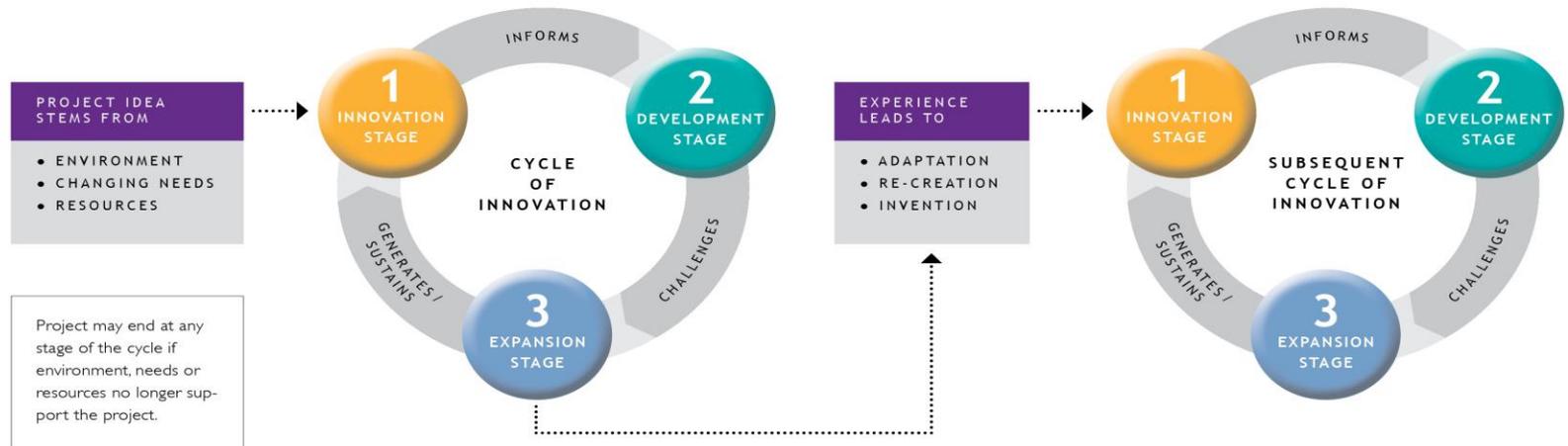
**Step 7. Selecting the next target and repeating the cycle while moving toward systemic change**

# The Path to Systemic Change

Susan Elrod and Adrianna Kezar (2015)



# Moving from Step 1 to Step 7



# What will it take to change a system?

## Larger Campus-wide Issues

- A shift from individual modules and classes and a concept of “my work” to a pattern of “our work” to create a pathway concept that gradually builds intellectual and solution-finding skills and the capacity to deal with complexity, uncertainty, paradox and ambiguity.
- New forms of assessment of learning
- A move from teaching and learning as a solitary process to learning and co-creation of knowledge as a collaborative process.
- A goal of engaging students in ways that promote “continuous self-reflection in the light of new experiences, including the witnessed experience of others.” (Andrew Delbanco, 2012, College)

# Understanding How Your Institution Works: Reading the River

- Q.1 What else is going on that may be creating momentum and new avenues for collaboration?
- Q2. What is happening that may limit or block your efforts?
- Q.3 Are you working in a conducive environment that embraces collaboration?
- Q.4 How ready is your campus to continue significant change of any kind?
- Q.5 In what ways can your project contribute to the capacity of your campus to adapt to changing expectations, needs and conditions? What connections do you have to other change efforts?

## **Q.1 What else is going on that may be creating momentum and new avenues for collaboration?**

- What institutional priorities might your project inform or address?
- Is your campus involved in a process to review and update your undergraduate curriculum or some component of that curriculum (e.g. General Education or the major) and/or to define or act upon a set of Institutional Learning Goals?
- Are there any other campus-wide efforts to enhance the student experience or improve retention/graduation rates for some or all of your students?

## **Q2. What is happening that could limit, block or redirect your efforts?**

- New campus leadership
- Mandates from policymakers or your governing board
- New forms of performance-based budgeting or accountability that focus the campus on immediate issues and performance
- Serious budget cuts
- Initiative fatigue
- Other?

### **Q.3 Are you working in a conducive environment that embraces collaboration?**

- Is your institution involved in any other projects either internally or in partnership with the broader community or both that address significant social, economic or environmental issues issues?
- Does the focus of your HIPs work support those other efforts?
- Looking at your local environmental setting, what challenges or concerns are there that you can use as a laboratory for your students and as a focus for scholarship and collaboration?

## **Q. 4 How ready is your campus to continue to engage in significant change of any kind?**

Policies and practices

Experience with successful change efforts

Distribution of resources: What kinds of information are used to guide allocations?

Appropriate infrastructure to support faculty leadership and a shared governance model

Capacity to engage in evidence-based change and effective institutional research efforts to support this

Leadership support for intentional change

Existing examples of collaboration internally or with the broader community surrounding your institution that offer lessons and opportunities

Other?

**Q. 5 In what ways can your project contribute to the capacity of your campus to adapt to changing expectations, needs and conditions? What connections do you have to other change efforts?**

- Who knows about your work and who cares?
- Have you gotten the attention and buy-in of senior administrative and faculty leadership?
- If you have had significant turnover in leadership since your project got underway, what are you doing to get buy-in from the new President, Provost, Dean, Faculty Senate Steering Committee, other?

## **Sustaining Change Over the Long Term Now What?**

- How well do you understand your campus culture and how your project fits into that culture?
- How does your work offer insights into how to support student success and prepare your graduates for a changing world?
- What are you learning from your work that can be shared with colleagues in other disciplines and adapted to different contexts? How might you do that?

## **Getting Ready to Expand Your Efforts (1)**

How does your project support institutional priorities?

Can you clearly state the core value/mission that you want to sustain and the connection to the larger mission at your institution and to students' educational success?

What assets already exist that can support this work?

Describe the assets that you have identified and how you can gain or maintain access to them. Examples: related projects, implementation of similar strategies, areas of special emphasis on campus, goals of the strategic plan.

## Getting Ready to Expand Your Efforts (2)

- Who needs to know about your work now?

Prioritize the gatekeepers or stakeholders who influence or control the distribution of resources and the setting of institutional priorities. Within your campus governing and decision-making structure, where can you generate the most interest and potential support both for building upon your own project and for the larger changes that will be needed for your work to be embraced and incorporated into your campus culture, the curriculum more broadly and your shared expectations for your graduates? What have you learned that will be useful to others on campus?

## Getting Ready to Expand Your Efforts (3)

- How will you get the attention of campus leaders? What are the venues for raising awareness? Prioritize these venues and conversations. Are you part of those networks? If not, how could you gain access to them?
- What is your message to these stakeholders? How will you talk about your project and the value of this work? What lessons can you derive from your experience so far that might be applicable to other parts of the curriculum or to campus-community relationships or to broader institutional goals?

## Getting Ready to Expand Your Efforts (3) Making Your Case for Further Work

BASIC PREMISE: Campus cultures and leadership tend to emphasize a dominant mindset

- Some campuses are all about relationships and feelings (the **personal**/HR frame)
- Some campuses focus on organization and protocol (the **organizational**/structural frame)
- Some campuses focus on coalitions and power (the **political** frame)
- Some campuses focus on evidence and argument (the **logical**/case-based frame)
- A few campuses have a mixed repertoire.

## **Making the Case for Continuing Your Work: Bringing the National Story into Focus Locally**

- Members of minority groups are less likely to graduate from high school and if they do, they are less likely to go to college and succeed. [What are the statistics on your campus? Has your work affected this pattern?]
- The educational capacity of our nation is declining. In 2009, we ranked fifth in OECD data for attainment for 55-64 year olds but...[What is the educational attainment of residents of your state now?]
  - We ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in attainment for 25-34 year olds.
  - We ranked 26<sup>th</sup> in math and 21<sup>st</sup> in science among our peers in other industrialized nations.

## Working with your Institutional Research Office

A compelling case is based on effective approaches to **monitoring** the progress you are making and **measuring** the impact of your project on the issues it is designed to address.

How are you evaluating your project now? What questions are you seeking to answer?

How are you gathering evidence and how are you using it to monitor your progress and evaluate the impact of your work?

Is your IR Office already involved and if so, in what ways?

What other data does your IR Office collect that could assist you in making your case?

What additional information would help you assess your progress and make your case?

How easily could those data be collected and interpreted?

## Getting Ready to Expand Your Efforts (4)

Now, outline your message starting with the point that is most likely to gain traction in your environment with the people you want to reach.

- What are people most concerned about on campus?
- Does your project address any of those concerns? If so, how?
- Why else might they be interested in your work and what would be a good way to approach them?
- How will you work with your team and others to craft your message and back it up with data, stories, examples, lessons learned in ways that resonate with your colleagues and with campus leadership?

## Things to Keep in Mind

- How are important decisions made at your institution and what frame is usually used (technical, organizational, personal)? How do you usually make sense of things? Does your approach match up with larger institutional behaviors?

## Things to Keep in Mind

- Who already buys into your agenda and how can you recruit additional advocates and partners?
- Who is likely to resist or oppose your agenda and why?
- How can you attach your agenda to the ambitions and goals of campus leadership and how do you find out what those goals are?

## In Summary

### Position Your Work as an Answer to Important Questions

- ✓ Every campus has critical questions to answer. How can your work provide answers to questions that matter most to your colleagues and to campus leadership (administrators, faculty, students)?
- ✓ Campus leaders want good stories to tell in speeches, alumni magazines, donor conversations. How can you become one of those good stories?
- ✓ Success loves company. Study the strategic plan and listen carefully to what your new leadership talks about. Look for ways to link your work to key campus priorities and to other related projects.

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