

8-9-2023

## Achieving Equitable Support for Adjunct Faculty Using Upside-Down Change

Katherine Ann Andrushenko  
Western University, kandrush@uwo.ca

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## Abstract

Lifelong learning equips members of society to face their greatest challenges, which is the moral purpose of higher education. Online continuing education (OCE) serves this purpose well. In recent years enrollments for OCE have outpaced enrollments for more traditional education and the number of adjunct faculty facilitating OCE continues to rise. However, these adjunct faculty do not enjoy the comfortable respectability afforded to faculty facilitating full-time education. The organizational culture in higher education institutions (HEIs) is bifurcated between continuing and full-time education, with OCE assumed to be a poor substitute for full-time education. Consequently, adjunct faculty receive inadequate and inequitable support compared to the support offered to their full-time counterparts. This organizational improvement plan problematizes higher education's organizational culture in relation to its failure to equitably support adjunct faculty. Upside-down change originating from the bottom of the hierarchy is adopted as a solution to the problem of practice, built upon Kotter's change framework and the Plan-Do-Check-Act/Adjust framework for continuous improvement. Leading change by distributing leadership among the adjunct faculty with an ethic of community will result in faculty support initiatives that enact strategic, socially just, and substantive change. The change initiatives will be communicated using knowledge mobilization; measured using specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals; and evaluated using mixed methodology. In the context of community, adjunct faculty will engage in socially constructing the envisioned future and generate momentum to change the organizational culture locally and across HEIs.

*Keywords:* online continuing education, adjunct faculty, organizational culture, distributed leadership, social construction

## Executive Summary

In this organizational improvement plan (OIP) I examine the inadequate provision of support for adjunct faculty members that deliver online continuing education (OCE) at ABC Polytechnic (a pseudonym), a public higher education institution (HEI) in southern Ontario. Through examination of a problem of practice (POP) I identify the main barrier to support as the organizational culture at ABC Polytechnic that keeps online and continuing education at its periphery, which is especially isolating for adjunct faculty facilitating OCE. Rather than being valued by the organization, the adjunct faculty are treated as mere satellites and regarded as interlopers who are poor substitutes for romanticized in-class and full-time faculty (Ubell, 2016). I argue adjunct faculty deserve and desire better institutional support. I define my leadership-focused vision for change, then propose and develop a comprehensive plan to implement, communicate, monitor, and evaluate the change, which aims to achieve more equitable support.

In Chapter 1, I discuss the circumstances and challenges of my context. I present the POP from the position of a mid-level operational manager, affording me limited scope and agency. Yet, I can help socially construct a new reality. Applying my interpretive lens and cultural and political frames, I insist that organizational values can be changed over time (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Morgan, 2006). Such changes will not emerge in a vacuum, so I examine the political, economic, social, and technological challenges at the macrolevel, mesolevel, and microlevel. I also argue it is necessary to intentionally apply the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID) from the outset. Despite the contextual challenges, my vision, supported by the dean of CE, is to enact ethical change that draws the adjunct faculty in from the periphery.

Anticipating taking action to make the vision a reality, I explain my distributed and

ethical leadership approach and propose possible solutions to the POP in Chapter 2. Any change in shared values happens not in isolation, but through intentional interactions among community members (Lu et al., 2011; Myers et al., 2012). I will be distributing leadership and encouraging wide and substantive participation (Woods, 2004) among the community members to empower them and drive ethical change (Beckmann, 2017; Capper, 2019; Jones & Harvey, 2017). I contend that the interplay of community members' varying strengths and experiences, combined with shared responsibility and power to make decisions, will allow novel change initiatives to emerge (Holcombe & Kezar, 2017; Senge et al., 1994; Spillane, 2005; Stephenson, 2018). As the members encounter one another, I expect them to engage in sensemaking (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Maitlis, 2005). I argue it is necessary for me to complement this with sensegiving, framing the vision, and providing leadership to the community (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021; Smerek, 2011). As leader, I must also fulfill my duty to address social justice (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022) by integrating the ethic of community (Furman, 2004). To improve the likelihood of successful change, I modify Kotter's (2014) change framework to allow for strategic co-learning with the implementation of the Plan-Do-Check-Act/Adjust framework (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015). I also assess the organization's change readiness (Cawsey et al., 2016; Napier et al., 2017) before presenting and evaluating three possible solutions. I do not consider the status quo as a possible solution because the present state of support for adjunct faculty is inequitable and inadequate. The first solution I consider is forming a change task force joined by unit representatives from within ABC Polytechnic. As the second solution I explore outsourcing an external consultant to guide change. Finally, the third solution I review is piloting upside-down change (Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021), which is change originating from the bottom of the institutional hierarchy without the need to

secure buy-in from executive leaders in advance. Analyzing potential benefits vis-à-vis structural, political, and cultural considerations, I decide to pilot upside-down change because of its alignment with my context and potential for achieving cultural change (Myers et al., 2012).

In Chapter 3, I build my chosen solution into a thoughtful and thorough implementation, communications, monitoring, and evaluation plan for piloting upside-down change. The implementation plan follows Kotter's (2014) eight steps. In the communications plan I focus on effective internal communications (Men & Bowen, 2017; Theaker & Yaxley, 2017) and knowledge mobilization (Lavis et al., 2003). To monitor and evaluate, I present a mixed methods approach to collecting evidence (Creswell, 2015) using the pilot change phenomena as bounded case studies (Creswell et al., 2007; Halkias et al., 2022; Scholz & Tietje, 2002; Yin, 2018). Throughout every planned element, I give attention to ethical and EDID considerations, and dynamic conditions. The plan is necessarily flexible to be responsive to emergent issues. I anticipate continuous improvement through applying the PDCA cycle, which will prompt further action or adjustments to the plan (Pietrzak & Paliszkiewicz, 2015). I aim to maximize strategic co-leading and co-learning during my plan's execution, and in anticipation of next steps.

By piloting upside-down change, I will strive to achieve second-order change (Bartunek & Moch, 1987) that alters the organizational culture's perception of adjunct faculty, and hope to build momentum toward third-order change that reaches across the system of HEIs. I conclude this OIP by reflecting on the best-case scenario, wherein support for adjunct faculty will be equitable to that received by full-time faculty. If the pilot achieves this, or any positive increment of change along the continuum toward equitable support, then I will give credit to my OCE community and its adjunct faculty members' collaborative and substantive participation in socially constructing and co-creating the more equitable future we desire.

## **Dedication**

To MVT, GT, and ET, with eternal love.

To all my fellow scholar-practitioners, especially the class of 2023, congratulations!

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### **List of Acronyms**

CE	Continuing Education
EDID	Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IT	Information Technology
OCE	Online Continuing Education
OIP	Organizational Improvement Plan
PEST	Political, Economic, Social, and Technological
POP	Problem of Practice
QA	Quality Assurance
REB	Research Ethics Board
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
TAL	Teaching and Learning
TPCK	Technological, Pedagogical, Content, Knowledge

## Definitions

**Adjunct Faculty:** At ABC Polytechnic these are non-bargaining unit faculty members who are contractually employed as subject matter experts on a part-time basis only for the duration of their course assignment(s), while typically working primarily in their professional field.

**Continuing Education:** At ABC Polytechnic this is lifelong learning taken on a part-time basis by adult learners, leading toward degree-, diploma-, or certificate-level credentials, or job-related training, in areas of study including, but not limited to, business, health sciences, arts, and engineering.

**Online Continuing Education:** At ABC Polytechnic this is asynchronous learning made possible using learning management software to connect part-time learners with adjunct faculty, peer learners, and educational content over the internet to bridge the distances between them in place and time.

**Upside-down Change:** This is change originating from the bottom of the institutional hierarchy with an expectation that buy-in will emerge throughout upper levels of the hierarchy later, as the change is undertaken, rather than needing buy-in before any change can be initiated (Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021).

## Chapter 1: Problem Posing

Like at higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide, leaders of Ontario's HEIs are grappling with important governance challenges and their repercussions (Buckner et al., 2023; Harmsen & Tupper, 2017; Pizarro Milian et al., 2016; Shaibah, 2023). Leaders are simultaneously pressured to concentrate on the efficiency and effectiveness of decisions and comply with the demands of governments who wish to exercise their political power and force compliance with neoliberal ideological interests (Jarvis, 2014). Such pressures and interests are, in many ways, at odds with the moral purpose of higher education, which is to encourage inquiry, creativity, and intellectual curiosity in preparation for facing and creating the future (Busch, 2017; Elliott, 2015). Delors (2013) poignantly describes a treasure within each person that is deserving of every educational opportunity—beginning in early childhood and continuing for a lifetime—to thrive in work and life, which in turn helps people prepare to overcome local and global challenges.

Continuing education (CE) units contribute to achieving the moral purpose of higher education by serving the educational and vocational needs of adults (Mayo & Osborne, 2019). Yet leaders of HEIs persistently marginalize CE units and the faculty teaching within CE units (Etter et al., 2023; Stephenson, 2018). This is the case at ABC Polytechnic (a pseudonym for my organization), where approximately 150 adjunct faculty members are employed in the online continuing education (OCE) unit. These adjunct faculty members have expressed in an engagement survey and questionnaire that they feel isolated from, and unsupported by, the institution (ABC Polytechnic, 2020, 2021). Meanwhile ABC Polytechnic has strategic goals that include providing support to all faculty (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). However, because of underlying pessimism about OCE that pervades the organizational culture, my experience has

been that adjunct faculty facilitating OCE are undervalued and severely undersupported in contrast to the variety and number of supports afforded to full-time faculty. Thus, in the problem of practice (POP) I problematize organizational culture in higher education in relation to inequitably supporting adjunct faculty facilitating OCE.

### **Positionality and Lens Statement**

At ABC Polytechnic, CE is defined as lifelong learning taken on a part-time basis by adult learners. All the institution's CE offerings are centralized and delivered by staff and adjunct faculty who are exclusively responsible for CE, while full-time offerings are delivered by other staff and full-time faculty. Most CE offerings lead to degree-, diploma-, and certificate-level credentials. In almost every case, CE offerings are available in multiple modes, including in-person and online. OCE is a uniquely flexible mode of delivery within CE, so OCE is further distinguished as its own functional unit within CE and I am its manager. As OCE manager, I fulfill many responsibilities including overseeing day-to-day operations, completing strategic annual planning, developing academic programs, coordinating learning technology and software systems, supervising the unit's support staff, scheduling course offerings and faculty contracts, and managing faculty. All OCE faculty are adjunct faculty; they are non-bargaining unit faculty members who are contractually employed as subject matter experts on a part-time basis only for the duration of their course assignment(s), while typically working primarily in their professional field. For example, an adjunct professor of accounting would typically work full-time as an accountant. If adjunct faculty members are hired as full-time faculty, they are no longer eligible to work in OCE due to the conditions of a bargaining agreement in place at ABC Polytechnic. Going forward, the adjunct faculty I refer to in this OIP are limited to the adjunct faculty who serve in my OCE unit.

As a mid-level operational manager, my scope is limited to within my functional unit. However, within my scope I enjoy considerable autonomy. The dean of CE, to whom I report, has expressed their support for OCE while not getting involved with the operations of my unit. I proceed without supervision of my day-to-day activities. In my role, I select, train, develop, support, and discipline all adjunct faculty that facilitate OCE courses. Thus, my positional power extends authority over these adjunct faculty. My power does not extend outside OCE, so I do not have influence over the management of any non-OCE faculty, neither within CE nor ABC Polytechnic at large. Stemming from the siloed nature of OCE and my position managing it, I can attest to increasing levels of power inequity when I face non-OCE colleagues, who in fact make up the majority of the organizational structure.

In my role as OCE manager, my agency is limited. For example, because the duties I perform are not the same as those of other units, input that I may offer to colleagues from other units may not carry as much weight. Additionally, because OCE is held at the periphery, I am a less recognizable leader. For example, I do not get the privilege to sit at many decision-making tables, so I have not gained the visibility that would come with sitting at such tables. As a result of being less recognized, I hold less power and sway as a stakeholder in the organization. Acknowledging that my scope and agency are constrained, I am prepared to act from within these constraints (Bolman & Deal, 2017). With the support of the dean of CE, I plan to initiate and facilitate change that results in support for adjunct faculty in OCE, and I am determined to make the recipients of the change co-initiators and co-implementers. This is important to me because of my worldview and values.

As a leader in higher education with an interpretive worldview, I have a desire to distribute leadership so that the path forward emerges as a result of relationships built on trust



and collaboration rather than as a result of my individual striving, charisma, or character (Beckmann, 2017; Crawford, 2012; Jones et al., 2012). The dynamic flow of ideas and discussion is essential; I do not see merit in traditional leader-follower dualism (Gronn, 2000). This is because I agree with interpretive theorists that knowledge and reality are not objective, instead they are socially constructed in an ongoing manner, taking into account the historical and social contexts where meaning evolves (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983). Situated within this interpretive paradigm, my cultural perspective insists interactions and shared knowledge result in the development of shared values and meanings among people participating in a community (Manning, 2012; Morgan, 2006). By the process of sensemaking, members of an organizational community construct meaning from the ongoing stream of social interactions within their organization (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Maitlis, 2005; Smerek, 2011). During this stream of interactions, community members may also be the initiators or recipients of sensegiving, which is intentional effort to influence meaning through communication that frames and interprets interactions (Fiss & Zajac, 2006; Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021; Smerek, 2011). Sensegiving is an important communicative activity for me as a leader (J. T. Brown, 2021; Degn, 2015; Maitlis, 2005; Smerek, 2011).

I will engage in sensegiving because, while I intend to usher in the development of a new reality of improved support for adjunct faculty, it is of utmost importance that this change be community-driven and socially-just. To this end, I have two ethical leadership objectives. My first objective is to lead in ways that unite the best of theory and practice, as emphasized in the theory of critical practice leadership, which I describe next. My second objective is to encourage substantive participation by adjunct faculty who are women, Indigenous, and have racialized and

diverse identities. Their meaningful participation will help ensure the new reality is built upon principles of social justice, as captured in the theory of ethic of community.

### **Ethical Leadership Approaches**

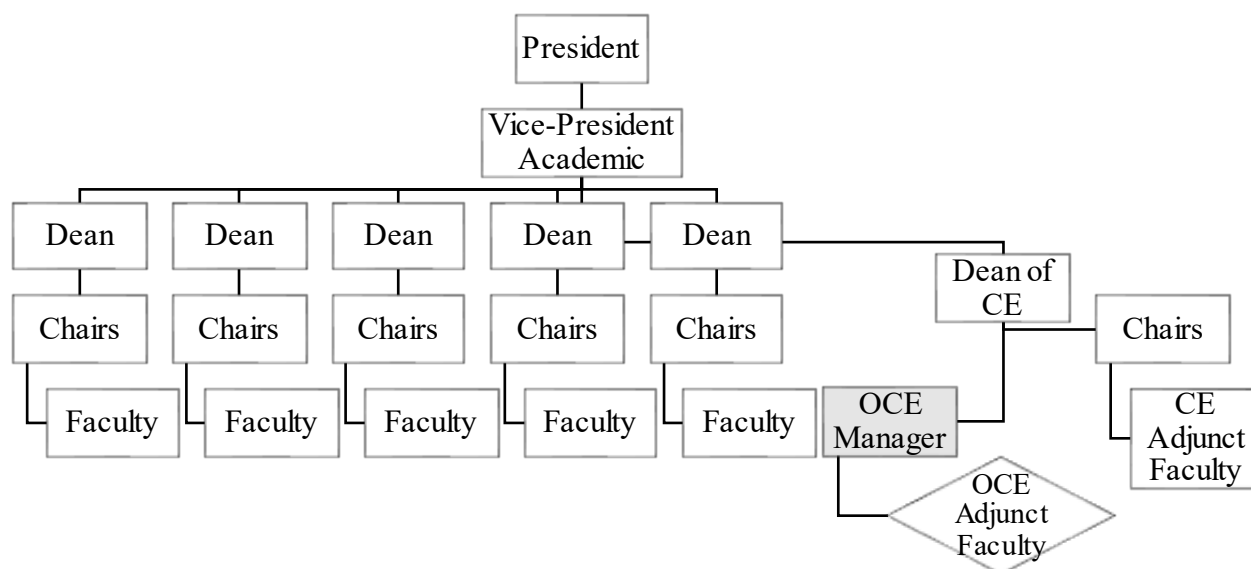
The critical practice leadership framework conceptualizes the leader as always researching, learning, and providing leadership of learning on an ethical basis, which means with attention given to the moral purpose of education (Elliott, 2015). As a critical practice leader actively engaged in research and learning, as exemplified by striving to earn a Doctor of Education degree, I am determined to be reflective and critical as I lead. Further, the ethic of community is inseparable from my leadership approach. Furman (2004) defines the ethic of community as “the moral responsibility to engage in communal processes as educators pursue the moral purposes of their work and address the ongoing challenges of daily life and work in schools” (p. 215). I see merit in engaging in these processes for valuing, inquiring, and working toward the common good, and expect that these processes shall promote feelings of belonging and trust (Furman, 1998). I hope that we will reap the benefits of ongoing, relationship-based communication, dialogue, and collaboration within the OCE community (Furman, 2004). Wide participation is important because in this way all community members can become change agents and problem solvers (Furman, 2004). I am especially aiming to include the voices of women; people with marginalized, racialized, and diverse identities; and Indigenous adjunct faculty members. Further, problem solving in pursuit of goals, especially moral goals like social justice, is understood by the ethic of community to be iterative and ongoing (Furman, 2004), which is also aligned with my belief in socially constructing reality over time. Together we can engage in improving the organization’s support for adjunct faculty gradually and ethically, collaborating among people in the OCE community.

## **Organizational Context**

ABC Polytechnic is a large, public HEI located in southern Ontario. Its Board of Governors is responsible for overseeing the HEI's management, including the appointment of its president, and its academic planning, finance, and governance committees, all regulated by the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002). There are multiple vice presidents reporting to the president, among them is the vice-president academic. As depicted in Figure 1, there are more than five deans reporting to the vice-president academic. All but one of the deans oversee a large academic faculty responsible for programs targeted at regular, full-time students in a designated field, such as science, business, or arts. The remaining dean oversees all CE offerings. The CE offerings span across all fields including science, business, and arts, but are centralized under the umbrella of CE because the programs are targeted at part-time students. To attract part-time students, CE courses are delivered on campus outside of business hours or online. While the OCE offerings again span across all fields, these courses are segmented into their own unit because of the unique online mode of delivery. I have managed this OCE unit for nearly a decade. Before my time, in the early 2000s, it was established that the core activity of this unit is online course delivery. As a result, the OCE unit did not experience any major disruption precipitated by the COVID19 pandemic and was able to continue almost business as usual. Therefore, the emergency pivot to online education experienced elsewhere in higher education is not addressed in this OIP.

### **Figure 1**

*Organizational Hierarchy of Academic Units*



*Note.* The shaded grey box in Figure 1 represents my position. The dean of CE is intentionally positioned away from other deans and the adjunct faculty facilitating OCE are intentionally positioned at the bottom of the hierarchy. The positioning is meant to emphasize the unequal footing of CE and especially OCE, which are held at the periphery of the institution, evidence of which I give in the PEST analyses in this chapter.

The OCE unit is a small, busy functional unit. My unit's four full-time support staff are dedicated to student-facing service and coordinating OCE, delivering more than 400 online course sections annually, facilitated by approximately 150 adjunct faculty. In 2020-21 there were more than 15,000 paid enrollments, roughly 9% more than there had been in 2019-20, because of a peak in online activity during the onset of the pandemic. In 2021-22 enrollments returned to a level representative of the 2% average year-over-year growth trend the unit has enjoyed for the previous decade. The enrollments represent adult learners earning degree-, diploma-, or certificate-level credentials, or completing job-related training, in areas of study ranging from

business to health sciences, arts, and engineering. The volume of enrollments makes ABC Polytechnic a leading provider of OCE in Ontario (OntarioLearn, 2023), indeed exceeding the Canadian national average of 12,000 and median of 5,000 enrollments (Etter et al., 2023). As a result, OCE activities provide 40% of the revenue that CE contributes to ABC Polytechnic. By proportion, this contribution outweighs investment back into the development of adjunct faculty, leaving them feeling undersupported. This is a symptom of wider issues and challenges. I provide a political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) analysis (Casañ et al., 2021) of the macrolevel and mesolevel challenges, which is summarized in Table 1. I will also provide a microlevel PEST analysis in the Framing the Problem of Practice section.

**Table 1**

*Macrolevel and Mesolevel PEST Analysis*

Analysis Level	Political Challenges	Economic Challenge	Social Challenge	Technological Challenge
Macrolevel	Demands of neoliberalism	Drive for revenue	Persisting inequities	Traditional views of pedagogy
Mesolevel	Provincial QA requirements, Vested political interests	Lack of investment into OCE	Discriminatory occurrences affecting faculty who are women, Indigenous, and have diverse identities	Expertise required to effectively teach online

***Political Context***

We live in an era of pervasive neoliberalism, characterized by the development of human capital for market-driven purposes. The positivist beliefs of the neoliberal economy have resulted

in the marketization, privatization, and deregulation of higher education (Busch, 2017). The pursuit of economic return on investment is ubiquitous in higher education (Austin & Jones, 2016), as is a dogged insistence upon collecting measurable data in support of the quest for so-called evidence-based policy making (Cairney, 2016). Within ABC Polytechnic the organization's executive leaders depend on data and quantitative evidence, which is common among HEIs that hope to predictably achieve economic growth (Donaldson, 2005). As a result, there is a noticeable prioritization of efficiency and compliance (Jarvis, 2014). Participating in program quality assurance (QA) reviews required by Ontario's provincial regulatory bodies is a powerful example of this. The QA reviews determine compliance with accountability models, upon which the institution is dependent to receive public funding (Austin & Jones, 2016; Hauptman, 2006). While neoliberalism purports to let the market rule, QA is a mechanism used by the provincial government to reassert its control and exercise its political power (Jarvis, 2014). The government's neoliberal ideological leanings lead to "policy prescriptions that valorize market rationality" (Jarvis, 2014, p. 164). Such top-down policy prescriptions download accountability responsibilities onto HEIs, so that institutions are forced to prove fitness for purpose of programs in attempting to meet these value-for-money expectations (Harvey & Newton, 2007). Measurable compliance is preferred over innovation, and submission to external agencies is required rather than investment in internal capacity. This de-incentivizes institutions from investing in anything that is difficult to measure, quantify, and prove (Deane, 2019). Meaningful and holistic professional development activities defy assessment via typical QA processes (Jones et al., 2017; McCune, 2021). So, while this sort of support for adjunct faculty is more likely to be effective in assuring the quality of the OCE we deliver, providing such support is not prioritized.

The decision not to prioritize support for adjunct faculty facilitating OCE is concomitant with the decision not to prioritize CE. Instead, full-time students and full-time faculty are prioritized in all decision-making, for everything from how student information system data is organized to how the registrar's office performs its duties. Even though it is experienced, this bias against CE, OCE, and adjunct faculty exists at a deep, unspoken level, making it difficult to investigate (Myers et al., 2012). This facet of organizational culture exists below the surface (Schein & Schein, 2016), as I describe in the Leadership Problem of Practice section. As suggested by the political frame (Morgan, 2006), there are powerful vested interests (Manning, 2012) that have held sway since the inception of the institution and that work to maintain the dominance of non-CE units. The marginalization felt by CE is corroborated by Stephenson's (2018) qualitative analysis of American universities and colleges, through which she found that "CE is considered an appendage or an entrepreneurial division of higher education institutions" (p.6). Another study found that CE is not considered a partner on equal footing with non-CE departments in fulfilling the mission of higher education (Downey et al., 2006). This is also the finding in the State of Continuing Education 2023 report, which shows that even as there is an expressed support for CE among the Canadian HEIs surveyed, the lived experience at 60% of them is that CE is not well integrated into the institution (Etter et al., 2023). The local reality at ABC Polytechnic is that CE is undersupported, with the least regard given to the OCE unit. For example, the dean of CE negotiates term after term for on-campus services to be open in the evenings and on weekends to serve CE faculty, which is a battle that leaves little-to-no energy to advocate further for virtual services that would reach adjunct faculty facilitating OCE. This inattention to the needs of adjunct faculty perpetuates their marginalization despite the substantial economic gain enjoyed by ABC Polytechnic thanks to their work.

### *Economic Context*

Excelling in the area of OCE represents a distinct, revenue-earning, competitive advantage, as distance education accounts for more than one-third of enrollments worldwide (Roberts, 2019). Distance education can be defined as education delivered using technology to overcome physical separation between teachers and learners in both time and place (Roberts, 2019; Seaman et al., 2018). In the United States, where the higher education landscape is similar to that of Canada, distance education enrollments increased year over year for 14 consecutive years, while overall enrollment declined (Seaman et al., 2018). Enrollments in distance education represented 31.6% of all students across the United States (Seaman et al., 2018). Online learning is the primary delivery mode for distance education in the United States and Canada (Johnson, 2019a; Seaman et al., 2018). In Canada, online learning has been widely implemented, making Canada a mature player in this field (Bates, 2018). Even before the onset of the COVID19 pandemic almost all Canadian universities and colleges offered online learning for credit, with many having done so for 15 or more years (Bates, 2018). The last national survey of post-secondary institutions across Canada prior to the pandemic already showed that, year over year, online course enrollments increased nearly 10% in every region of the country, with the largest gains in Ontario, at 14% (Johnson, 2019b). Even as a return to in-person learning became possible, the national survey performed in spring 2022 showed 59% of respondents expected to increase their online offerings over the next 24 months (Irhouma & Johnson, 2022). Despite this remarkable and sustained demand for online offerings, in 2019 only 29% of Canadian institutions reported that faculty training was required prior to teaching online (Johnson, 2019a) while in 2022 the figure dropped to just 21% requiring professional development before teaching online (Irhouma & Johnson, 2022). Tellingly, the findings also showed that 74% of respondents



from Canadian institutions found faculty fatigue and burnout to be their top challenge alongside a lack of effective instructional practices for teaching online and lack of digital literacy among faculty (Irhouma & Johnson, 2022). My interpretation of these statistics is that they illustrate a truth that we in OCE have known for a long time due to our lived experience: namely, HEIs do not effectively support faculty that facilitate online. At ABC Polytechnic, the inadequate provision of support for adjunct faculty members at is not a trivial matter considering our responsibility to strive for social justice and to value equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID).

### ***Social Context***

Institutional barriers and everyday discriminatory occurrences affect all aspects of higher education (Dua & Bhanji, 2017; F. Henry et al., 2017; Mugo & Puplampu, 2022). Gender inequity persists as masculinity politics tend to devalue the entire field of higher education in which women predominate as both teachers and learners (Abu-Laban, 2016; Leathwood & Read, 2009). Despite the number of female faculty increasing, proportionally there are far fewer women than men ascending to high-ranking positions in higher education (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2018; Valantine, 2020). Instead women are expected to perform more pastoral roles and their achievements are undervalued (Kloot, 2004; Priola, 2007). Even as women close the gender gap in achievements, their achievements are discounted (O'Connor et al., 2015; Valantine, 2020). The result can be a vicious cycle: the work these women do is undervalued, so they receive fewer opportunities to develop professionally, in turn they are less likely to advance to higher-ranking positions, so those of the dominant group (non-Indigenous, non-racialized men) further perpetuate the inequity (Crimmins, 2016; Dupree & Boykin, 2021). This has a disproportionate effect on faculty with racialized and diverse identities and Indigenous

women in academia (Campbell, 2021; Dupree & Boykin, 2021; Valentine, 2020). Racialized people, people with diverse identities, and Indigenous women in academia in Canada experience more unemployment and greater wage inequity than their white colleagues (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2018). For example, among racialized faculty of colleges, South Asian, West Asian, and Black instructors have the highest unemployment rates, while those racialized faculty who were employed in colleges earned 19% below average (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2018). Canadian institutions are also known to privilege settlers over Indigenous peoples due to prejudices arising from Canada's colonial past (Campbell, 2021; Pidgeon, 2016; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Indeed, it is disturbing to note that HEIs are prone to reproduce, rather than disrupt, systemic racism and white supremacy (F. Henry et al., 2017; Mugo & Puplampu, 2022). These problems of inequity are perceived at ABC Polytechnic too, though there is no disaggregated data available to me to quantify it.

The inequity persists in spite of the cultural artifacts (Schein & Schein, 2016) at ABC Polytechnic that would suggest otherwise. To use an example that is particular to adjunct faculty, the institution's strategic plan espouses intentions to offer development options for all employees (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). However, when offering professional development opportunities for faculty, many events are held on campus rather than online and are most often scheduled during business hours during which time adjunct faculty are likely to be working in their primary careers. If adjunct faculty are even invited to take part, the way these opportunities are planned excludes them from the outset. As a result, the few opportunities that may exist for adjunct faculty to receive development and support from the institution fail to account for the fact that the needs of adjunct faculty are complex (Betts, 2009; Gappa & Leslie, 1993), as I discuss in the

Framing the Problem of Practice section. The lack of support for adjunct faculty is a symptom of traditional views of pedagogy that persist at the macrolevel.

### ***Technological Context***

Traditional notions of pedagogy can result in misunderstandings of, as well as skeptical or pessimistic views of, online learning (Ubell, 2016, 2021). Ward and Kushner Benson (2010) argue that “quality online education will be realized only when traditional views of content and pedagogy are reconceptualized within new frameworks that include technology” (p. 6).

Traditionalists may mistakenly assume that classroom learning can effortlessly be transitioned online despite the difference in technology between online and in-person learning (Ahedo, 2009; Rovai, 2019). This is mistaken because it begins with the false premise that having been a student or having taught in a classroom will itself sufficiently equip one to facilitate online education (Archibald, 2017). Relying on this false premise, ABC Polytechnic may justify that adjunct faculty need no support or professional development to become proficient in facilitating OCE. However, we know that if faculty tend to teach only based on the way they were taught or have taught in a classroom (Betts, 2009), their attempt to do nothing more than to duplicate classroom-based teaching practices online will be ineffective (Robinson et al., 2017). Assumptions about the universality of one’s own educational experiences undermine understanding of what is required to develop and deliver effective online learning.

To combat such misunderstanding, Mishra and Koehler (2006) offer a conceptual framework, which is called Technological, Pedagogical, Content, Knowledge (TPCK). TPCK emphasizes the complex and dynamic relationship between technology, pedagogy, and content that is always contextually bound (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The context includes the pre-existing knowledge faculty bring but it emphasizes that the pre-existing knowledge is not

sufficient; new knowledge and experiences must be integrated (Ward & Kushner Benson, 2010). Reconceptualizing teaching online therefore requires thinking about what faculty know, and how that influences what they need to know, and finally how the necessary knowledge can be developed (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). To put this in practical terms, they may be subject matter experts, but need to learn the pedagogy of teaching adults online and may need to develop this knowledge through experiential learning in an immersive online training course. This might include how to establish online presence and learner-focused design of content and activities (Dreon, 2016; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006; Yuan & Kim, 2014). For example, Dreon's (2016) seven principles for effective faculty presence online:

- communicate frequently
- include collaborative activities
- encourage active learning through activities that centre authentic reflection, analysis, and synthesis
- provide regular, prompt feedback focused on learner development
- guide students on managing their time
- communicate high expectations
- allow and respect differences between learners

This example demonstrates the complexity of learning to teach online. Not many faculty appear to have the expertise or wherewithal to decipher effectively teaching online on their own (Oblinger & Hawkins, 2006). Indeed, faculty describe learning to effectively teach online as similar to learning a new language in that both types of learning require an expert teacher (Lu et al., 2011). Accordingly, ABC Polytechnic should support adjunct faculty members as they

reconceptualize teaching and learning outside the classroom, but the organization's culture is a barrier.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

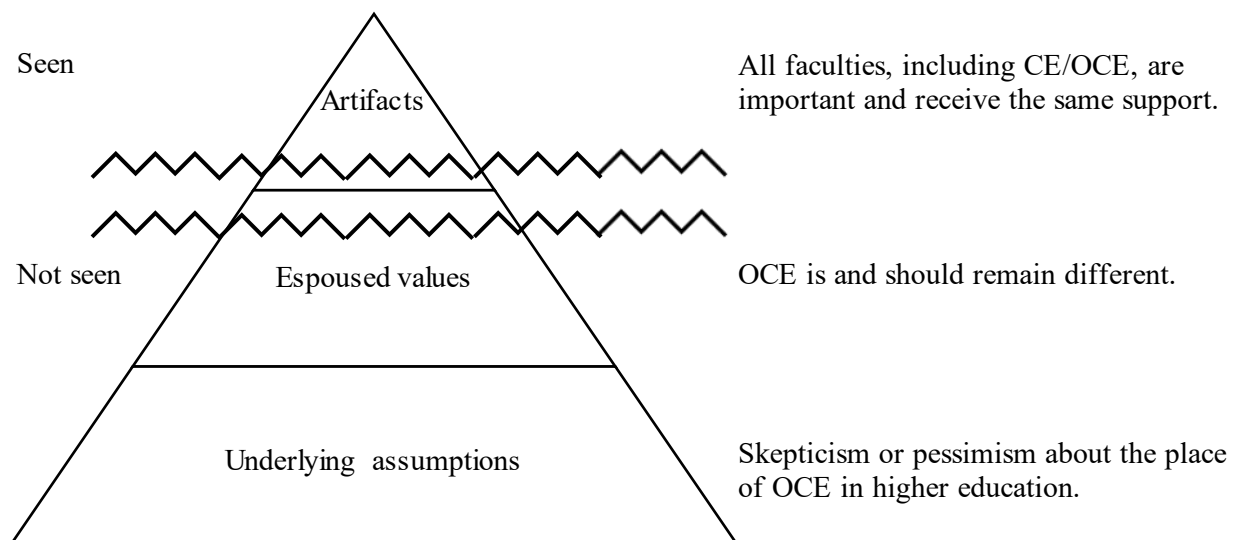
The POP is problematizing organizational culture in higher education in relation to the inequitable provision of institutional support for adjunct faculty members. The status quo provision of support is inequitable. For example, adjunct faculty do not get opportunities for meaningful and holistic professional development. There is a lack of investment in such opportunities, especially online or virtual opportunities that would meet the complex needs of diverse adjunct faculty. The organization's leaders tend to overlook the needs of adjunct faculty, which I attribute to the organizational culture that ranks the needs of full-time stakeholders first.

I understand my experience of the organizational culture at ABC Polytechnic using the model of an iceberg (Schein & Schein, 2016; Senge et al., 1994), of which the most significant portion is unseen below the water's surface. This iceberg model is a device to expose seen and unseen aspects of my organization's cultural regard for OCE, as depicted in Figure 2. The artifacts that appear above the waterline are visible and articulated in goals and strategies. At ABC Polytechnic, everyone can observe the strategic plan and its goals, which appear to be inclusive of all faculty, whether full-time or adjunct, and to treat all faculty departments the same (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). However, looking beneath the surface it is immediately clear that the OCE unit's activities and processes are managed separately from any other unit. The OCE unit is intentionally siloed from other faculty departments; attempts to participate or collaborate in institution-wide decision-making are met with little enthusiasm and OCE remains marginalized at the periphery of the organization. Meanwhile, deep under the water, the underlying assumptions are much subtler. The assumptions can be better understood when one considers the

inconsistencies between artifacts and espoused values. The perception or taken-for-granted belief that bogs down efforts toward seeking a more equitable position for OCE at ABC Polytechnic is that OCE is not only different, but less important, and the feeling toward it is one of skepticism or pessimism about its place in the institution and more generally in higher education.

## Figure 2

### *Problematizing Organizational Culture*



*Note.* Adapted from *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*, by P.M. Senge, A. Kleiner, C. Roberts, and B.J. Smith, 1994, Doubleday.

Within ABC Polytechnic, there is a bifurcated academic community, as has been observed in other HEIs (Christopher et al., 2022; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Full-time faculty are regarded with high esteem to the detriment of adjunct faculty across the higher education landscape

(Christopher et al., 2022; Ubell, 2016). The experience of adjunct faculty at ABC Polytechnic is similar to the experiences at other HEIs where adjunct faculty are less esteemed because the OCE they deliver suffers from misconceptions about its quality and fitness for purpose in higher education (Gaskell & Mills, 2014; Ubell, 2016; Ulmer et al., 2007). Full-time faculty experience the privilege of being included in a wide array of institutional activities, receiving recognition and opportunities to contribute or advance in educational roles in ways that adjunct faculty do not experience (Baik et al., 2018; T. Brown et al., 2010; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). It is my lived experience at ABC Polytechnic that faculty leading OCE courses are the least esteemed culturally and so the support afforded to them by ABC Polytechnic has so far been limited. Thankfully the dean of CE is supportive of OCE and agrees that there is a need for change. In sum, the status quo is not sufficiently supportive of adjunct faculty, but, with the dean of CE as a change champion, I see more equitable support as an achievable organizational state.

### **Framing the Problem of Practice**

In conversation with colleagues who are adjunct faculty, a shared sentiment is that they crave relief from their isolation and better support. They should be included and receive institutional support because the teaching they do underpins the excellent academic experiences of OCE students, which ABC Polytechnic promises all its learners, as noted in the institution's strategic plans (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). Indeed, these learners deserve quality education, so for their sake the adjunct faculty should be supported to be able to perform well. Further, the work of adjunct faculty members is important to society, because they are helping to achieve the purpose of higher education and develop the society of the future by serving non-fulltime learners (Barnett, 2021; Busch, 2017). The need for lifelong learning is remarkable given the significance of knowledge in our economy and the race to obtain credentials that will signal

qualification in the job market (Livingstone & Guile, 2012). In this same economy, there is a critical role played by on-the-job, informal learning that is discipline-based (Livingstone & Guile, 2012). Access to this type of learning is what the adjunct faculty themselves need. They need to be included in an academic community where they can reflect upon their existing knowledge of teaching and learning vis-à-vis new knowledge and experiences shared with others in the OCE community.

This kind of workplace learning takes place in community, not in isolation. Learning opportunities should be expansive, holistic, and relational in approach (Evans et al., 2007). In context, examples might include opportunities for collaboration, cooperation, mentoring, peer-to-peer sharing or networking, access to relevant training sessions and research on teaching and learning, and participation in ABC Polytechnic activities, committees, and decision-making processes (Fischer et al., 2020; van Lankveld et al., 2017). Given my distributed leadership approach each example aligns with my interpretive worldview, but I want the community of adjunct faculty themselves to guide such choices. In addition to anticipating the benefits of addressing the POP, changing organizational culture also means considering challenges. In Table 2 I provide an overview of the microlevel PEST analysis.

**Table 2**

*Microlevel PEST Analysis*

Political Challenge	Economic Challenge	Social Challenge	Technological Challenge
Competing interests and demands	Resource scarcity, Value placed on full-time faculty	Complex make-up of adjunct faculty members, Wide and substantive participation	E-leadership, building trust online



### ***Political Context***

The political frame describes organizations as being composed of multiple networks at the microlevel, each possessing varying and often competing interests (Morgan, 2006). The varying interests of each group will influence their perspective of any problem or proposal (Evans et al., 2007). This is true of ABC Polytechnic, which has more than five diverse academic faculties, each subject to the divergent demands of multiple stakeholders. My unit also faces competing demands. The president and vice-president academic of ABC Polytechnic have mandated two per cent growth in enrollments annually. More enrollments mean more work for staff. Meanwhile staff turnover is already high and OCE staff report feeling chronically overworked from serving thousands of students and 150 adjunct faculty. The goal of growth is at odds with a goal set by the dean to reduce turnover. The demands of executive leadership and decisions of my supervisor affect my unit. They are outside the scope of the POP, but they are directives that I must manage.

### ***Economic Context***

Economically speaking, resource scarcity is a common reality across the higher education landscape (Li & Zumeta, 2015). Indeed, the political frame (Morgan, 2006) highlights scarcity as one of the defining tensions of organizational life. The fact is organizations cannot continue to exist if there are inadequate resources. This is also true of ABC Polytechnic, though my OCE unit consistently generates surplus revenue and has done so for more than a decade. In spite of being a money-making unit, the money allotted for investment back into OCE, in parallel with the allotment of other finite resources such as personnel and technology, is subject to powerful competing interests (Manning, 2012). Interestingly, full-time faculty may see the success of OCE or the traction of adjunct faculty as a threat when students or the institution readily adopt the

mode of delivery, pulling them away from traditional face-to-face delivery (Gaskell & Mills, 2014). Regular, full-time faculty may thus fear being replaced by adjunct faculty or fear that OCE is encroaching on their discipline (Ubell, 2016). The full-time faculty are outside my scope and agency, but I must consider the high value placed upon them in the organization and be careful not to stoke their fears as I confront the POP. The social context also shapes my considerations for the POP.

### *Social Context*

One aspect of the microlevel social challenge is that I will need to manage the diverse needs and expectations of the adjunct faculty, who are a large group of about 150 people. They offer a mosaic of talent, but their assorted backgrounds shape the way they may conceptualize the work they do as adjunct faculty (Beaty, 2005; Boyer, 1990). Their individual professional backgrounds include business, marketing, accounting, nursing, nutrition, political science, computer science, cybersecurity, and more. They range in age and experience from early career to retired professionals. They possess varying levels of teaching expertise, from newly hired to seasoned adjunct faculty with 20 or more years of post-secondary teaching experience. Their teaching loads at ABC Polytechnic vary, with some courses having only five students while others have 45. Their participation in the course-building or program-planning stages varies, with some adjunct faculty having the benefit of developing curricula and defining program learning outcomes, while others must deliver content that is already a fait accompli. They have differing amounts of time available, and may evaluate the necessity, utility, and applicability of professional development or other engagement opportunities differently (Cooper, 2021). They may each be enticed by different incentives, such as additional compensation, recognition, rewards, or job security (Cooper, 2021; Dailey-Hebert et al., 2014). The list of variables could

be expanded further, but thankfully studies examining faculty identities have shown that it is most often personal values that give meaning and a sense of commitment to their work as educators (Barnett & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2017; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; McCune, 2021; van Lankveld et al., 2017). This reflects my experience with the adjunct faculty, who almost universally tell me that they continue being educators because they value engaging with learners even though they also long for more support. This provides a common ground upon which to build their identities as adjunct faculty and an academic community among them, which is not done in a social vacuum (van Lankveld et al., 2017).

There is a need for wide participation by the members of the academic community (Lester & Kezar, 2012) underpinned by the need to address issues of EDID. It is important to receive input from women faculty, faculty with racialized and diverse identities, and Indigenous faculty so that their thoughts, words, and symbols may emerge as significant (Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983). Hearing multiple perspectives about the current state and seeking consensus among the affected faculty is important (Capper, 2019). A lack of opportunity to engage in discussion results in the “oppression of voicelessness” that meanwhile privileges the already established academic voices (Crimmins, 2016, p. 53). The community will need to enable reflection, reflexivity, and sensemaking (McCune, 2021; Ryan & Carmichael, 2016). Sensemaking among the stakeholders is especially significant because it is what allows people to “craft, understand, and accept new conceptualizations of the organization and then to act in ways consistent with those new interpretations and perceptions” (Kezar & Eckel, 2002, p. 314). Faculty are expected to especially benefit from this opportunity to engage in sensemaking, given their autonomy (Kang et al., 2022) and their group identity (Stensaker, 2015). As a leader, I will complement this with sensegiving; framing and communicating the change (Fiss & Zajac, 2006)

using the authority and prerogative inherent to my role as manager. Sensemaking and sensegiving both will take place within the community of adjunct faculty.

### ***Technological Context***

Due to the microlevel technological context, the community building must be done in concert with the reality that the adjunct faculty members all work remotely. This can make it difficult to build a cohesive, trusting community. The term e-leadership arose to describe leadership conducted mainly through electronic channels, such as email, chat, web-conferencing, and telephone, which are necessarily used because the members of the leader's team are dispersed geographically and temporally (Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). Leaders of such teams must fulfill three roles: team liaison, team direction setter, and team operational coordinator (Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). Trust is foundational because only with trust will the members of the community have confidence that all members are working in concert to achieve the group's goals (Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). Faculty working remotely do not have the same socialization experiences with which to initiate relationships, nor to help them acclimatize (Roueche et al., 1996). Additionally, virtual communication media take on more formality in contrast with the spontaneity of face-to-face (Coppola et al., 2002; Yuan & Kim, 2014). This precipitates the need for frequent communications and interactions (Betts, 2009), and the sharing of successes to avoid them being overlooked or forgotten about as a result of their remote location (Malhotra et al., 2007; Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). I will account for this among the challenges that frame the POP.

### **Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice**

Addressing this POP is important because higher education decisions have far-reaching effects (Barnett & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2017; Buckner et al., 2023; Campbell, 2021; Mugo & Puplampu, 2022). These effects are not limited to the instrumental and economic impact; they

also include the wrestling leaders must do to incorporate values and ethics into their decision-making (Samier, 2002). However, befitting of the neoliberal, functionalist context, I have never encountered discussions of the purpose of higher education within my workplace. Broaching these topics among my colleagues and superiors is now important to me, as I position myself as a leader that can and should raise major questions (Eacott, 2013), and that can and should help colleagues continually learn (Elliott, 2015).

Three key ontological questions emerge from the POP that guide my inquiry. First, what might equitable support for adjunct faculty look like and who would be ready to plan and implement changes to achieve it? This question emerges from discontentment with the status quo igniting desire for change. Answering the question is important because it is necessary to establish a vision for change and assess the readiness of change agents. Engaging change agents is not for the sake of change itself, but to achieve more equitable support. The pursuit of equitable support leads to the second guiding question: How do we ensure the changes are ethical and underpinned by EDID values? As leaders in an HEI, we have a responsibility to explicitly address “historic, systemic, and structural oppression” (Capper, 2019, p. 61). Doing so will not happen naturally, in fact the opposite is true: there is an inherent risk of reproducing inequities and oppression that persist in higher education today (A. Henry, 2015; F. Henry et al., 2017; Lumby, 2013). To mitigate the risk, I emphasize the importance of answering this question well, which will in turn drive the outcomes. This leads to the third and ultimate guiding question: What may be the outcomes when the leadership approach is integrated with research and strategic learning, and energized by the moral purpose of education? This is precisely the question that excites me and has motivated me to examine the POP and prepare this OIP. In alignment with my interpretive worldview, the investigation of these phenomena is influenced by

my belief that co-leading and co-creating change will allow space to bring along my research and to experience co-learning. I look forward to actively learning while adapting to emerging conditions as iterative change unfolds, especially in an environment where we develop a shared understanding of the moral purpose of higher education and our responsibility to accomplish it.

In anticipation of facilitating fruitful and challenging conversations centered around these questions, I foresee exposing underlying assumptions that are embedded in the culture. As I introduce my research that marries theory and practice, we can adjust our perspectives, collaborate on new ways forward, and mitigate the deleterious consequences of education adrift from its moral purpose.

### **Leadership-Focused Vision for Change**

As a leader within ABC Polytechnic and especially within my unit, I have a vision for change, and the dean of CE is a champion for this vision. In the immediate future I envision co-creating more equitable support for adjunct faculty with the adjunct faculty as co-initiators of change. I also have a longer-term vision in which we positively influence the organizational culture at ABC Polytechnic and across the higher education system. As adjunct faculty become more integrated with the organization, the goal is for OCE faculty to stop being regarded as interlopers who are poor substitutes for romanticized full-time faculty (Ubell, 2016). As adjunct faculty are shown to participate in the same quality of academic life as full-time faculty, we hope this will mitigate pessimism about OCE and breed greater acceptance of adjunct faculty and OCE in the culture (Ulmer et al., 2007).

First, in the near-term vision the dean and I want the adjunct faculty to feel more supported by ABC Polytechnic by involving them in the change. I define these target feelings as: “a sense of appreciation, a sense of connectedness, a sense of competence, a sense of

commitment, and imagining a future career trajectory” (van Lankveld et al., 2017, p. 325). In contrast, in an employee engagement survey, only 29% of the adjunct faculty agreed that they received training they wanted to help them do their job properly (ABC Polytechnic, 2020). Furthermore, in the most recent questionnaire available, adjunct faculty members said they felt the lack of formalized training and the absence of sharing best practices between peers left them unprepared to effectively deliver online learning (ABC Polytechnic, 2021). To close this gap, we want to engage them in change and for it to be accessible, despite the adjunct faculty working remotely. I aim to co-create a sense of belonging where everyone shares experiences (Betts, 2009; Furman, 2004). As recipients of change, I will place an emphasis on collaboration, participation, interaction, and sensemaking among the adjunct faculty (Gronn, 2000; Holland, 2019; Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009; Ouzts, 2006). I want to guide and provide sensegiving while together we socially construct the change (Degn, 2015; Eliason & Holmes, 2010; Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021).

As the adjunct faculty receive more and better support relevant to their work, and as wins can be tracked and measured over time, hopefully the longer-term vision will take hold. With sharing these successes of adjunct faculty in OCE, the dean of CE and I hope to positively influence the organizational culture. This vision should be of value and interest to the wider organization because it complements ABC Polytechnic’s strategic goals to develop all faculty and to position itself as a leader in flexible education (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). ABC Polytechnic (2023) also cites its obligation to fulfill EDID goals, which are incorporated throughout the vision and its emphasis on social justice and ethical change. Further, prompted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report (Government of Canada, 2002), ABC Polytechnic has joined the Indigenous Educational Protocol, so the vision also aligns with this

overarching objective. With this vision, we want to enact meaningful change. Pidgeon (2016) powerfully states, “higher education has a responsibility to Indigenization, that is, to empower Indigenous self-determination, address decolonization, and reconcile systemic and societal inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians” (p. 77). This is why, as leaders within our HEI, this vision for change matters.

At its heart, the vision is to reshape the relationships between adjunct faculty members, the institution, and me. This is because relationships are the site of collaboration, the mechanism for social construction of new values and new realities, and where the desired sense of appreciation, connectedness, competence, and commitment can be developed and enhanced between collaborators (van Lankveld et al., 2017; Woods, 2004). Figure 3 depicts the vision of moving from the status quo to the desired future state.

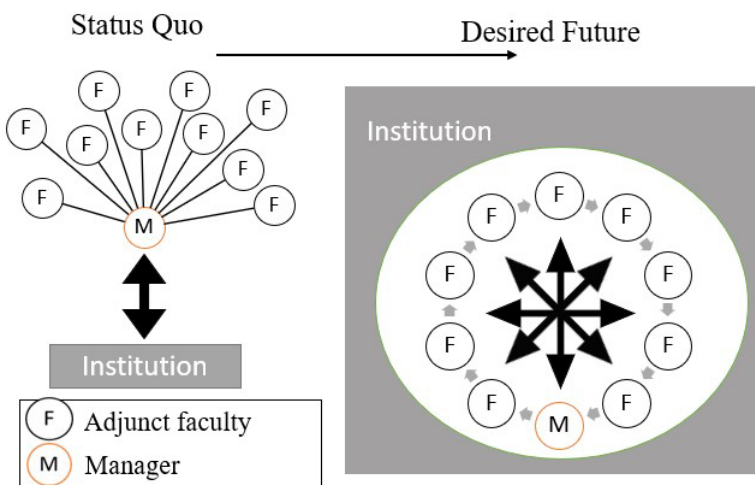
The dean and I aim for the adjunct faculty to feel part of ABC Polytechnic, rather than satellites of the institution. We want to bring them into the system, rather than have the persisting feeling of being outsiders (Kimmel & Fairchild, 2017; Reyes, 2022). These faculty are the primary stakeholders in the vision, the people for whom the change will represent the greatest improvement over the status quo, so we want a change that prioritizes their needs. I hope to distribute leadership among the adjunct faculty members, so that they may embrace the vision and set out the initiatives that will best serve them (Jones et al., 2012). We will collaborate in creating change, with adjunct faculty acting as local leaders among their peers in developing and launching the unfolding initiatives (Beckmann, 2017; Cordiner et al., 2018). I anticipate change diffusing and disseminating among the adjunct faculty through ongoing collaboration and supportive community (Borrego & Henderson, 2014; Cordiner et al., 2018; Furman, 2004; Woods, 2004). I will also actively lead, sharing the vision, creating the circumstances that are



conducive to producing the vision, and working to break down barriers as needed (Jollands et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2022; Kezar, 2018; Kotter, 2014).

**Figure 3**

*Vision for Change*



*Note.* In Figure 3 I use black arrows to represent the directional relationships between adjunct faculty members, me as the manager, and the institution.

## Chapter 1: Conclusion

In this chapter I have framed the POP, which problematizes ABC Polytechnic's organizational culture and inequitable support for adjunct faculty. The organizational context has shown macro-, meso-, and microlevel challenges. I posed questions about achieving equitable support for adjunct faculty and the impact it could have. Inspired by these guiding questions, I have described my leadership-focused vision. As I consider how to enact the vision, I need a plan for organizational change built upon my leadership approach and an appropriate framework for the change process, the detailed explanation of which I articulate in Chapter 2.

## **Chapter 2: Planning and Development of Organizational Change**

Recalling the moral purpose of higher education introduced in Chapter 1, which is to encourage inquiry, creativity, and intellectual curiosity in preparation for facing and creating the future (Busch, 2017; Elliott, 2015), the matter of organizational change in HEIs is no trivial pursuit. The POP examined the need for organizational change at ABC Polytechnic to bring about more equitable support for the HEI's adjunct faculty in the OCE unit. In Chapter 2 I will describe: my leadership approach to change, which combines distributed and ethical leadership; the Kotter (2014) enhanced eight-step leadership framework I chose to frame the change process; an assessment of ABC Polytechnic's organizational readiness for change; and three solutions I considered to address the POP, accompanied by the rationale for the solution I ultimately selected.

### **Leadership Approach to Change**

For me, leadership is critically reflecting on theory and then acting in practice (Elliott, 2015) to shape an equitable future (Capper, 2019; Shields, 2022). I engage in leadership when I am aligning practice with theory and research to help the people within my organization thrive and contribute their best toward achieving the organization's goals while shaping the institution and the higher education sector to become more socially just. What I have found, in my search for leadership approaches, is that my self-awareness is growing in a way that constantly prompts self-reflection on the development of my leadership (Hannah et al., 2008). I am persuaded of the need to exercise leadership that suits my context, while never forsaking my social justice values. My goal is to continuously return to literature to learn more, and to incorporate my learning into my work as a practitioner in a positive cycle of development (Hannah et al., 2008). This is exactly what a critical practice leader does, continuing to research and provide leadership of

learning in their context (Elliott, 2015). The critical practice leadership I want to display, as befitting of my context, melds distributed leadership and the ethic of community.

### **Distributed Leadership**

I embrace distributed leadership because I agree with the argument that effective leadership does not reside within any one person alone, nor does it come about as the result of any one individual's authority, actions, or character (Beckmann, 2017; Crawford, 2012; Gronn, 2002; Jones et al., 2017; Jones & Harvey, 2017). Leading involves developing and sharing knowledge and values, which are socially constructed over time through collaboration between members of a community (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Manning, 2012; Morgan, 2006). Knowledge and values are not apolitical; they should be explicitly driven by pursuit of equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization. In turn, a distributive leader must intentionally interact with their community to construct new knowledge or adjust values among its members for the purpose of a more socially just future (Shields, 2022). Distributed leadership, as I see it, is the process of setting up conditions (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008) to maximize the potential of a collaborative community whose members are empowered to bring about the desired future (Holcombe & Kezar, 2017).

I will lead within ABC Polytechnic by leveraging the power available to me as the OCE unit manager, with the support of the dean of CE. As a middle manager, I do not have formal, positional power to drive top-down change, so I will act as a distributive leader within my scope and agency, where agency is defined as “deliberately and intentionally exerting positive influence” (Hannah et al., 2008, p. 669). Using what vertical and horizontal influence the dean and I have, meaning within the institutional hierarchy and laterally across it, we will lay a groundwork of institutional support for change (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). We will voice the

tenets of this POP at ABC Polytechnic to lay the antecedent conditions that will help the planned change succeed. These conditions are necessary to enable distributed leadership in the form of concertive action (Gronn, 2002). Concertive action entails collaborative efforts toward a shared purpose within a structured, institutional team (Gronn, 2002). A team can be likened to a focused community, the sort of community where knowledge and values are examined, shaped, and reshaped over time. The members of this focused community will then share leadership over the vision and initiatives for the planned change (Holcombe & Kezar, 2017). The conditions among OCE adjunct faculty are ripe for this, as many have shared with me their desire to be part of an OCE community where they might enjoy giving and receiving peer support. Forming such a community allows for the strengths, expertise, experience, and talents of multiple people to interact, so together they may generate ideas pertaining to their shared context (Senge et al., 1994; Spillane, 2005). The sharing of responsibility and the reciprocal interdependency between members of the community in relation to their shared situation (Spillane, 2005) can lead to novel and iterative solutions for organizational problems (Harris et al., 2007). It can also lead to the development of adaptive skills that help overcome resistance to change (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). The community must be empowered to make decisions and be allocated sufficient resources by its vertical leader (Cox et al., 2003; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). As a leader setting out to establish such a focused community, which I shall call a team going forward, I will fulfill four key responsibilities: (a) forming the team, (b) managing boundaries, (c) providing as-needed leadership support, and (d) maintaining the shared leadership system (Cox et al., 2003).

### ***Forming the Team***

Forming the team means I become the “nucleus” of a focused group of members (Cox et al., 2003, p. 13). I reach out to the relevant parties internal or external to ABC Polytechnic, I

define the team's structure, I determine who might be on the team, and together we launch the team. The decisions I make and the expectations I set at this stage allow the concertive action team to emerge and hopefully perform well (Cox et al., 2003). Avolio (2011) convincingly describes the leader of a well-performing team:

It starts with an individual who is a full contributor and who is willing to sacrifice for the team's goals, mission, and vision because he or she identifies with the collective but will not and should not give up who he or she is as an individual. (p. 118)

This description characterizes my intentions to contribute to, and even sacrifice for, the team, while I maintain my social justice values.

### ***Managing the Boundaries***

Managing the boundaries means we actively buffer any negative pressure or friction between team members, and I advocate to ensure necessary institutional resources are allocated. Friction between team members may arise due to task, relational, or process-related conflicts, which should be moderated and resolved quickly and constructively (Greer et al., 2008; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). By buffering these negative pressures, either myself or with the efforts of my co-leaders, we help the team to flourish and accomplish its purpose (Cox et al., 2003).

### ***Providing as-needed Leadership Support***

Providing leadership support on an as-needed basis means I judiciously interact with the team. I am cautious when exercising power or influencing decisions, being careful only to do so when the success of the team is at stake. This is also important because at times I may have to exercise the power inherent to my role and make decisions (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). For example, I have the power to guide the team and move it forward in ways that are acceptable to ABC Polytechnic in light of my familiarity with the institution's strategic goals. By providing

as-needed support along a continuum I help to fill gaps that may arise, without disempowering the team by trampling over them (Cox et al., 2003).

### ***Maintaining the Shared Leadership System***

Maintaining the shared leadership system means I am actively encouraging the team. I make it clear that I value their participation in sharing leadership, I reinforce the expectations of the team through coaching, and I help the team reflect on and evaluate its performance (Cox et al., 2003). I also model the desired collaborative behaviours for the team, such as taking initiative, setting goals, solving problems, resolving conflicts, and engaging with a positive attitude (Cox et al., 2003). Together we reinforce and build the agency of the team's members individually and collectively (Hannah et al., 2008).

In sum, with a distributed leadership approach I want to see what my colleagues and I can do when we put our efforts together to build collective capacity among us to be co-initiators and co-implementers of change, to strive toward continuous improvement, and to be a highly effective team (Avolio, 2011; Hannah et al., 2008) in pursuit of a more equitable and socially just HEI (Shields, 2022).

### **Ethical Leadership**

There are also limitations of distributed leadership that must be overcome. The limitations must not be ignored because, at its heart, education is essentially a moral enterprise (Woods, 2004) placing upon educational leaders a duty to strive for social justice (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022). The limitations arise because distributed leadership originates from within the interpretive worldview, which, while not ignoring race, gender, class, and other intersecting identities, does not address resultant oppression (Capper, 2019). It is necessary, therefore, to explicitly address “historic, systemic, and structural oppression across these

differences” (Capper, 2019, p. 61). In the case of distributing leadership by forming a team of diverse members, there is inherent risk of reproducing inequities and oppression that persist in higher education today (A. Henry, 2015; F. Henry et al., 2017; Lumby, 2013). So, instead of layering well-meaning collaboration on top of already inequitable and oppressive structures, inclusion and empowerment must be values that are built into the expectations for the team from its inception (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022). One example of this is valuing intentional participation by community members with marginalized race and gender identities. Their participation must be substantive, not only nominal. To make it substantive, Woods (2004) argues they must have rights to participate and influence decision-making; the dialogue must be open; they must experience positive feelings of belonging and trust; and all participation must be ethical, meaning there is an overarching aspiration to truth (Woods, 2004). These elements are reflected in the ethic of community, which is inseparable from my leadership approach.

Furman (2004) defines an ethic of community as “the moral responsibility to engage in communal processes as educators pursue the moral purposes of their work and address the ongoing challenges of daily life and work in schools” (p. 215). Engaging in these processes for valuing, inquiring, and working toward the common good promotes feelings of belonging and trust (Furman, 1998). By committing to these processes as a leader, I want to realize the benefits of ongoing, relationship-based communication, dialogue, and collaboration (Furman, 2004) within the OCE unit. Wide participation, especially including the voices of women, people with diverse identities, and Indigenous adjunct faculty members, is important because in this way all community members can become change agents (Furman, 2004). So, while staff census data are not available to me, I am aware that the adjunct faculty my OCE unit employs are diverse. I will strive to make the conditions right for inclusive participation. Further, problem solving

together in pursuit of goals, especially moral goals like social justice, is understood by the ethic of community to be iterative and ongoing (Furman, 2004), which is aligned with my distributed leadership approach and with my chosen framework for leading the change process.

### **Framework for Leading the Change Process**

The POP is focused on how to achieve equitable support for adjunct faculty, who are disconnected from one another and isolated from ABC Polytechnic. Leading a change to improve support for adjunct faculty requires a thoughtful change process. I have chosen to use a modified version of Kotter's (2012, 2014) eight-step change framework, which is complemented by the Plan-Do-Check-Act/Adjust (PDCA) framework for strategic learning. I will explain the value of this change framework as it pertains to the context of the POP and explain how and why I have modified it.

### **Kotter's Change Framework with Iterations and PDCA Cycles**

Kotter's (2012, 2014) eight-step change framework is a widely used model across many types of organizations. It is known for its focus on bringing stakeholders along through the change process. The key appeal of this framework in the context of the POP is that it has become familiar to many people throughout the organization. This recognition stems from its successful and ongoing use for the implementation of other institutional changes at ABC Polytechnic. The framework is also recognized because its steps and their application are taught during professional workshops at ABC Polytechnic (2018). Indeed, I remember learning about Kotter and being introduced to the eight-step model during my manager training, where I also received accompanying worksheets and engaged in discussions about the potential application of the framework to anticipated changes. It stands to reason that Kotter's (2012, 2014) change framework is used at my institution because of its value in planning and implementing change. It



has eight highly structured and sequenced steps. Each step details the process of change and prescribes how to enact organizational change in an orderly manner to improve the likelihood of successful change (Cawsey et al., 2016). The enhanced eight-step model (Kotter, 2014) is closely aligned with my leadership approach, as described below.

***Step 1: Create a Sense of Urgency***

In this step I will articulate the urgent need to provide more equitable support for adjunct faculty vis-à-vis the strategic goals of ABC Polytechnic. In my communications I will emphasize that the opportunity to provide more support is at hand and worth seizing today. It is hoped that this appeal will help relevant stakeholders at ABC Polytechnic willingly coalesce around the opportunity with a readiness to embrace the change.

***Step 2: Build a Guiding Coalition***

For the second step, I will act as the nucleus of a team, as described in the Distributed Leadership section in this chapter. The team should be made up of members that agree about the urgency of the opportunity and are eager to construct a more equitable organization (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022). The team should be diverse and also united by their determination and authority to act in pursuit of the opportunity at hand (Kotter, 2014). The team's commitment to the change at hand will be guided by the expectations I set and model, including valuing equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization.

***Step 3: Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives***

In this step a strategic vision and initiatives must be agreed upon by the team and validated by me, since I will be the nucleus of the team and ensure its vision and initiatives help meet strategic objectives at ABC Polytechnic. The vision should clarify how the future will be more equitable than the present; the vision is both a critique and a promise (Gélinas-Proulx &

Shields, 2022). The vision should also be easy to communicate, desirable, flexible, feasible, and imaginable (Kotter, 2014). The corresponding initiatives must have embedded EDID values and describe how the vision will become a reality. All initiatives will be specific and coordinated actions that, when executed, will bring the vision to life.

#### ***Step 4: Enlist a Volunteer Coalition***

Change requires participation, so in this step the team's vision will be shared widely and colleagues will be invited to join the initiatives. Communicating the vision should entice wide participation; at least 15% participation is recommended to build momentum for change (Kotter, 2014). Once these colleagues become participants in the initiatives, the team will have to continue to engage with them and entice further participation.

#### ***Step 5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers***

As the guiding team, the participants, and I may come up against barriers, in this step I will need to mitigate or remove them (Kotter, 2014). Identifying barriers includes looking at reasons why any initiatives may have failed, examining political pressures, and exposing underlying assumptions. This mirrors my duty to manage the boundaries, as described in the Distributed Leadership section of this chapter. Doing so is extremely important because, as described in the Solutions section of Chapter 2, there are multiple possible solutions to address the POP, but only by addressing barriers as they are encountered can a proposed solution become a reality.

#### ***Step 6: Generate Short-term Wins***

As the change unfolds, this step requires that results be “collected, categorized, and communicated—early and often—to track progress and energize your volunteers to drive change” (Kotter, 2014, p. 25). I anticipate the initial results to bring about first-order,

incremental change. Measuring results as prescribed in this step is crucial to the evaluation of the change plan. As the positive results accumulate and are talked about, measured and evaluated, it builds a body of validated, quantifiable, and qualifiable data that should confirm the momentum toward higher-order change. I will need to articulate these wins in ways that continue to appeal to relevant stakeholders at ABC Polytechnic so that they make the change tangible for the institution.

### ***Step 7: Sustain Acceleration***

The early results must be leveraged to keep the change going in this step. Having communicated some short-term wins and gained credibility for the opportunity at hand, I will now have to sustain the energy in the team to keep working on the change. This means keeping the urgency up so that complacency does not set in (Kotter, 2014). It will be necessary to continue accumulating results that help achieve the vision and make it a reality in the institution.

### ***Step 8: Institute Change***

Here in the final step, having built a track record with successful initiatives, I will now have to help ensure that the new behaviours and values take hold. I will continue to articulate the success of the change and its benefits to the institution, so that equitable support for adjunct faculty becomes anchored as the new norm in the organization. Adjunct faculty will no longer be marginalized while OCE is held at the periphery, and instead they will be intentionally included and valued in the organization. In other words, a second-order change will take place. This change will be paradigmatic in that it alters fundamental values that govern ABC Polytechnic and modifies its bifurcated academic system (Bartunek & Moch, 1987; Tsoukas & Knudsen, 2005). Were this change to gain attention and have traction with similar successful initiatives in peer HEIs, then the higher education system could potentially experience a third-order change

(Bartunek & Moch, 1987; Tsoukas & Knudsen, 2005). A third-order change would generate more appreciation for adjunct faculty and positively affect the support they receive across the higher education system.

### **Modifications to the Change Framework**

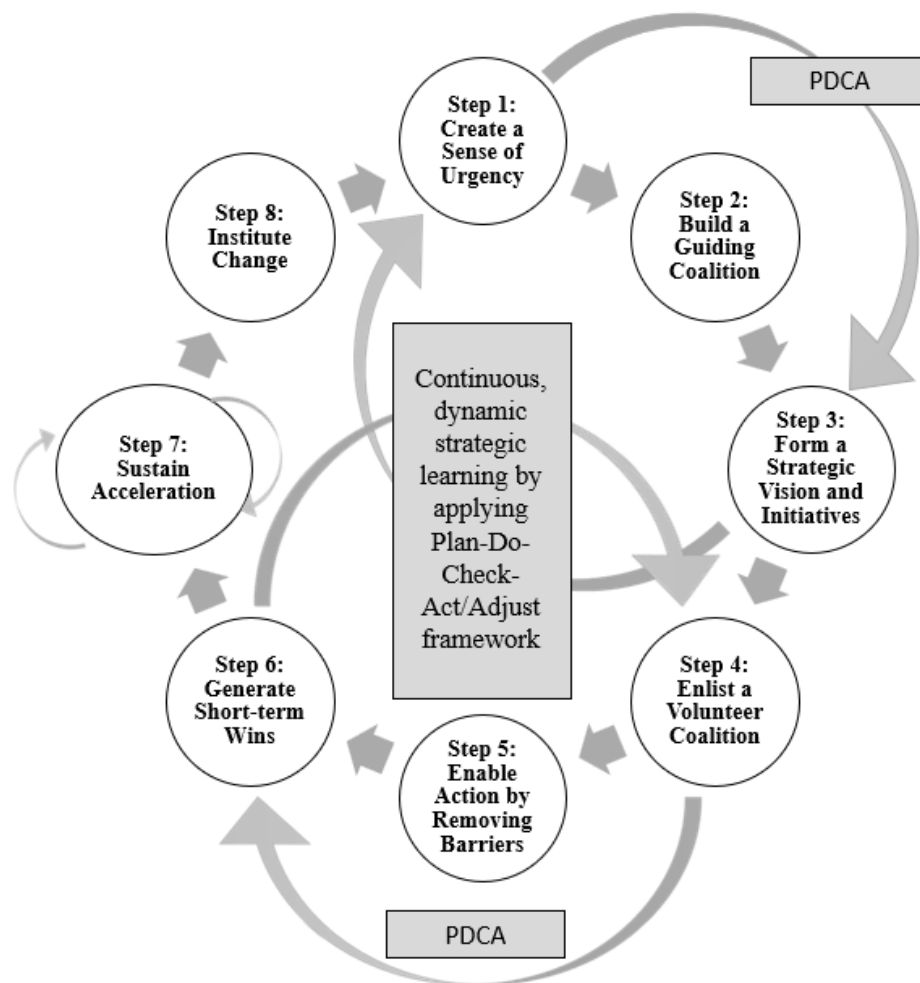
Kotter's (2014) enhanced eight-step framework prescribes very linear change, which is a limitation. To maximize the potential for emergent, significant, and lasting change, moving sequentially through these eight steps only once will not be enough (Kang et al., 2022). Since socially constructing new knowledge and allowing values to evolve takes collaboration over time (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983), I modified this change framework in two ways to align with my worldview and distributed and ethical leadership approaches. First, by allowing for iterative cycles to emerge that repeat steps in the process as needed. Second, by complementing it with the application of the Plan-Do-Check-Act/Adjust (PDCA) framework for strategic learning. The modified framework is depicted in Figure 4.

Iterative cycles are intended to allow for adjustments to the plan and its execution. For example, reiterating Steps 1 through 3 we can adjust the vision, participation, and initiatives as the urgency of supporting adjunct faculty moves along a continuum from inadequate to adequate to good or excellent, and so on. Gaining momentum for increased participation over iterative cycles of change is expected to generate greater success (Gronn, 2000). Moreover, I am planning for wide participation to promote equitable and socially just change (Lester & Kezar, 2012). It is important to receive input from diverse people so that their thoughts, words, and symbols may emerge as significant (Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983). Finally, the process of iterative change will enable reflection and sensemaking (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009). Sensemaking among the stakeholders is especially significant because it is what allows people to “craft,

understand, and accept new conceptualizations of the organization and then to act in ways consistent with those new interpretations and perceptions” (Kezar & Eckel, 2002, p. 314). As a change leader, I will complement this with sensegiving; framing and communicating the change (Fiss & Zajac, 2006; Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021). The combination of sensemaking and sensegiving in cyclical iterations is also intended to pave the way for strategic learning. I will apply the PDCA framework to organize and guide these iterations.

**Figure 4**

*Iterative Change Framework with PDCA Cycles*



*Note.* Adapted from *Accelerate: Building Strategic Agility for a Faster-Moving World*, by J. Kotter, 2014, Harvard Business Review Press.

The PDCA cycle is a helpful framework for strategic learning (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015). The four-phase cycle complements Kotter's (2014) framework because it begins with planning a vision and initiatives for bringing the vision to life (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015). Similar to Kotter's Steps 4 to 6, the second phase involves communicating the vision and initiatives so that the target audience will be moved to participate and do what it takes to begin bringing the vision to life (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015). With controlled implementation of the initiatives in these steps comes the necessity of checking their validity against the vision (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015) and increasingly enabling connections and collaboration. As detailed in the Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation section of Chapter 3, the findings of monitoring and evaluation done during the checking phase may prompt perpetuating or correcting the initiatives and/or confirming or adapting the vision, which should be followed by returning to phase one of the cycle to continue or improve the plan (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015) before continuing to Steps 7 and 8. Repeating or returning to steps of the change plan to act or adjust as needed helps maintain alignment with my distributed and ethical leadership approaches.

### **Organizational Change Readiness**

For organizational change to be successful, resistance to change must be addressed (Armenakis et al., 1993) and readiness must happen at the individual level and culturally on the organizational level (Weiner, 2009). Readiness is the cognitive precursor to behaviours that support change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Weiner, 2009). Assessing readiness is therefore a

proactive move to better facilitate successful change (Judge & Douglas, 2009). This is aligned with the first step of Kotter's (2014) eight-step change framework, which recognizes that urgency must coincide with readiness before undertaking any of the remaining steps.

Napier et al. (2017) offer a tool evaluating cultural, technical, process, and people pillars of readiness on a Likert-type scale. Acknowledging that any assessment of change readiness is subjective (Gelaidan et al., 2018), I reflected the four pillars of readiness at ABC Polytechnic using this evaluative tool. I applied a rating along the five-point scale for each of the four pillars, which I include in Table 3, followed by my reflections.

**Table 3**

*Assessment of Four Pillars of Change Readiness*

Pillar	Strongly Ready	Ready	Neutral	Resistant	Strongly Resistant
Cultural				Culturally resistant	
Technical		Technically ready			
Process			Process neutral		
People	Adjunct faculty are strongly ready			ABC Polytechnic organization is resistant	

*Note.* Adapted from “Preparing for transformational change: A framework for assessing organisational change readiness,” by G. S. Napier, D.J. Amborski and V. Pesek, 2017, *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 17(1–2), p.137. (<https://doi.org/10.1504/IJHRDM.2017.085265>)

### ***Cultural Pillar***

The cultural pillar examines the degree of readiness or resistance among the recipient agencies of change (Napier et al., 2017). ABC Polytechnic, at the organization-level, is culturally resistant to changing its support for adjunct faculty. Based on conversations and observations within the organization, I know that there is change fatigue due to significant organizational change initiatives that are unfolding. Additionally, like other large, bureaucratic institutions, there is a preference for maintaining the status quo. Moreover, the organization does not highly value OCE nor adjunct faculty, which makes the cultural conditions for change unfavourable (Weiner, 2009).

### ***Technical Pillar***

The technical pillar reviews the degree of complexity and the resources that are available to support change (Napier et al., 2017). In this case, being a large HEI allows ABC Polytechnic to tap into a wealth of resources, such as the revenue earned by enrollments in OCE. At the same time, being a large HEI also increases the degree of complexity for any change and the number of stakeholders competing for resources, so I evaluate this pillar as ready.

### ***Process Pillar***

The process pillar again considers the degree of complexity and the resources available to support the change, which can be organized through project managers or teams (Napier et al., 2017). For this pillar, I considered the material resources available to me to manage a change project. My budget has room to allow an investment in change, but I would first have to win approval from the dean of CE for any and every expenditure, so I evaluated this pillar as neutral.

### ***People Pillar***

Finally, the people pillar includes a review of competencies and awareness pertaining to the change (Napier et al., 2017). Within this pillar I evaluated ABC Polytechnic as resistant to



change because, while I know it is capable of successful change, the awareness pertaining to changes that support adjunct faculty is presently limited and on the whole, organizational commitment to supporting OCE is low, which can have a significant influence on employees throughout the organization (Gelaidan et al., 2018). On the other hand, adjunct faculty themselves are strongly ready for change. This is influenced by my own readiness and the open communication between me and the adjunct faculty members (Gelaidan et al., 2018; Niemeijer-Rens et al., 2022). In sum, by analyzing this pillar I expose the fact that change readiness is not homogenous (Weiner, 2009) between stakeholders at ABC Polytechnic.

To more closely examine the varying degrees of readiness between three key stakeholders, I used another tool for evaluating change readiness developed by Cawsey et al. (2016). For each stakeholder group I applied an evaluation score of either low, medium, or high to the elements of dissatisfaction with status quo, benefits of change, probability of success, and cost of change (Cawsey et al., 2016). Table 4 displays the scores I gave. I determined the scores by reflecting on the willingness to change and interpreting how the adjunct faculty, the executive leadership of ABC Polytechnic, and I will be affected by the proposed change.

**Table 4**

*Assessment of Stakeholders' Change Readiness*

Stakeholder	Perceived Dissatisfaction with Status Quo	Perceived Benefits of Change	Perceived Probability of Success	Cost of Change
Adjunct Faculty	High	High	Medium	Low
OCE Manager	High	High	Medium	Medium
Executive Leaders	Low	Low	Medium	High

*Note.* Adapted from *Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit*, (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), by T. F. Cawsey, G. Deszca, and C. Ingols, 2016, Sage Publications.

With this assessment I show that there is considerable readiness among the adjunct faculty and on my part, so for us the potential cost of embarking on change is not a deterrent. Because the adjunct faculty are experiencing dissatisfaction with the status quo and because they report this to me, we are the stakeholders most convinced that change should urgently take place and that it would be successful. Conversely, any cost of broad organizational change could be objectionable to the executive leaders of ABC Polytechnic at this time because they are already occupied with other significant change. However, this perception says more about ABC Polytechnic than it does about the true value of changing support for adjunct faculty. Currently ABC Polytechnic does not perceive high benefit to improving support for adjunct faculty because of its organizational culture, but this does not mean the benefits are negligible. Given the results of this stakeholder readiness assessment, broad organization-wide change is unlikely to be successful (Cawsey et al., 2016), but forming a vision for more equitable support of adjunct faculty and initiating changes with a coalition of the willing is still possible (Kotter, 2014; Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021). Moreover, I have a moral responsibility to try to make changes that will construct a more equitable future (Capper, 2019; Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022). The pursuit of EDID goals drives me to embrace the limited, but palpable, readiness for change. Even though making change may not be easy, with time new knowledge and adjusted values can be socially constructed for the purpose of a more socially just future (Shields, 2022). Although the conditions for organizational change may not be ripe, it is still worth working to create urgency and to maximize the change potential driven by a guiding coalition whose members are

empowered to bring about the desired future (Holcombe & Kezar, 2017). I will mitigate the risks of this approach with the implementation of the PDCA framework for continuous improvement, which will prompt strategic learning along the way (Pietrzak & Paliszkievicz, 2015), as I will describe further in Chapter 3.

Creating urgency by articulating the need and the opportunity is step one in my chosen change framework (Kotter, 2014). This OIP itself is effectively the detailed, carefully composed, thoughtfully researched, and critically analyzed script that articulates the urgency and the opportunity to change. In this document I am building the case for initiating change, paired with discussing the risks of ignoring or delaying this change, and a strategic learning framework for mitigating barriers that may arise as we embark on change. I am convinced this change is desirable now even if it begins on a small scale. So, armed with this scholarly and evidence-informed document, I will pursue the next step prescribed by the change framework. The next step entails building a coalition or team of willing members that want a chance to make this strategically important change now (Kotter, 2014). Thus, each of the three possible solutions I will present to address the POP considers a different configuration of members who should be approached to join this team.

### **Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice**

To address the POP, I propose action that will help achieve more equitable support for adjunct faculty, recognizing that there is no binary that limits support to all or none. There is a continuum starting from inadequate support and striving toward not only adequate, but excellent and equitable support. Equitable support would include the adjunct faculty's substantive participation in distributed leadership (Woods, 2004). The adjunct faculty would gain rights to influence decision-making around the types of opportunities afforded to them, such as

professional development, networking, and collaborative opportunities. All adjunct faculty would be welcome to contribute to open dialogue about their experiences and their ideas pertaining to improving their shared context (Spillane, 2005). Further, I intend that they would experience positive feelings, such as appreciation, connectedness, competence, belonging, and trust (Betts, 2009; Furman, 2004; Robinson et al., 2017; van Lankveld et al., 2017; Zaccaro & Bader, 2003). Importantly, any collaborative and participation opportunities must be purposefully be accessible and inclusive, especially of people who are traditionally underrepresented and subject to structural oppression in higher education (Crimmins, 2016; A. Henry, 2015; F. Henry et al., 2017; O'Connor et al., 2015; Pidgeon, 2016; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

In alignment with my distributed leadership approach, which emphasizes collaboration, and my chosen change framework, which emphasizes participation, I will examine three possible solutions. I do not consider the status quo as a possible solution because the current state of support for adjunct faculty at ABC Polytechnic is inadequate and inequitable. Each solution of the three solutions I consider will describe a different team composition and evaluate that team's potential to be co-initiators and co-implementers of the envisioned change, as I summarized in Appendix A.

### **Solution 1: Insource a Task Force**

The first solution under consideration is insourcing (McClure & Woolum, 2006; Ubell, 2021) a team composed of members from across key units in ABC Polytechnic. The solution proposed is a joint task force involving: the Teaching and Learning (TAL) unit, whose expertise is in faculty development; the Information Technology (IT) unit, whose expertise is in technology-enabled collaboration; willing adjunct faculty members; and me, as the nucleus, as described in the Distributed Leadership section of this chapter. The task force team would form a

vision and then initiatives intended to produce equitable support in a format that is accessible to adjunct faculty working remotely and customized to their needs and goals as adjunct faculty.

This solution would begin with forming a task force team whose members are drawn from TAL, IT, and adjunct faculty, plus me as the nucleus. The task force would work together to determine its vision and approach to effectively meet the needs of adjunct faculty. The approach would have to be highly customized because, while TAL and IT have experience supporting full-time and residential faculty, adjunct faculty are a distinct group, as described in the Framing the Problem of Practice section of Chapter 1.

### ***Structural and Cultural Considerations***

In light of the COVID19 pandemic that began in 2020, it is worth noting that the emergency virtual instruction that full-time and residential faculty were forced to deliver during the pandemic is not representative of the high-quality, thoughtful, and instructionally-sound design of OCE that my unit delivers. In fact, pandemic-era tactics, like posting of slide presentations or lecturing via Zoom, should not be taken as an example because OCE adjunct faculty do exceedingly more. The pandemic experience also exposed that the TAL and IT units lacked confidence to support anything other than traditional in-class education at such scale. One contributing factor is that at ABC Polytechnic, TAL and IT are siloed units whose work traditionally has very little overlap. This is unlike other HEIs who specialize in online education and consequently have combined Teaching, Learning, and Technology units, whose *raison d'être* is supporting education using online technologies (CHLOE 5). In contrast, when ABC Polytechnic's TAL and IT units were forced to jointly support remote faculty delivering online education they discovered doing so was far from easy. Based on recent discussions at ABC Polytechnic and my observations of these units, at this time neither TAL nor IT is convinced

supporting OCE is something they ought to do if it can be avoided. In fact, generating agreement among the TAL and IT units to be involved with OCE at all is itself an impediment to this solution. Essentially, they do not have confidence in virtual or technology-enabled pedagogy and are not presently convinced of its value or permanence.

Without shared beliefs, it is supposed that parties prefer to maintain the status quo (Weiner, 2009); in this case, the TAL and IT parties prefer OCE remains on the periphery of higher education. This contrasts with the desire of adjunct faculty to redress their marginalized position. As a result of their desire to change, the adjunct faculty would display a high commitment to the task force team and value its purpose. In comparison, even if they agreed to take part, the TAL and IT parties might have low commitment and insufficient buy-in (Kotter, 2014), and therefore view the task force as something to which they are obliged. These differences in commitment can create problems (Weiner, 2009) that prevent effective collaboration.

### ***Potential Benefits***

While acknowledging these structural and cultural barriers that would be challenging, this solution offers several potential benefits. Costs for the TAL and IT staff and time are already built into the institutional budget. Leveraging these resources does not require a new financial investment (McClure & Woolum, 2006), but does require planning and budgetary commitment in an upcoming fiscal year. If the outcome of the task force's recommendations requires further investment in enterprise applications or systems, such as a Learning Management System, then that cost would have to be accounted for in a future budget. Further, the formation of the task force aligns with two deliverables specified in the institutional strategic plan: that provisions should be made for all faculty to participate in an academic community; and that the institution

should maintain its position as a leader in CE and OCE (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). Moreover, using institutional units to achieve this solution will build capacity (Moloney & Oakley, 2010) within ABC Polytechnic, so even upon eventual dissolving of the task force there will be a residual benefit of ongoing competencies (Ubell, 2021). As the OCE unit continues to grow, there will be an internal capacity to scale-up support (Moloney & Oakley, 2010; Ubell, 2021). Further, I hope that this solution would have an impact on the culture at ABC Polytechnic, eroding the bifurcated academic community and making way for greater acceptance of OCE and its adjunct faculty.

### ***Political Considerations***

Despite the potential benefits, I do not foresee gaining support for the launch of such a task force given the present culture at ABC Polytechnic, as evidenced by the organizational readiness review in this chapter. While the dean of CE to whom I report is neutral, the wider organization is not ready because it does not see supporting adjunct faculty as essential (Moloney & Oakley, 2010) to its mission (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). Even if this task force was approved, it would take a long time to get a multi-unit team up and running since it will require multiple stakeholders to agree and sign on. I estimate the time between the task force forming then developing and launching change initiatives would take two or more years. I base this estimate on previous projects where OCE has waited several years and still not become a priority, and on the sector-wide resource scarcity (Li & Zumeta, 2015), where competition among plural interest groups (Morgan, 2006) throughout the HEI make elongated commitments of this type unlikely.

There are also tensions with other, ongoing changes at ABC Polytechnic, which is common among organizations with multiple strategic goals (Kodama, 2019; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). If these tensions became too heated, they could overwhelm the goal of change described

in this OIP and prevent either beginning or integrating the change (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009). In sum, I will not select this solution because structural, cultural, and political barriers would stifle change (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009).

### **Solution 2: Outsource a Guide**

Outsourcing a guide is the second solution under consideration. The proposed solution is to hire an external consultant or consultancy under a vendor contractual relationship (Hoffman, 2012; Ubell, 2021) to form a team with willing adjunct faculty members and with me as the nucleus. The role of the consultant will be to guide the team in producing a vision and initiatives for offering equitable support in a format that is accessible to adjunct faculty working remotely and customized to their needs and goals as adjunct faculty.

#### ***Potential Benefits***

External consultants bring the advantage of having experiences across a wide range of organizations, thereby helping them to bring horizontal expertise (Hoffman, 2012). That expertise is an asset because they bring a host of change management skills that are common across organizations (Reisman, 2004), which may also be suitable to deploy at ABC Polytechnic. For example, a consultant may have expertise in writing vision statements or in systematically performing a needs analysis to define initiatives that would support converting the vision into a reality. They may have experience bridging differences and connecting ideas for novel approaches (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009). They may also “bring the outside in” (Kotter, 2014, p. 118), which means communicating a big picture view of what is going on across the industry that otherwise may not be accounted for. As external observers, they may be astute in identifying the relevant risks or hazards, as well as the opportunity, that are the reality of the situation (Hoffman, 2012) but that may not be recognized by people that are much closer to the



issue. Further, a well-chosen consultant may bring expertise in the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization, which can ensure social justice is explicitly embedded in the change. In these ways a consultant may indeed educate our internal change agents in ways that otherwise would not happen (Armenakis et al., 1993).

### ***Structural, Political, and Cultural Considerations***

Availing of a consultant's expertise is not without drawbacks. There is a financial investment that must first be approved then budgeted for, as well as the significant time that must be invested to perform a vendor selection process (Hoffman, 2012). These investments are not politically appealing due to competing interests (Morgan, 2006) and resource scarcity (Li & Zumeta, 2015), especially given the lack of change readiness at the organization level. The matter of agreeing on the limits of the contractual agreement and obtaining sign-off by administrators at ABC Polytechnic may further compound the difficulty, not to mention that hiring a consultant has no direct correlation to any objective of the institutional strategic plan (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). Even were these barriers to be overcome, upon beginning consultations it may become apparent that any external guide does not know what they do not know. In the context of ABC Polytechnic, there are certain particularities and issues pertaining to CE, OCE, adjunct faculty, organizational culture, and so on, that are known only to the constituents of the community because they are socially constructed (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Lueddeke, 1999; Putnam, 1983). Because these are nuanced issues, many of which are kept behind the veil, so to speak, any external consultant will lack context-specific knowledge. This lack of knowledge may impede or sidetrack the progress of the team. Even if the team makes good progress with the guidance of the consultant, it may fail to build its own capacity because of dependency on the vendor (Moloney & Oakley, 2010). That is to say, hiring a consultant does

not translate to a sustainable, scalable, long-term solution (Moloney & Oakley, 2010; Ubell, 2021). To sum up these considerations, I will not select this solution because its potential benefits do not outweigh the associated structural, political, and cultural concerns.

### **Solution 3: Pilot Upside-down Change**

The third solution under consideration is piloting upside-down change to increase the provision of meaningful support for adjunct faculty, such as offering holistic professional development opportunities. An upside-down change is change originating from the bottom of the institutional hierarchy (Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021), which is where adjunct faculty find themselves at ABC Polytechnic, as I detailed in Chapter 1. Those at the bottom of the hierarchy can play a great role in piloting early change (Balogun & Johnson, 2004) and it has the advantage of not needing advance buy-in across the organization or from executive leaders. The early change initiators can proceed with a pilot, then allow buy-in for the change to emerge throughout the hierarchy later (Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021). This builds capacity for incremental cultural change to take place over time (Myers et al., 2012).

The solution proposed is to form a team composed of willing adjunct faculty members with me as the nucleus to pilot upside-down change. The adjunct faculty team, also known as the guiding coalition in Kotter's (2014) change framework, would coalesce around the vision for change, using distributed leadership practices, and then develop and launch pilot change initiatives that include, but are not limited to, holistic professional development opportunities. The pilot initiatives will not require advance buy-in from the upper levels of the organizational hierarchy. The pilot initiatives are intended to produce incrementally more equitable support, such as the launch of mentoring or conferences for adjunct faculty, the successes of which we can share widely and use to generate more readiness for wider organizational change.

### ***Potential Benefits***

In contrast with the mixed composition of the teams considered in Solutions 1 and 2, this team is composed only of willing adjunct faculty and me. The more concentrated team means they will have ample occasion to be active participants in the change process (Burrell & Morgan, 2005). This can build up their adaptive skills and make them a more vital part of the organization (Niemeyer-Rens et al., 2022). Also, the adjunct faculty all share a common experience of working in OCE and being members of an educational community (Furman, 2004). This shared experience lends them an emotional closeness, which can be further enhanced through frequent team interactions (Betts, 2009), and such emotional closeness is observed to be critical in the early innovation process (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). As peers, the adjunct faculty will enjoy trust (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009) and are more likely to feel safe engaging in a team composed exclusively of adjunct faculty than among unfamiliar parties. This engagement and the sharing of responsibility can lead to the building or deepening of collaborative relationships (Gronn, 2000) as well as informal and personal interactions that are fruitful in making sense of change.

### ***Structural, Political, and Cultural Considerations***

With this solution, the adjunct faculty would be invited to participate in piloting change, act to bring about the change, and make sense of the change as it is enacted. This is sensemaking which involves cycling between cognition and action (Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021). In upside-down change, even when a leader has an end-state in mind, the path to achieving it must be socially constructed (Maitlis, 2005). The process of socially negotiating and constructing this team's path and incorporating new values will form the basis of gradual, incremental change in the culture (Hatch & Yanow, 2003; Myers et al., 2012; Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021). I will complement this with sensegiving (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Maitlis, 2005); framing and

communicating the change (Fiss & Zajac, 2006) using the authority and prerogative inherent to my role. The mirrored processes of sensemaking and sensegiving can help create alignment with the change more widely throughout the organization (Niemeyer-Rens et al., 2022), which can happen even though political will is initially lacking more widely throughout the institution. Initiating the formation of this team and acting as its nucleus is entirely within my scope and agency. The dean to whom I report knows I have the will to do it and that the adjunct faculty members have demonstrated their readiness, and he agrees undertaking a pilot is reasonable. While it might be nice to have whole-hearted enthusiasm from him or buy-in from the organization's executive leaders before moving to the next step of the change framework, by embracing upside-down change as a pilot it is feasible to move ahead without it.

### **Rationale for Chosen Solution**

Having considered the potential barriers and benefits of each possible solution, I have chosen the possible solution which would initiate a team of adjunct faculty members to pilot upside-down change because it has been observed that putting the participation of faculty at the centre of an organizational change can help the vision take hold more widely (Jones & Harvey, 2017; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). The pilot will hold space for experimentation and generating new learning (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009), the best of which can then be integrated permanently (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). The pilot is expected to legitimate and consolidate the changes needed to support adjunct faculty and reduce uncertainty about what more should or may be done (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). This pilot makes sense given the existing structure, politics, and organizational culture of ABC Polytechnic and given its potential to become a scalable, long-term solution by building internal capacity (Moloney & Oakley, 2010) and competencies (Ubell, 2021). Ultimately this solution could

positively influence the organizational culture as adjunct faculty delivering OCE courses become more integrated with the organization and are shown to participate in the same quality of academic life as full-time faculty.

## **Chapter 2: Conclusion**

In this chapter I have described my distributed and ethical leadership approach to change, showing its alignment with the eight steps of the Kotter (2014) change framework. My assessment of organizational change readiness shows a resistance to change in the upper levels of the institutional hierarchy, while there is readiness and high commitment among the adjunct faculty. Their readiness underpins the selection of Solution 3, which pilots upside-down change. This entails forming a team of willing adjunct faculty and making them co-initiators and co-implementers in piloting change as befitting of my distributed leadership approach. This also allows for addressing issues of EDID with the substantive participation of women, Indigenous faculty, and faculty with diverse identities. I envision the diverse participants as a concentrated but vibrant team of adjunct faculty discussing and sensemaking their educational experiences, beliefs, and values, and together defining change initiatives for achieving more equitable support. Generating short-term wins will lead to sharing success stories. This should be of value and interest to the wider organization (Kang et al., 2022) because it complements ABC Polytechnic's strategic goals (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). This alignment potentially makes way for incremental institutional change to take hold. In Chapter 3, I will articulate the details of this change implementation plan as well as examine the potential impact of achieving more equitable support, including future considerations.

### **Chapter 3: Implementation, Communication, and Evaluation of Organizational Change**

In the POP I problematize organizational culture in relation to inadequate support for adjunct faculty. The solution I selected in Chapter 2 is forming a team to pilot incremental change that includes, but is not limited to, the provision of meaningful professional development activities for adjunct faculty. The change team will co-lead and co-learn from each activity or initiative, then brainstorm and execute subsequent initiatives, so that over time the learning accumulates and the incremental changes gain momentum. The pilot change team is composed of adjunct faculty, which I will co-lead in alignment with my distributed leadership approach. I will also bring the ethic of community (Furman, 2004) to the team to encourage substantive participation and empowerment, and to ensure the values of EDID are built into the expectations for the team from its inception (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022). These expectations include co-leading, co-planning, co-learning within the team. The vision for the team is to pilot a support program that we co-create, whose purpose is to generate upside-down organizational change that results in more equitable support for the institution's adjunct faculty in OCE and, ultimately, them being valued more throughout ABC Polytechnic. The support may come in the form of training sessions, peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges, mentoring, conferences, or other opportunities that the adjunct faculty define as meaningful and meeting their diverse needs. In Chapter 3 I discuss the plans for implementing, communicating, monitoring, and evaluating this pilot program as it unfolds. The implementation, communication, and monitoring and evaluation plans are each mapped to the eight steps in the Kotter (2014) change framework. The monitoring and evaluation plans are guided by applying knowledge mobilization (Lavis et al., 2003) and the PDCA framework for strategic learning (Pietrzak & Paliszkievicz, 2015). Taken together these form the backbone of the pilot program, the conclusions of which are hoped to point to next steps

along the continuum of co-achieving a more socially just future (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022) in the realm of higher education at ABC Polytechnic and beyond.

### **Change Implementation Plan**

At ABC Polytechnic the strategic plan includes two key institutional goals that pertain to the POP. The first key goal is to become a leader in the province of flexible education, and the second key goal is to offer development opportunities for all faculty (ABC Polytechnic, 2023). The first goal underpins the appeal of the change; since OCE epitomizes the delivery of flexible, lifelong learning then I contend that investing in the adjunct faculty who deliver OCE can help achieve the goal. The second goal seems to promise professional development for all faculty, inclusive of adjunct faculty. However, as revealed in Chapters 1 and 2, the reality of the organization's culture is that the academic community is bifurcated. Faculty development opportunities cater to full-time faculty and fail to be inclusive of the development needs of adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are overlooked and held at the periphery, rather than being included in the academic community of the institution. As a result, I hold tension within this OIP; the appeal of my change hinges on the institution's stated goals, but the strategic goals are artifacts that mask the underlying skepticism and pessimism about the place of OCE and its adjunct faculty in ABC Polytechnic. Nonetheless adjunct faculty deserve to be valued and supported in ways equitable to those enjoyed by full-time faculty.

With the support of the dean of CE, I will initiate incremental change within the scope of my OCE unit where I enjoy considerable autonomy and already engage in regular and in-depth interactions with all its adjunct faculty. Together with the change team, I will co-lead a one-year pilot program focused on generating upside-down change that can potentially generate momentum for achieving incremental changes to the organizational culture at ABC Polytechnic.

The flexibility throughout my plan is purposeful, so that there will be numerous opportunities to legitimate and consolidate the changes needed (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). The plan for the pilot program maps responsibilities to people and specific timelines across a one-year period, aligning these elements to each of the eight steps in the change framework. I provide an overview of the responsibilities and timelines in Table 5, followed by step-by-step details.

**Table 5**

*Overview of Responsibilities and Timelines for the Pilot Program*

Step	Responsibility	Timeline
1 & 2: Create a Sense of Urgency & Build a Guiding Coalition	I communicate and recruit; Adjunct faculty members self-nominate for change team	Weeks 1 to 5, or more if necessary for recruitment
3: Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives	I host meetings; Change team members participate; We validate	Weeks 6 to 18
4: Enlist a Volunteer Coalition	Change team jointly launches initiatives; Adjunct faculty take part	Weeks 19 to 22 for first initiative, Weeks 23 to 35 for 3-4 more initiatives
5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers	We communicate, coach, mediate, and mitigate barriers; Change team receives feedback and responds	Ongoing
6: Generate Short-term Wins	Change team monitors and evaluates reaction to the change initiatives	Weeks 36 to 42, or longer, as needed
7: Sustain Acceleration	Change team keeps up energy, Change team communicates	Weeks 42 to 48
8: Institute Change	Change team communicates all successful increments of change	Weeks 48 to 52



### **Steps 1 and 2: Create a Sense of Urgency and Build a Guiding Coalition**

The upside-down change will originate with me and willing adjunct faculty, who are at the bottom of the institutional hierarchy. Together willing adjunct faculty and I, as the nucleus described in Chapter 2, will form a change team.

I will solicit the participation of willing adjunct faculty by following my internal communications plan, as I describe in the Plan to Communicate section of this chapter. I will be responsible for informing and educating the adjunct faculty about the urgency of the change and for motivating and positioning the adjunct faculty to participate in the change team (Barrett, 2002; Clappitt, 2017). I will allocate five weeks from the commencement of the initial communications to the launch of the change team. During this time I plan that 8-10 adjunct faculty will self-nominate to join the change team, which is targeting 5% to 7% of the total to optimize success (Kotter, 2014). I anticipate this based on many conversations I have had with dozens of adjunct faculty members about their desire to become more involved with, and feel more connected to, their faculty peers and ABC Polytechnic. If fewer than expected adjunct faculty members come forward it may provide feedback on barriers that I need to mitigate. I may allocate up to four additional weeks to overcome challenges and to engage in more customized communications, or we may proceed with a smaller team if its members are eager. Since they will be self-nominating, we cannot foretell the composition of the team, but I plan to communicate effectively and intentionally to appeal to women, people with diverse and racialized identities, and Indigenous faculty, who I know from our professional interactions are among the adjunct faculty. Their input is desired so that their thoughts, words, and symbols may emerge as significant (Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983) as we share leadership over the vision (Holcombe & Kezar, 2017) and form initiatives for making the vision a reality.

### **Step 3: Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives**

I will launch the change team by giving its adjunct faculty members an orientation. During the orientation I will clearly communicate that the vision is to produce equitable support in a format that is accessible and customized to their needs and goals as adjunct faculty, and that the purpose of the change team is to form corresponding initiatives to be piloted, also known as a set of pilot activities, that will help achieve the vision. Additionally, I will orient them to my distributed leadership and ethic of community leadership approach, as well as share my expectations for the pilot program. In particular, I will empower them to make decisions about which initiatives to pursue and I will ensure sufficient resources are allocated (Cox et al., 2003; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018) by budgeting for them within my unit's annual budget. I expect their varied strengths, expertise, experience, and talents will help the team generate ideas pertaining to their shared context (Spillane, 2005). However, I will also hold boundaries that insist all initiatives can be operationalized using the resources to which we have access and in a reasonable time (Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015). By providing support along a continuum I will help to fill gaps that may arise, without disempowering the team by trampling over them (Cox et al., 2003). Within these boundaries the team may suggest engaging their peers in any number of support initiatives, such as, but not limited to, online training, on-campus conferences, a newsletter, a wiki, a community of practice, a blog, a recorded video series, or a mentoring program. There are many possible initiatives that may fulfill the vision, but I leave it to the change team to determine which actions or activities they want to undertake with my support.

As the change team takes action, I will be its nucleus, creating the conditions to allow the change team to perform concertive action well (Cox et al., 2003), as I defined in Chapter 2. Over a period of 12 weeks, we will host a series of participative hybrid meetings scheduled to suit

adjunct faculty in recognition of their unique needs, during which the change team will consider and decide upon the pilot program's initiatives. This participation by the adjunct faculty themselves is a prerequisite of successful change (Burrell & Morgan, 2005). In alignment with my interpretive worldview, their participation will illuminate their existing knowledge and values, and also allow new knowledge and shared values to be socially constructed over time through collaboration (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Manning, 2012; Morgan, 2006). Their participation will also result in sensemaking among them, which I will complement with sensegiving, both defined in Chapter 2. I will take special care to validate the initiatives. I will validate that they explicitly pursue EDID for the purpose of bringing about a more socially just future (Shields, 2022). I will ensure they are also desirable, flexible, feasible, and imaginable (Kotter, 2014) given my scope and familiarity with ABC Polytechnic. Finally, we will validate that all initiatives are specific and coordinated actions that, when executed, will contribute to making the vision a reality.

#### **Step 4: Enlist a Volunteer Coalition**

Once the initiatives are validated, the change team and I will share responsibility for spreading news of the vision and initiatives widely among all adjunct faculty, as described in detail in the Communications section of this chapter. There will be a blast of communications over a period of four weeks that precedes the launch of the earliest initiative. The communication will aim to entice wide participation by inviting all 150 adjunct faculty to join in the initial activity. I target having all the change team members plus 23 to 25 additional adjunct faculty take part in the first initiative, which is a target of 15% to 20% participation, about which further details are given in the Monitoring and Evaluation section of this chapter. Fifteen per cent is the minimum recommended to build momentum for change (Kotter, 2014). Once these participants

take part, we will maintain communications so that they continue to be engaged with subsequent initiatives. Three to four more initiatives will continue to roll out with a goal of one per month over a period of 12 weeks, with the same or greater levels of participation for each. We will also work together to entice further participation by building in feedback surveys about each initiative and opportunities for follow-up discussions among adjunct faculty, as described in the Communications and the Monitoring and Evaluation sections in this chapter.

### **Step 5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers**

As the launch and subsequent initiatives are executed, we may face barriers to gaining participation or keeping the change team functioning effectively. To mitigate such barriers, we will continue to communicate to all adjunct faculty, inclusive of women, Indigenous faculty, and faculty with diverse identities, that the change initiatives underway are for the purpose of supporting them. As they engage in the initiatives, then we can plan more or different activities based on their feedback as described in the Monitoring and Evaluation section of this chapter. If we do not meet our engagement targets or receive satisfied feedback, we can change course and plan other initiatives as we strive toward continuous improvement. Responsively planning iterative change will require the change team to be a highly effective team (Avolio, 2011; Hannah et al., 2008). As with any team, we will likely experience some friction, whether relational, task-related, or process-related conflicts, which should be moderated and resolved quickly and constructively (Greer et al., 2008; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). In my role I will respond to emergent issues and proactively coach team members. Together with the co-leaders, I will mediate any interpersonal or progress-related problems that arise, as well as model conflict resolution and a positive attitude to help the team to flourish and accomplish its purpose (Cox et al., 2003).

**Step 6: Generate Short-term Wins**

The change team and I will look at the results of feedback from the launch and subsequent initiatives. It is essential to monitor and evaluate the reaction to the pilot program to determine whether our initiatives are beginning to achieve the vision or may need to be adjusted (Gronn, 2000; Kang et al., 2022; Kotter, 2014). Details for tracking progress are explained in the Monitoring and Evaluation section of this chapter. It is planned that the initiatives will be well received so we can continue to accelerate toward higher-order change in Steps 7 and 8. If, at this point, the monitoring and evaluation do not show a positive reception, then we have full flexibility to return to an earlier step in the change process to allow for any concerns or new learning to be effectively addressed. The long-term goal of achieving equitable support will remain the vision, but more or different change initiatives may be needed in the short- and medium-terms to anchor this as a new norm. This may take a further 6 to 24 weeks, so the plan's timeline remains flexible to account for the real-time feedback that will be received.

**Step 7: Sustain Acceleration**

The change team and I will work cohesively to leverage and accelerate results from all successful change initiatives as assessed during monitoring and evaluation. I present a three-pronged acceleration strategy through which I hope to move the organization from first-order, incremental change toward second-order change.

First, I will work to keep the change team energized. There is a continued need to keep the urgency up so that complacency does not set in (Kotter, 2014). To this end, I will monitor the change team for possible fatigue from decision-making, a stalling of open dialogue, or fading of positive feelings from participation (Furman, 2004; Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009; Woods, 2004), and responsively redress these scenarios. Should any change team members wish to stop

participating there will be no obligation to continue alongside an openness to hearing about their reasons for withdrawing in case there are issues needing rectification and to ensure membership continues to generate positive feelings. Should other adjunct faculty express an interest in joining, I will bring their interest forward to the team for consideration and discussion about how often its membership may need to be renewed while prioritizing EDID values. I plan to adapt the team's membership composition as the needs of the individuals and the change team evolve (Hackman, 1990), which is why I decline to set in stone the terms of service now. Instead, I plan to wait until the adjunct faculty themselves have contributed to the conversation and we jointly agree on the terms. The substantial participation by adjunct faculty in distributed decision making remains the foundation of this plan as they are the key stakeholders in this change.

For the second prong of the acceleration strategy, the change team will continue to communicate regularly with the adjunct faculty outside the team to seek feedback and share all wins (Kotter, 2014). For example, if after an initiative we assess it is successful using monitoring and evaluation techniques, we will publicize this across appropriate channels as I describe in the Communications section of this chapter. This will help to gain credibility for the initiatives (Kang et al., 2022; Kotter, 2014) and widen their appeal so more adjunct faculty will be likely to partake in future initiatives. Even though we may not meet 100% participation in any single initiative, we will strive to serve all adjunct faculty across a variety of offerings because the vision is to achieve equitable support for all adjunct faculty. Reaching this goal, hopefully within 46 weeks of initiating the change process, will be cause for celebration.

The third and final prong of the acceleration strategy unfolds in Step 8, which I will describe next. Step 8 reaches across the institution to alter fundamental values that govern ABC Polytechnic's deeply held beliefs about adjunct faculty.

## **Step 8: Institute Change**

Throughout the first seven steps the vision will remain constant while holding space for experimentation and generating new learning (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009; Pietrzak & Paliszkiewicz, 2015). When we reach Step 8, the goal will be to communicate the new behaviours brought on by the piloted change initiatives to accelerate the change as new values are shared across ABC Polytechnic. Thus, the third prong of the acceleration strategy is to track, communicate, and celebrate success of the change initiatives through institutional channels, such as the ABC Polytechnic intranet and e-newsletter, thereby targeting an audience across the institution and helping the vision take hold more widely (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). This is befitting of the upside-down change approach, which starts at the bottom of the hierarchy and then news of the change and its momentum gain wider reach (Rheinhardt & Gioia, 2021). In the Communications section of this chapter, I describe messages that will inform and engage the ABC Polytechnic community in the mirrored processes of sensemaking and sensegiving, as I defined in Chapter 2. This process will help create alignment with the change more extensively throughout the organization (Niemeyer-Rens et al., 2022). The communication will focus on all successful increments of change integrated into our OCE operations, the best of which can form the basis for next steps and future considerations beyond the pilot program.

### **Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process**

Communication is the basis of change (Deszca, 2020) and change is fundamentally a challenge that requires an effective communicative plan and practices (Allen et al., 2007; Russ, 2008). Effective internal communications must meet the requirements of the employee audiences (Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). Communicating effectively with remote-working employees depends on dialogue via interactive channels that allow for voices to be heard and collaboration to occur

(Men & Bowen, 2017; Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). Achieving effective internal communications and being open to hearing the voices of all adjunct faculty, inclusive of women, racialized people, and Indigenous faculty, is at the heart of my plan. I have formed my internal communications plan using five guiding questions for knowledge mobilization (Lavis et al., 2003) mapped to my eight-step change plan. A visual representation of this knowledge mobilization plan is found in Appendix B. Further, in an effort to ensure the effectiveness of my internal communications plan and practices, I have also mapped out a plan for monitoring and evaluation (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015) that utilizes mixed methodology and allows for strategic learning along the way.

### **Hearing All Voices**

Throughout this communication plan I am conscious that knowledge is socially constructed, in context, over time (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983). As members of a community interact and share knowledge, shared values and meaning also evolve (Manning, 2012; Morgan, 2006). This is reflected in the fact that storytelling and narrative are much more effective in changing behaviour than factual information alone (Aminpour et al., 2022; Choy, 2017; Molthan-Hill et al., 2020). Moreover, disseminating messages to audiences is not merely an act of transmission (Bartesaghi & Cissna, 2009) nor does language purely represent knowledge because knowledge and meaning are contingent and emerge in social contexts (Gergen, 1973). This is why I, as a knowledgeable scholar practitioner and determined change leader, have designated messages, messengers, audiences, and channels for knowledge mobilization while simultaneously holding space for these elements to evolve with the unfolding change. I intend for diverse adjunct faculty members to be co-initiators and co-implementers of change that will result in co-learning and co-creating the future we desire.



Our change team's women, racialized faculty, and Indigenous faculty members will help create a more socially just reality. Processes of communal investigation, dialogue, and debate will be inclusive and non-oppressive (Weinberg, 2014) throughout each step of my plans for communication, evaluation, and monitoring.

### **Knowledge Mobilization**

Lavis et al. (2003) provide five questions that serve as a framework for organizations setting out to effectively mobilize knowledge. For the purpose of my internal communications plan, I have adapted the five questions to my context:

- What message(s) should be communicated?
- Who should be the messenger(s)?
- Who should be the target audience(s)?
- What communication channel(s) should be used?
- What are the expected outcomes against which the success of knowledge mobilization can be measured and evaluated?

The first four questions are summarized in Table 6 and described next. I discuss the fifth question in the Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation section of this chapter.

**Table 6**

*Overview of Communication Plan*

Step	Messenger & Message	Target Audience	Communication Channels
1 & 2: Create a Sense of Urgency & Build a Guiding Coalition	I communicate the vision for the change pilot	All adjunct faculty	Email, OCE intranet, live and recorded hybrid event, informal

Step	Messenger & Message	Target Audience	Communication Channels
3: Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives	Change team members socially construct and define change initiatives	Change team members	Series of hybrid meetings
4: Enlist a Volunteer Coalition	Change team communicates the launch initiative(s)	All adjunct faculty	Email, OCE intranet, live and recorded online meetings, informal
5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers	I communicate to help overcome or mitigate any barriers as needed	Change team, my supervisor or other members of ABC Polytechnic as needed	Email, in-person, or online meeting(s)
6: Generate Short-term Wins	All participants in the change initiatives communicate feedback	Change team members	Survey distributed by email, OCE intranet forums, informal
7: Sustain Acceleration	Change team communicates wins	All adjunct faculty	Email, OCE intranet
8: Institute Change	Adjunct faculty and I communicate successful increments of change	All of ABC Polytechnic and peer HEIs	Institutional e-newsletter, institution-wide intranet, institution podcast, public-facing webpage, internal and/or external presentation(s)

### Messengers, Messages, Audiences, and Channels

My communications strategy will accomplish two primary objectives: 1) to inform and educate the adjunct faculty about the pilot program; 2) to motivate and position the adjunct faculty to participate in and support the change initiatives (Barrett, 2002; Clampitt, 2017). Accordingly, I have planned messages, messengers, audiences, and internal communication channels corresponding to various steps of the pilot program.

Step 1 is communicating a sense of urgency drawing on knowledge (Kang et al., 2022) developed in this OIP. From this body of knowledge, I have four key messages that I will deliver

to the adjunct faculty who are the target audience to form the change team in Step 2. These recruitment messages are intentionally simple and intended to move the adjunct faculty to engage (Dailey, 2021). The key messages are:

- I am committed to offering you adequate and equitable support for your work as an adjunct faculty member facilitating OCE.
- I want to know what this support would mean to you and how you want it to be offered to meet your needs as an adjunct faculty member.
- Let's engage in a safe space for collaborative community discussion, then together shape and launch the support initiatives you want.
- Everyone is welcome to join our change team to help make better support a reality.

I will communicate these messages to all adjunct faculty, inclusive of women, racialized people, and Indigenous faculty. I will use digital media, primarily because all adjunct faculty work remotely and because these media will allow me to reach all members of the audience simultaneously and rapidly (Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). Specifically, a targeted email campaign will be complemented by an internal-facing media campaign via the OCE intranet space, which all adjunct faculty regularly access. The emails will be issued weekly for five weeks, introducing and then reiterating the key messages, and calling the adjunct faculty to action. I will send the emails from my own account, so that I can personally reply to any follow-up inquiries (Avolio et al., 2009; Clampitt, 2017; Kahai et al., 2017). Communicating in my voice will lend legitimacy and authenticity to the campaign (Gorfinkel & Muscat, 2022). The intranet campaign will include posting the key messages and establishing a "Just Ask" forum (Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). The forum will be an important common, social, and informal place (Németh, 2012)

where adjunct faculty can make and read related comments. From the time it is established, and for the duration of the pilot program, we will maintain the forum and other intranet content as a repository of collectively-owned resources all adjunct faculty can freely access (Copeland & Moor, 2018). Throughout both campaigns, the call to action will ask adjunct faculty to join an event either in person or online or watch its recording after the fact. The purpose of the event is to recruit adjunct faculty to self-nominate for the change team. During the live event I will give a presentation and I will open the floor to any interested faculty member to raise their questions and concerns. This event has the advantages of enabling both verbal and nonverbal communication, speaking in conversational language, and allowing immediate feedback and personal focus on the individuals attending (Clampitt, 2017; Kahai et al., 2017; Men & Bowen, 2017).

I anticipate that some adjunct faculty may ask about the terms of commitment on their part and about the commitment of ABC Polytechnic to sponsor the change initiatives. I will offer rapid feedback to these and any other concerns (Clampitt, 2017). Given that they are part-time employees I have already gained the dean of CE's approval to pay them for their hours spent participating. I will also emphasize the dean's and my enthusiasm for the launch of the pilot program and invite the faculty members to contact me directly for informal discussion, or to post the "Just Ask" intranet forum. I will craft messages to persuade adjunct faculty to participate and contribute, and to manage resistance and challenges (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). The desired outcome is that 8-10 adjunct faculty will join the change team.

Once the change team is formed, Step 3 entails the change team members collaboratively sensemaking the vision of equitable support, then socially constructing and defining three or four change initiatives they want to launch. This will be accomplished via a series of hybrid meetings

over a period of 12 weeks, allowing the adjunct faculty members to informally engage in rich conversations (Men & Bowen, 2017) at times that suit their schedules. As the nucleus of the team, I will host each meeting and manage the team as needed, particularly validating that inclusion and empowerment are built into the change initiatives from their inception (Gélinas-Proulx & Shields, 2022). Once these change initiatives are agreed upon and validated, we will move to Step 4, which is communicating the launch initiatives and operationalizing them among the remainder of the adjunct faculty community. To do so, we will again execute a targeted email campaign complemented by a media campaign on the exclusive OCE intranet space. The change team's faculty members will be the messengers of these campaigns because their identity as peers makes them key influencers over the target audience (Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). We will offer behind-the-scenes support to mitigate any problems in Step 5, and help them to develop effective key messages couched in storytelling (Aminpour et al., 2022; Choy, 2017; Dailey, 2021; Molthan-Hill et al., 2020). Depending on the messages, the appropriate delivery channels may vary. For example, we may employ blog-style intranet posts, meetings, or recorded video segments, and we will certainly invite ongoing informal communication via the intranet forum (Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). The intention is that using various channels and rich media will result in the successful communication and execution of the pilot program's initiatives.

Once the change initiatives are operationalized, we will lead the survey distribution and oversee the interviews planned during the monitoring and evaluation of Step 6, as described in the Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation section of this chapter. With the data from the surveys and interviews in Step 6, we will be equipped to move to Step 7, which is communicating the wins. During this stage we will continue to use email and the intranet as the primary channels to reach the adjunct faculty audience. The messages will be dynamic based on

the data. For example, if the survey and interview data reveal high rates of engagement or satisfaction with a particular initiative, we will publicize these results with the help of the change team. We will repeat this step as needed to sustain acceleration of the pilot program.

As we gain traction within the OCE community and build a record of wins, we will move to Step 8. At this point we will develop key messages together. These messages will again feature success stories told by or from the perspective of faculty because storytelling is known to be an effective communication method (Choy, 2017; Copeland & Moor, 2018; Dailey, 2021). The success stories from the pilot program will purposefully illuminate how receiving equitable support has improved the experiences of adjunct faculty members in facilitating OCE courses. Since the audience for these messages is all members of ABC Polytechnic, we will use institutional channels. I plan to publish stories in the organization's e-newsletter and on its intranet pages to engage the ABC Polytechnic community in the mirrored processes of sensemaking and sensegiving, as described in Chapter 2. We will also organize a guest appearance on the institution's podcast by an adjunct faculty member. For additional exposure, we will engage the institution's marketing team to request story placement on ABC Polytechnic's public-facing news webpage and we will look for opportunities to make internal and external presentations, such as during academic or OCE conferences. The dean of CE and I will intentionally proclaim the pilot program's success in establishing more equitable support so that the institution's adjunct faculty feel more included and valued. These communications are to help create alignment widely throughout the organization (Niemeyer-Rens et al., 2022). I hope to encourage a change in culture that appreciates new knowledge, insight, and innovation (Adiguzel, 2019) coming from our efforts in OCE. To facilitate this, it will be necessary to monitor and evaluate the pilot program's challenges, obstacles, and success.

### **Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation**

As the implementation of my one-year pilot program unfolds, we will gather qualitative and quantitative evidence since the mixed methods will help achieve an integrated analysis (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015; Serban & Roberts, 2016). The quantitative evidence will be used to monitor and evaluate several steps of the plan and the qualitative evidence will investigate the success of the change initiatives, and together the mixed methods will give a better understanding of the phenomena than either form of data alone (Creswell, 2015; Creswell et al., 2007). The purpose of monitoring and evaluating is to assess and legitimate the pilot program's success in achieving the vision (Cawsey et al., 2016; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015). The compilation of evidence will serve to reduce uncertainty about what should or may be done (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018) across the organization. ABC Polytechnic is currently characterized by a lack of change readiness, so evidence from the pilot program can help increase the readiness for next steps beyond the pilot program.

Monitoring and evaluating data and analysis will assess whether the pilot program is succeeding in achieving the vision (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015). I have carefully structured the monitoring and evaluation plan with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals (Cothran & Wysocki, 2019; Theaker & Yaxley, 2017) and with case study methodology for qualitative observations, all of which will be performed with integrity as a result of the ethical considerations. If the program is not succeeding, it will prompt us to refine the pilot's initiatives to continuously improve as issues emerge (Pietrzak & Paliszkiewicz, 2015).

#### **Monitoring Quantitative Outcomes**

In the Knowledge Mobilization section of this chapter, I addressed four questions from the framework for knowledge mobilization (Lavis et al., 2003). I now examine the fifth question,

which is: What are the expected outcomes against which the success of knowledge mobilization can be measured and evaluated? In Table 7 I give my answer to this question in tandem with SMART goals that I have defined (Cothran & Wysocki, 2019; Theaker & Yaxley, 2017).

**Table 7**

*Monitoring Quantitative Outcomes with SMART Goals*

Step	Outcome	SMART Goal
1 & 2: Create a Sense of Urgency & Build a Guiding Coalition	Urgent need for change communicated, Change team formed	30% participation in recruitment event in Week 5 5% of adjunct faculty join change team by Week 6
3: Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives	Strategic vision shared, Initiatives agreed upon and validated	3 or more initiatives defined by Week 18
4: Enlist a Volunteer Coalition	Pilot program initiatives are operationalized	First initiative is executed with 15% participation by Week 22, Subsequent initiatives have same or greater participation in Weeks 23 to 35
5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers	Barriers are removed or mitigated	Dynamic responses to emergent issues as needed in an ongoing manner
6: Generate Short-term Wins	Change is monitored and evaluated, change initiatives are modified and/or change team iterates through earlier steps in change process as needed	Survey completed with 30% response rate by Week 40 Survey data analyzed by Week 42
7: Sustain Acceleration	Change team gains credibility, Wins are celebrated with all adjunct faculty	3 or more success stories communicated to target audience in Weeks 42 to 48
8: Institute Change	Wins are celebrated widely across ABC Polytechnic and reach other HEIs	3 or more success stories to target audiences in Weeks 48 to 52



I have defined these SMART goals as the parameters for reflecting on the outcomes of knowledge mobilization. Ahead of any data collection, we will make a submission to the Research Ethics Board (REB) of ABC Polytechnic. As I describe further in the Ethical Considerations section of this chapter, we will ensure the process is ethical and safe for participants, particularly those with less power or agency. Once we receive input and approval from the REB, monitoring and evaluating whether each goal is met will commence. The quantitative indicators are all specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound, and easily observed (Cothran & Wysocki, 2019; Theaker & Yaxley, 2017). In addition to these indicators, the plan also includes collecting qualitative observations because they offer the advantages of richness and helpfulness in interpreting and analyzing the pilot with an ethical and EDID lens (Creswell et al., 2007; Halkias et al., 2022; Mertens, 2012).

### **Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Observations**

As we interpret and analyze the quantitative and qualitative data, we will be asking six evaluative questions adapted from Markiewicz and Patrick (2015). Each of the six questions evaluates a different aspect of the pilot program's success, namely: (a) appropriateness, (b) inclusivity, (c) effectiveness, (d) efficiency, (e) impact, and (f) sustainability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015). I applied this evaluation scheme to the pilot program in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*Evaluative Questions, Implementation, and Methods*

Aspect Being Evaluated	Question	Implementation	Method
Appropriateness	To what extent do the target audience participate in the pilot program?	Number of participants	Quantitative

Aspect Being Evaluated	Question	Implementation	Method
Inclusivity	To what extent is participation inclusive of people with diverse identities?	Participant characteristics, e.g. people with diverse identities	Qualitative
Effectiveness	To what extent is there satisfaction among the participants who experienced the pilot initiatives?	Responses to surveys and interviews with participants	Qualitative
Efficiency	Is the pilot program delivered on time?	Tracking of milestones against timeline	Quantitative
Impact	To what extent is there an improvement in equitable support?	Responses to surveys and interviews given by participating and nonparticipating adjunct faculty	Qualitative
Sustainability	Is there evidence of ongoing benefits beyond the pilot?	Review appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact results	Mixed

*Note.* Adapted from *Developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks*, by A. Markiewicz and I. Patrick, 2015, Sage Publications.

The qualitative research design involves treating each of the pilot program's initiatives as a bounded case study to build an in-depth, contextual, and holistic understanding across multiple cases (Creswell et al., 2007; Halkias et al., 2022; Scholz & Tietje, 2002; Yin, 2018). For example, if the change team decides to execute a live event or a mentoring program to support adjunct faculty, then we will treat each of these initiatives as a unique phenomenon to be investigated. We will investigate them using follow-up surveys and interviews. Since the pilot program is intentionally flexible and it is yet to be seen which initiatives will be operationalized,

we will design the follow-up survey and interview questions for each of the phenomena to be conducted after the initiatives unfold, such as after a live event or after a mentoring session is complete. We will distribute surveys by email because it is an efficient and instant method that can also be personalized (Avolio et al., 2009; Rea & Parker, 2014), while interviews will be conducted by the change team via web-conferencing tools since the channel will allow for conversational language and individual focus (Men & Bowen, 2017). Both types of investigation will include posing closed questions using a five-point Likert scale and posing open-ended how and why questions (Halkias et al., 2022; Nordin & Areskoug-Josefsson, 2019; Rea & Parker, 2014; Yin, 2018).

The aim is to investigate the adjunct faculty members' experiences of the phenomenon and whether it detracts from or contributes to their feelings of being supported. Surveys will be distributed to all faculty members, including to those who do not participate, i.e., do not attend a live event or do not sign up for mentoring. The questions for the non-participants will be customized to examine why they did not participate as well as how their experience affects their feelings of being supported. This multi-case study design carries the advantage of improved reliability and replication logic by examining each case as a stand-alone phenomenon to then make generalizations as we interpret any increments of success in achieving the vision (Creswell et al., 2007; Halkias et al., 2017; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2018). This will help legitimize the pilot program as well as reduce uncertainty about next steps and future considerations.

### **Ethical Considerations**

To disrupt inequity and oppression it is necessary to forefront principles of ethical research and data collection. I am applying three principles founded in the Belmont report: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Gabriele, 2003; Mihajlovic-Madzarevic, 2010;

Tolich & Tumilty, 2020). Respect for persons means giving attention to the fact that every participant is a person with inherent human rights, observance of which takes precedence over any advantage we hope to gain thanks to their participation as a research respondent (Gabriele, 2003). Beneficence reminds me to both do good and avoid harm, mitigating any risks to the research respondent (Gabriele, 2003). Finally, justice means we have a responsibility to protect the research respondents and especially the vulnerable research respondents (Gabriele, 2003; Talbert, 2019). Although designing ethical research is a very complex field, the minutiae of which are beyond this OIP, abiding by these principles and having an REB review will help a novice researcher like me preserve human dignity throughout the monitoring and evaluation phase.

I am preparing the submission for REB review to ensure we are protecting participant safety and mitigating harm. Considerations of anonymity and confidentiality are particularly important because of my EDID values and determination to strive for ethical inclusivity. For example, some quantitative data is easily observed, such as counting the number of participants or initiatives, thus ensuring the data is anonymous and avoiding questions of confidentiality (Tolich & Tumilty, 2020). On the other hand, the survey data can be anonymous, and the interview observations can be confidential, but neither is necessarily so. We will be intentional about the design of survey questions to keep the identities of the respondents anonymous (Rea & Parker, 2014; Tolich & Tumilty, 2020). We will plan the interviews so that the responses will be kept confidential but they cannot be anonymous because the interviewer will necessarily know the respondent (Tolich & Tumilty, 2020). In sum, the focus is on designing high-quality, reliable evidence-gathering techniques that will be ethically deployed with integrity (Anyansi-Archibong, 2015; Gabriele, 2003).

### **Strategic Learning and Adjusting the Plan**

Even the best laid plans are not immune to unintended consequences (Sherden, 2011) nor to the need for responsive adjustment as we act and others react. This is why, throughout Chapters 2 and 3, I have developed and described flexibility and responsiveness to emergent issues as features in my pilot program's plan, particularly my inclusion of PDCA cycles to guide strategic learning (Pietrzak & Paliszkiewicz, 2015). As the pilot program materializes, I fully anticipate strategic learning to occur that will prompt us to act or adjust. While I am still in the planning phase, I already anticipate that the contributions of the team, their participation in collaborative sensemaking, and the findings from my monitoring and evaluation plan will stimulate strategic learning that prompts refining the pilot program (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015). I am pragmatic about this now because I want to be ready to refine and iterate change as the one-year implementation plans unfolds, not wait for it to expire or fail to achieve its vision (Sherden, 2011).

With this pragmatism in mind, I stand by my pilot program and also expect it to need adjustments. This is because I have prepared a well-researched and precise plan, and I also humbly acknowledge my human tendencies to oversimplify and overestimate the likelihood of success (Sherden, 2011). I took care to carefully examine the POP and its preferred solution from many angles, and yet there is always the possibility of areas of weakness. I accounted for the complexity of my context within the landscape of higher education, my leadership approaches and lens, my organization's culture and readiness, and my interpretive worldview while planning to guide the social construction change, and yet I will have to rely on the contributions and sensemaking of others. While I know that less concrete, less measurable phenomena are at the heart of much of what is done in higher education (Deane, 2019) and that the findings of

monitoring and evaluation may prompt us to refine and adjust, I hold hope that the findings confirm the appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015) of the pilot program, thereby illuminating next steps toward achieving equitable support for adjunct faculty.

### **Chapter 3: Conclusion**

In Chapter 3, I shared a detailed change implementation plan for piloting upside-down change by distributing leadership to a team of adjunct faculty. The plan followed the eight steps of the Kotter (2014) change framework. Since change implementation is, at its heart, fundamentally about communication I included a plan for communications (Allen et al., 2007; Russ, 2008). The communications plan focused on message, messenger, audience, and communication. I emphasized my intention to hear the voices of people with diverse identities and to mobilize knowledge. To monitor the success of the pilot change plan, I offered a mixed methodology design aimed at achieving high-quality, reliable evidence-gathering techniques. The plan for data collection will be presented for REB review as we want to ensure that monitoring will be done ethically. I also included the plan to evaluate the change as it is being implemented, which is especially important to allow for strategic learning to occur. The plan is intentionally flexible to enable dynamic responses to collaborative input and emerging issues, and to ensure the plan is effectively improving support for adjunct faculty. We want to move along the continuum from inadequate support to improved and equitable support, so the plan intentionally incorporates the need to check and adjust progress against the vision. As the plan is enacted, we aim to gain momentum toward achieving equitable support and changing organizational culture at ABC Polytechnic. Anticipating success, the dean, the adjunct faculty, and I can look forward to socially constructing the future we desire.

### **OIP Conclusion: Next Steps and Future Considerations**

Many change efforts fail without adequate planning (Kotter, 2012). This is why developing a detailed change process and integrated leadership approaches is necessary and valuable for me as a leader in higher education and in response to the POP. In the best-case scenario, adjunct faculty will no longer be marginalized nor held at the periphery, and instead they will be supported by, and valued in, the organization. However, change is incremental along a continuum, so even if we do not achieve the ideal state, adjunct faculty will at least begin to feel less isolated and more supported. Change along this continuum at ABC Polytechnic could potentially even provide momentum for similar incremental change in peer HEIs, resulting in third-order change across the higher education system. I hope that such change would generate more appreciation for lifelong learning and positively affect the way adjunct faculty and OCE are perceived, resulting in a more socially just future.

But the change is ultimately not about me as a leader, which is why the voices of adjunct faculty members are the heart of my plan. I agree with Kezar (2018), who argues that “being a successful change agent requires a broad and expansive view of leadership, beyond individuals in positions of power to collectives or networks of individuals—to include all members of the campus” (p. 135). While I have the scope and agency to initiate change in my unit, it is really the power of collective participation and co-leading by the adjunct faculty that will bring this upside-down change pilot to life. As the adjunct faculty on the change team co-develop and execute change initiatives, they can in turn use that experience to become change agents and problem solvers themselves (Furman, 2004). Then the change, like the community, shall be ongoing and progressive.

The hoped-for future rests upon embracing the purpose of higher education, a moral purpose beyond satisfying the labour market, beyond the functionalist, neoliberal perspectives that dominate ABC Polytechnic. It is possible to reshape these tightly held perspectives with the adoption of different theoretical views and frameworks. With the research and learning I have done and will continue to do, I hope to respond “flexibly, reflexively, and proactively to reforms, trends, and events, and to design strategies to be effective in [my] changing and challenging context” (Elliott, 2015, p. 318). Going forward, higher education leaders must continue to flesh out the possibilities illuminated by theoretical perspectives and hands-on practices, as considered in this OIP, with respect to a more socially just future. Synthesizing ideas, wrestling with values, and planning change processes in detail, are fruitful actions, however daunting. As I continue to learn and change, I hope to contribute to producing the future I want to see inside my organization, and far beyond it.



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### Appendix A: Overview of Possible Solutions to Address the POP

Solution	Team Description	Cultural Consideration	Structural Consideration	Political Consideration	Potential Benefits
1: Insource a task force	TAL, IT, willing adjunct faculty members, and me	TAL and IT had difficult pandemic experience trying to support OCE	TAL and IT are siloed units	TAL and IT do not see supporting adjunct faculty as essential to mission	Low cost, capacity building, residual benefit of developed competencies
2: Outsource a guide	External consultant, willing adjunct faculty members, and me	Consultant will lack context- and community-specific knowledge	Not a scalable, long-term solution	Requires significant investment of money and time	Offers wide expertise and the perspectives of an external observer
3: Pilot upside-down change	Willing adjunct faculty members and me	Path to change is socially constructed	Sensemaking and sensegiving can create wider organizational alignment	Established readiness and feasibility	Small pilot team shares a common OCE experience, forming emotional closeness and trust for fruitful collaboration

**Appendix B: Depiction of 5-Step Knowledge Mobilization Plan**

