



Opening Doors: A personal and professional journey

How to use the *Opening Doors* Retreat as a Tool for Change

From initial innovation to full adoption, the way in which human beings respond to change is predictable. Perception of risk determines an individual's response to potential change. Understanding and working with this phenomenon when implementing diversity initiatives is critical to success.

The Change Adoption Process

Innovators are inherently on the cutting edge and begin to adopt the change regardless of what others around them are doing. *Change agents* are the opinion leaders that like to spread innovation. As innovators and change agents have visible success, the *pragmatists* who have been looking for outcomes, jump on board. Based on numbers, you now have half of the organization adopting the change. With administrative directives and support the *skeptics* have enough models of success to feel safe and adopt what first seemed quite risky. Finally, there are a small group of *traditionalists* who will never change. The application of this knowledge to diversity efforts allows us to anticipate and plan for the predictable human responses to change.

It does not matter if you are implementing a new computer system, a new curriculum or engaging in a diversity initiative, the change adoption process follows this predictable pattern.

Using *Opening Doors* as a tool for change will:

Help **innovators** to see how their understanding of diversity has a place in the organization, and inspire them to learn strategies for engaging in the organization's change efforts.

Provide **change agents** with the tools to effectively provide leadership on diversity and inspire others to engage in the organizational change initiatives.

Allow a safe space for **pragmatists** to explore their questions, and provide the opportunity to personally engage with people that are truly excited about the change.

Identify Innovators and Change Agents to attend *Opening Doors* first

- ✓ Make a list of the individuals currently initiating and leading diversity efforts within your system.
- ✓ Make a list of people already working with a diversity lens; teaching diversity classes, serving your "new" audiences, hiring and retaining individuals from under-represented groups, and more.
- ✓ Make a list of people you know are interested in seeing your diversity effort succeed.

Provide Support as People Return from *Opening Doors*

- ✓ Provide avenues for individuals to engage in the change effort.
- ✓ Highlight successes.
- ✓ Encourage past participants of *Opening Doors* to recruit others.