

Opening Doors: A Personal and Professional Journey

How to use the *Opening Doors* retreat as a tool for change



OPENING DOORS Diversity Project

From an initial innovative idea to its 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 and inclusion initiatives is critical to success.

The Change Adoption Process

Innovators are inherently on the cutting edge and begin to adopt a change regardless of what others around them are doing. *Change agents* are the opinion leaders who like to take part in 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 and inclusion 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 and inclusion 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 inclusion inspiring 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 who are truly excited about the change.

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

- ✓ Make a list of 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 who 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.