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Curriculum Renewal: Leading the Way

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Australia



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Honolulu, Hawaii



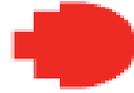
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Curriculum design for assuring learning in business education - leading the way

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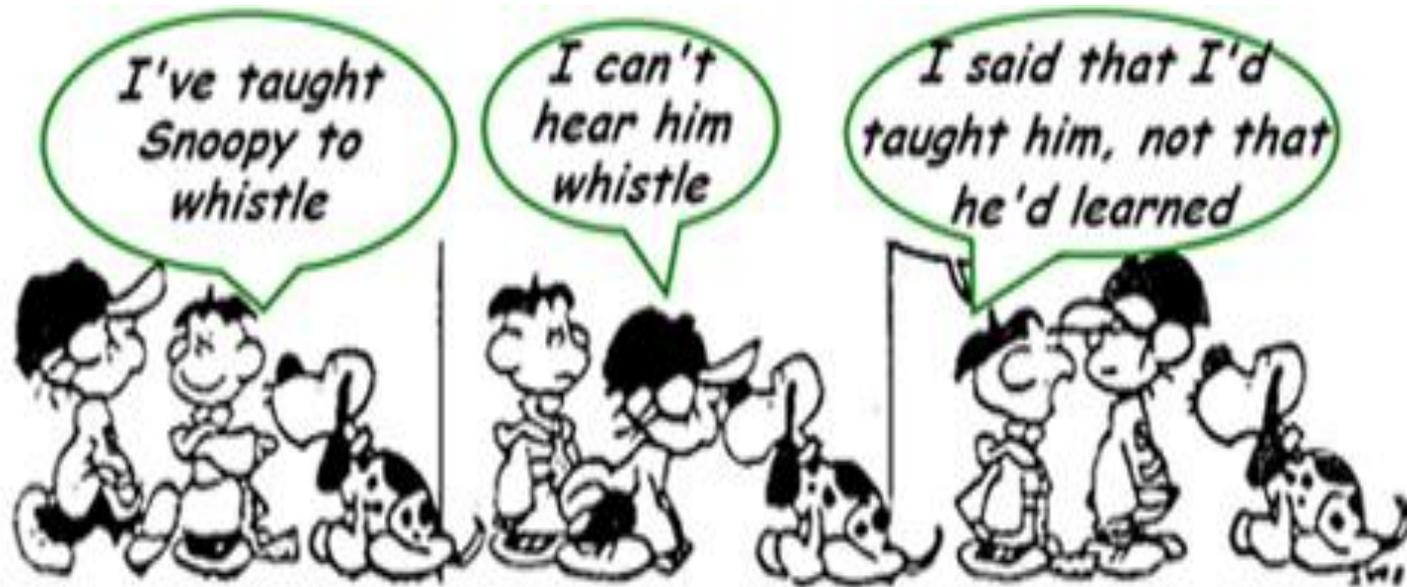


Associate Professor Romy Lawson

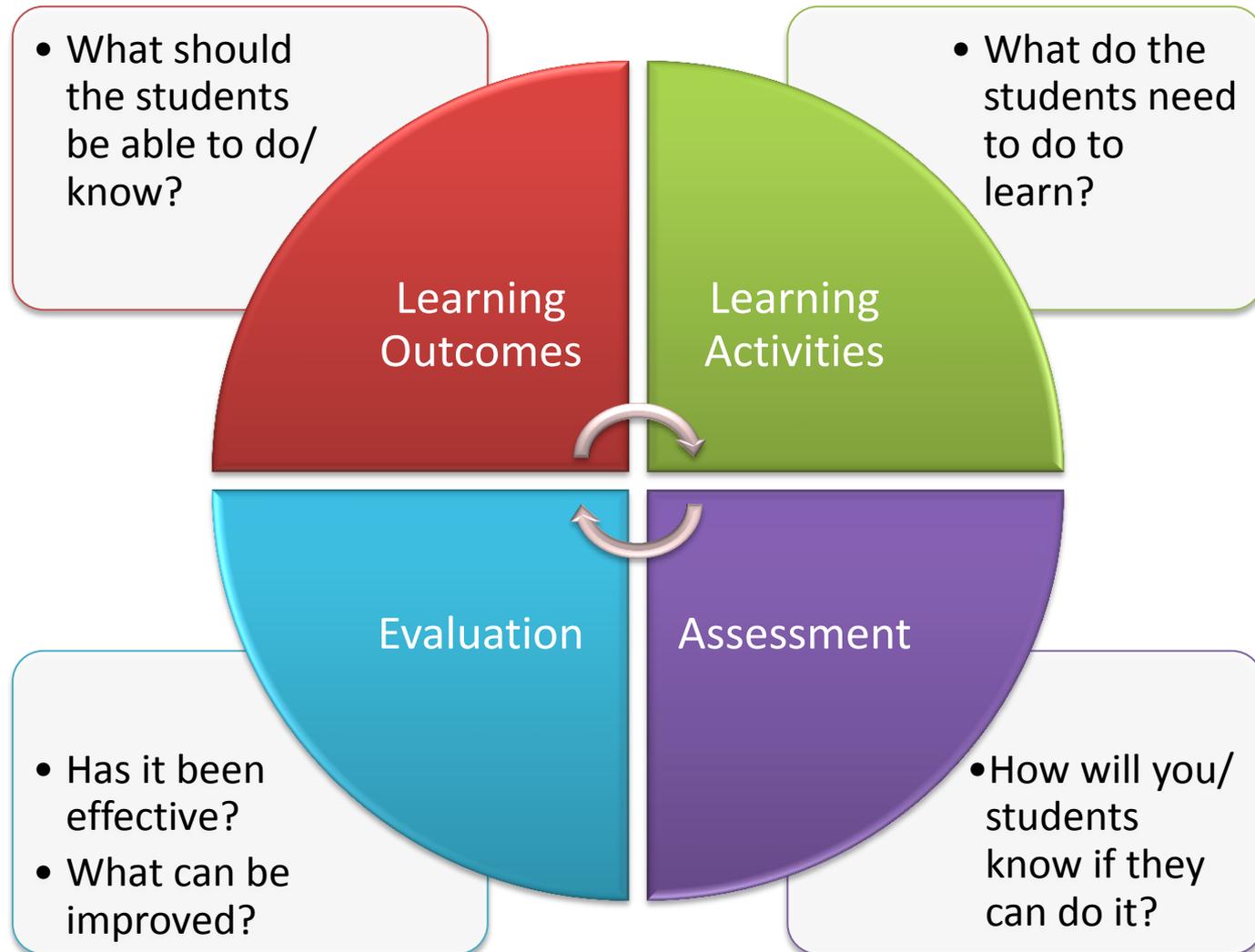
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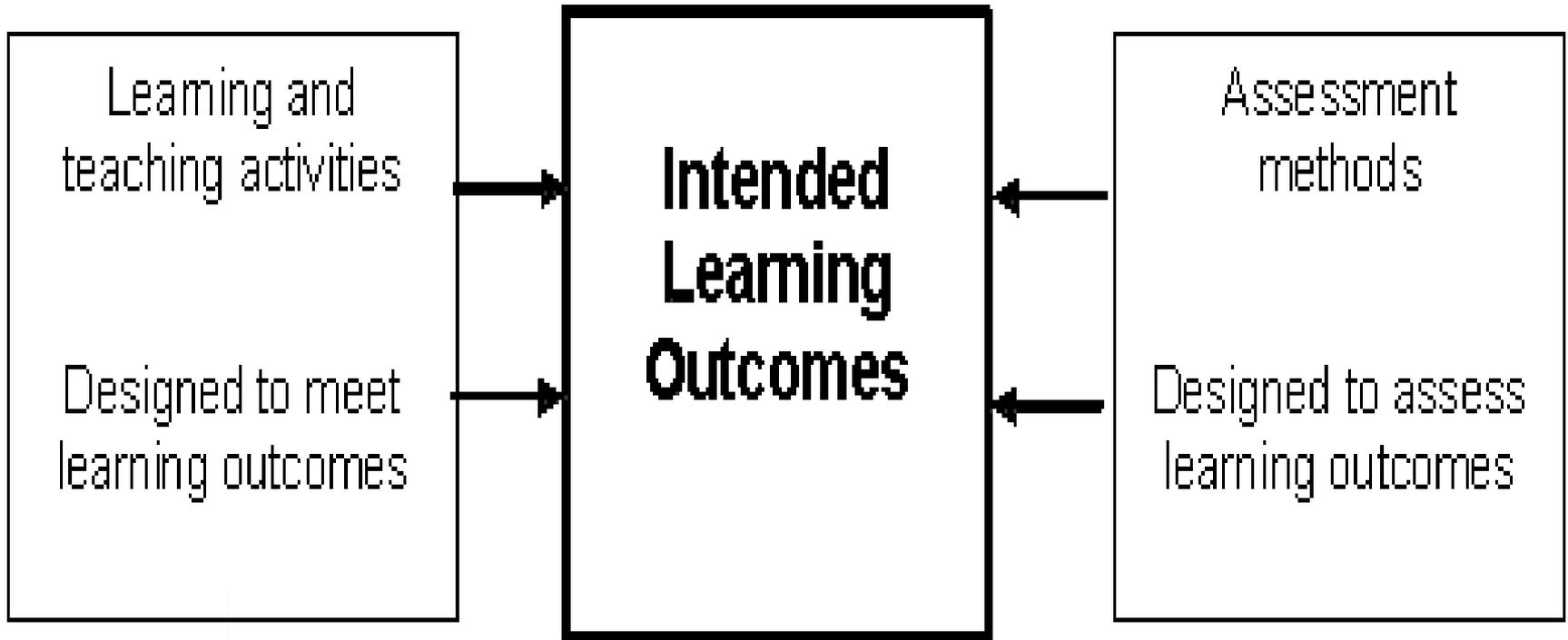
What are we trying to achieve when we teach?



Designing learning



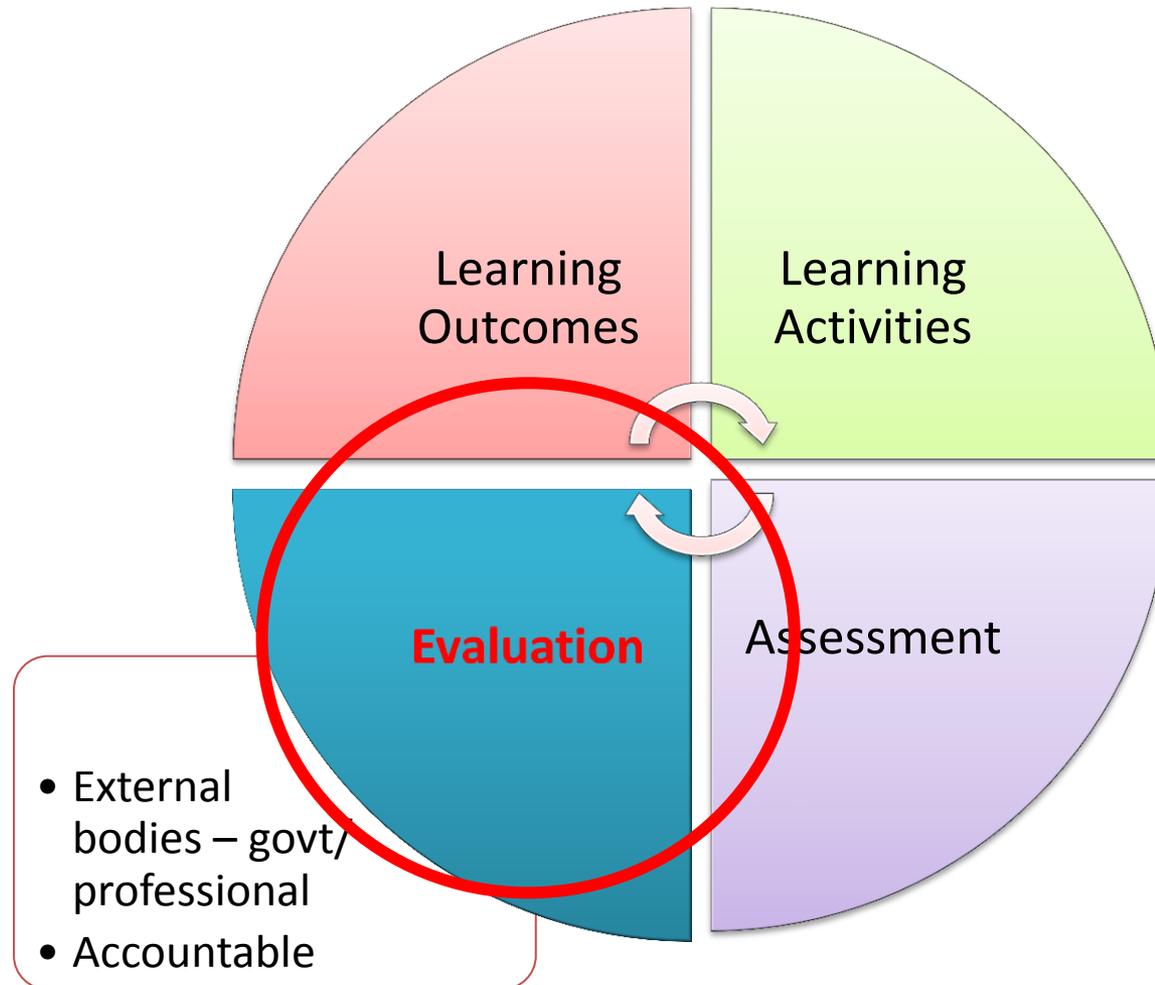
Constructive Alignment



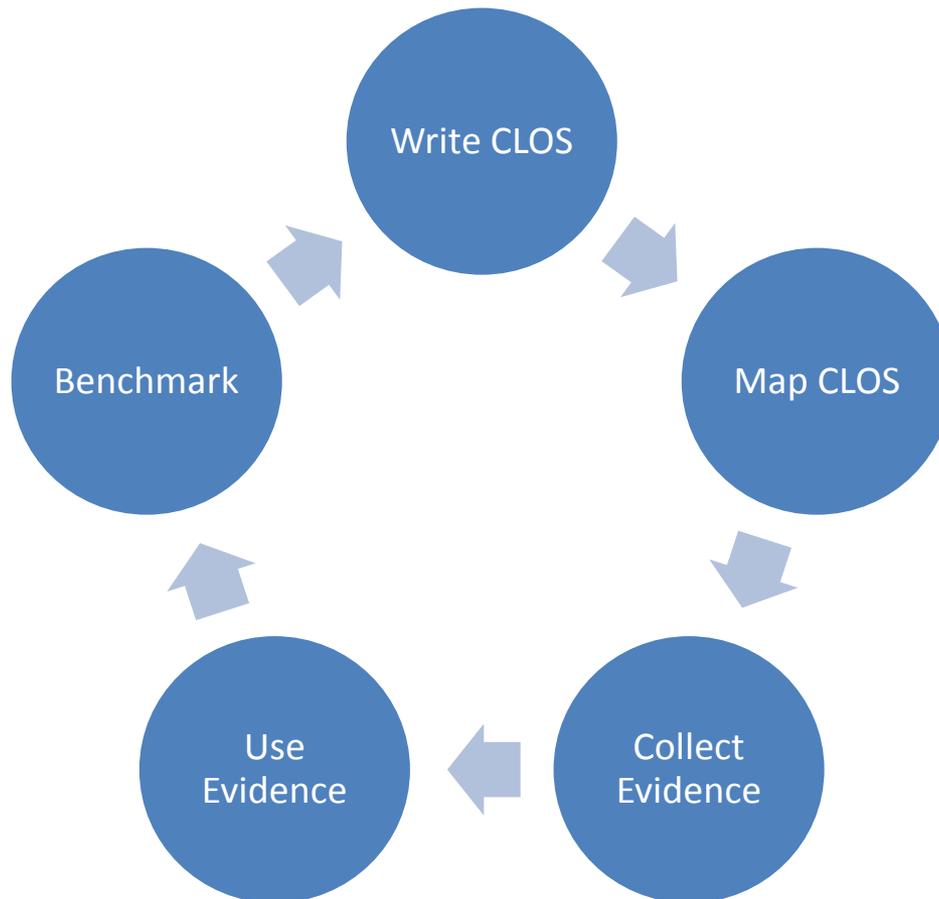
John Biggs, 2000



Designing learning



How do we assure learning?



Main Challenges



The main challenges identified were:

- **Staff Workload**
- **Staff Engagement**
- **Scale**
- **Need for Technical solutions**
- **Staff Confidence to teach/assess CLOs**



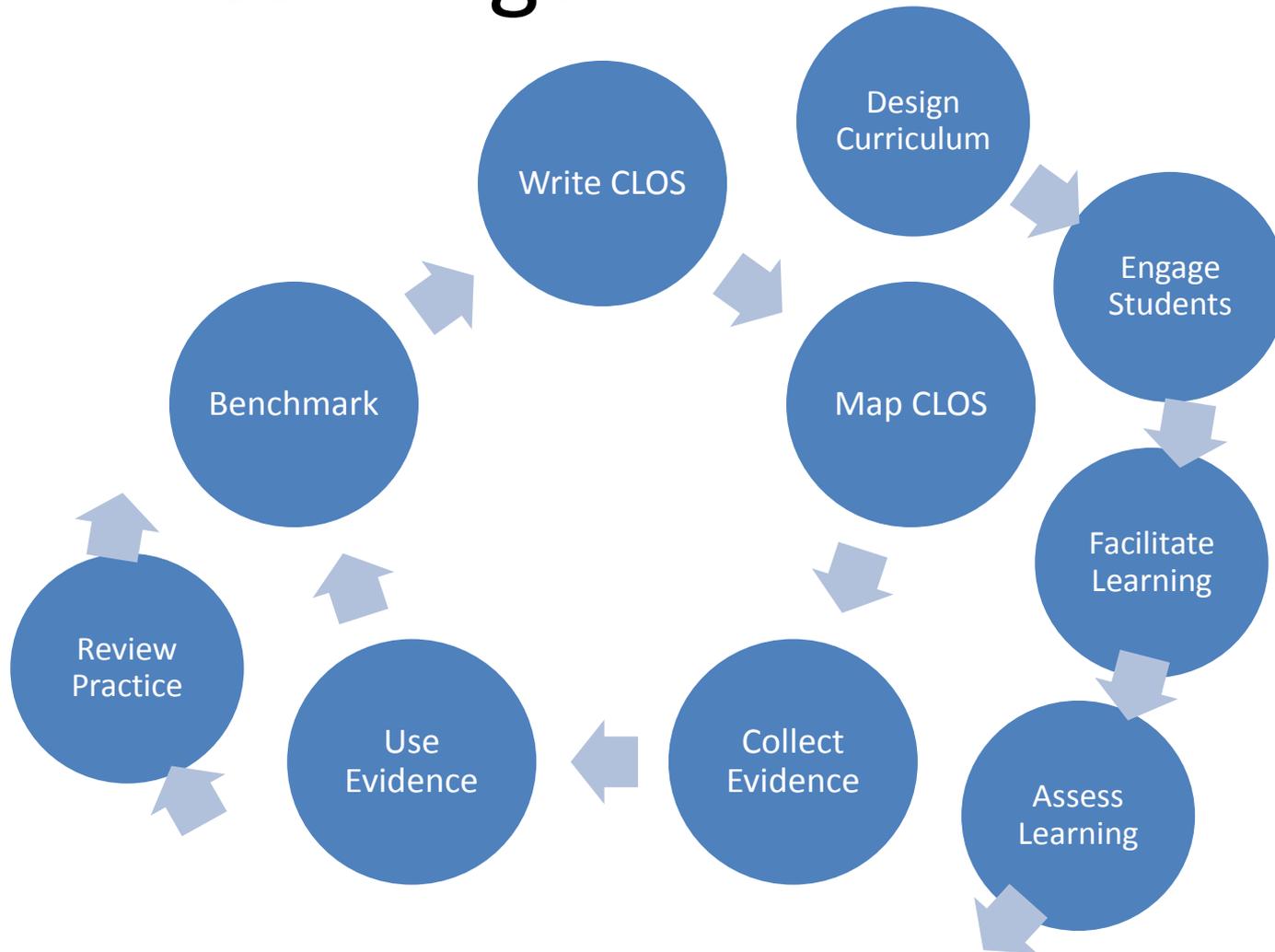
The magic words . . .



- Holistic
- Integrated
- Collaborative
- Maintainable



How do we assure learning?



Principles for Design

- **Holistic:**
 - whole of course approach;
 - setting expectations;
 - creating rubrics;
 - calibrating understanding;
 - engaging students (whole of course)



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- **Collaborative:**
 - vision
 - executive support
 - guiding team
 - training
 - reward and recognise
 - empowerment
 - communicate for buy-in



Cultural Change

- Made up of **the values, beliefs, underlying assumptions, attitudes, and behaviours shared by a group of people** (Heathfield, 2009).
- When an organisational culture is already established, people must unlearn the old values, assumptions, and behaviours before they can learn the new ones (Heathfield, 2009).
- Cultural change requires the input of others in decision-making (**participative leadership**). Participation and contributions helps group members feel more relevant and committed to the decision-making process, and to the changes that result (Tannenbaum & Schmitt, 1958).



Cultural Change

- Kotter (2002) suggests the following key strategies to manage cultural change in the workplace:
 - Get the vision right
 - Executive support
 - Build a guiding team
 - Training
 - Reward and Recognise
 - Empowerment
 - Communicate for buy-in



Getting the Vision Right: Changing Institutional Values

- AoL is not an additional requirement for external process but a “**basic educational principle**” that all educators should undertake in order to strive for continuous development
- Requires **integration** of assurance processes into the normal work of academics, with ongoing **sustainability** of this without constant agitation

“My goal would be that it just happened as part of everyone’s natural thing and it was no fuss, seamlessly across the school.”



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Executive Support: Strong senior management commitment and leadership demonstrating a constant and high level drive for staff engagement until AoL becomes an institutional norm

- Support of key individuals high up in the organisation, indicating **institutional support** for the approach
- At one Queensland University the continuous improvement agenda driven from the most senior leaders resulted in a rigorous annual unit reporting process, and evaluation every semester.
- At another Business School, engagement began through getting approval for the process at the highest levels of the university, the executives, the dean, the deputy dean, associate deans, and heads of discipline groups.



Building a Guiding Team: Developing leadership and champions among unit and program level staff, to share practices and promote the benefits that come from engaging in the process

- Using **participative leadership** was an important element of successfully integrating AoL in institutions.

“... needing a distributed leadership model to be able to make it to work, so it doesn't just rely on one person to be a champion. Let them sow a few seeds, and get a few other leaders around to help them spread it a bit further”.

- One example was an assurance of learning committee that drew on a representative from each of the disciplines involved. This served to not only have staff members responsible for interpreting the results, but to have key staff members enmeshed in the process.



Training - Providing professional development opportunities to discuss and resolve difficulties and tensions around AoL

- Participants emphasised the importance of setting up **workshops/professional development** as opposed to lectures, and setting up activities as **opportunities to develop skills as well as raise concerns**.
- At one school workshops were held **featuring staff that had implemented AoL** processes well within their programs/units; presenting the experience of someone who shared the perspective of staff was effective means of fostering support.
- **Key resources** created in order to improve staff engagement in AoL:
 - web based resources,
 - tools to support and streamline the AoL process,
 - development of generic rubrics for undergraduate and postgraduate learning goals,
 - inductions for new staff (including tutors and casual staff) and
 - sponsorship for staff to attend external AoL conferences.



Reward and Recognise - Demonstrating success and effectiveness by selling staff on the evidence that AoL makes a difference

- Selling staff on the usefulness and effectiveness of AoL was central to getting engagement, staff need to be able to directly see the benefits in order for them to be invested in the process.

“...what I’ll do now is I’ll take the behaviour changer and I’ll say let’s find someone doing this really well and then let’s promote it”.

- One fairly innovative measure was using program and unit coordinators who had done AoL well, and having them present at seminars and engage in mentoring and peer support then **funding them to present at conferences**. By recognising these staff, anxiety levels about the process were reduced amongst other academics.



Empowerment - Inclusive and making the process inclusive with academics collaborating in the development and implementation of the process

- One institution developed a mapping tool so that subject coordinators **collaborated** in not only the mapping of attributes across the program, but identifying and resolving issues around the distribution and gaps in the curriculum.
- At another School of Business, initial work on mapping was done through **workshops** where coordinators were using Post-it notes, they were asked to map out the distribution of the attributes across the degree.



Communicate for Buy-in

- Communications about AoL went hand in hand with professional development activities.
- **Acknowledging** the degree of apprehension around AoL processes was important in order to make it less daunting.
- Important to provide reference material and regular **updates** on the AoL process
- Academics were also canvassed for their **feedback** on the AoL process.



Resources

- Website:
 - <http://assuringlearning.com/>
 - [Leadership](#)



References

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