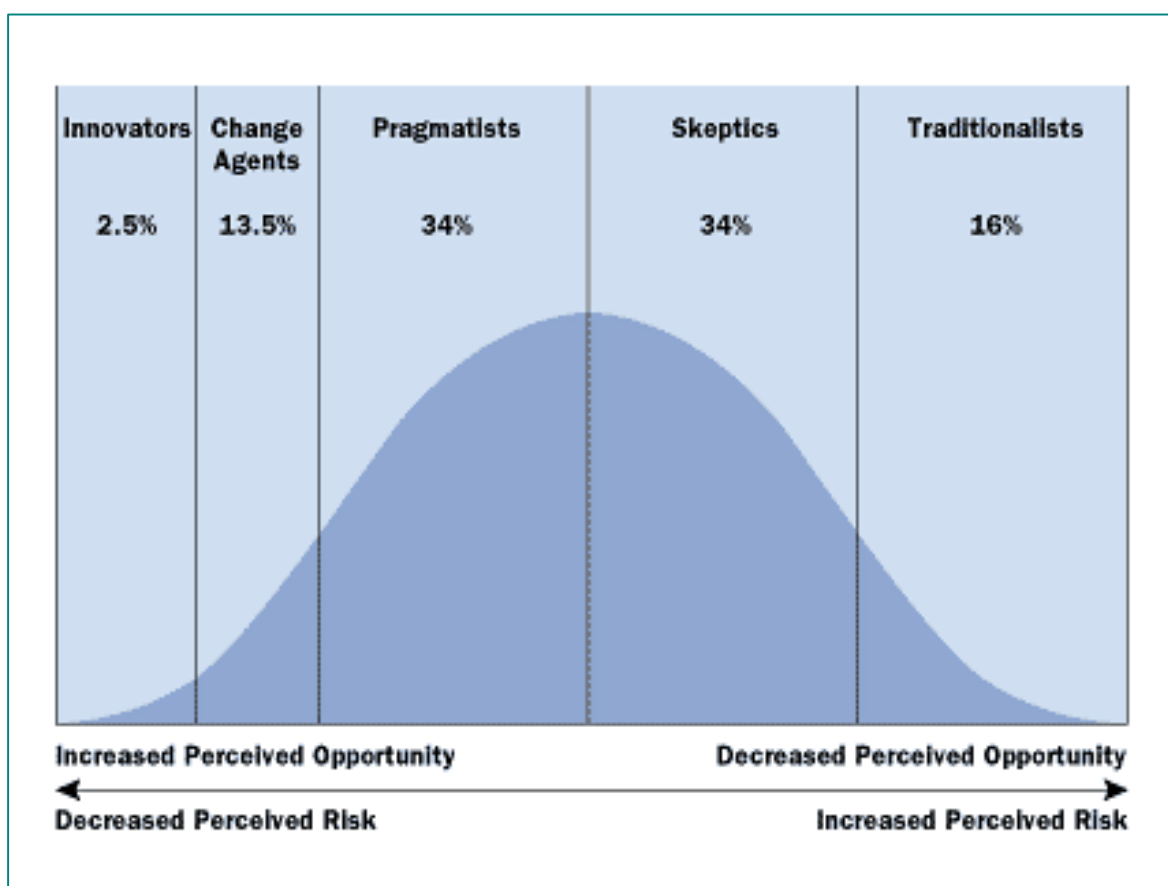


## Task 1: Solicit buy-in and commitment from key stakeholders

### Diversity Adoption and Engagement Resource

**Directions:** Use the information in this document to help you identify, engage, and work effectively with each diversity adoption type.

#### DIVERSITY ADOPTION CURVE



Source: Loden M. 1995. *Implementing Diversity: Best Practices for Making Diversity Work in Your Organization*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

## DIVERSITY ADOPTION PROFILES

### THE INNOVATOR PROFILE (2.5 percent)\*

- Exhibits characteristics of an organizational maverick; is on the leading edge of change
- Explores and invents opportunities
- Is idealistic
- Associates the lowest level of risk with valuing diversity
- Relies on self-discovery and own experience in adopting diversity; is an opinion maker, not an opinion leader
- Sees diversity as creative opportunity
- Seeks creative fulfillment

**WORKING WITH INNOVATORS.** Engage innovators early in the process. Expect innovators to provide great ideas, endorse your efforts, help with high-level strategic thinking, and provide creative ideas. Do not expect them to sustain attention throughout the entire process. Innovators are visionary but generally are not implementers. Don't overload them.

### THE CHANGE AGENT PROFILE (13.5 percent)\*

- Likes to influence and lead change
- Explores opportunities and issues with interest
- Is an optimist and early tester of new ideas
- Associates a low level of risk with valuing diversity
- Seeks out and passes on information, is an opinion leader
- Sees diversity as knowledge enhancing and good for people
- Seeks recognition, respect, social leadership, and personal fulfillment

**WORKING WITH CHANGE AGENTS.** Expect change agents to implement plans. Change agents are enthusiastic and dependable and enjoy seeing a process through. They are optimistic and will motivate others; their energy will drive the effort throughout. It's important for you to recognize and respect their efforts.

### THE PRAGMATIST PROFILE (34 percent)\*

- Wants to simplify change and follow at a safe distance
- Explores opportunities and issues cautiously
- Is suspicious of new ideas and change
- Associates a moderate level of risk with valuing diversity
- Relies on peer experience and expert endorsement; is a follower, not a leader
- Sees diversity as desirable after proven productive by change agents
- Seeks inclusion and belongingness

**WORKING WITH PRAGMATISTS.** Expect pragmatists to question the process of how the goals are going to be accomplished (e.g., Where are we going? How are we going to get there?). Pragmatists are good at sorting out possibilities and determining what can realistically be accomplished. Give careful consideration to what they say even if you do not agree.

### THE SKEPTIC PROFILE (34 percent)\*

- Is skeptical about new ideas
- Seeks security and wide endorsement by the mainstream
- Associates a high level of risk with valuing diversity
- Sees diversity as potentially harmful and moving too fast
- Explores opportunities reluctantly and is fearful of issues
- Will not accept diversity until it is embraced by the mainstream
- Is influenced by authority and majority endorsements

**WORKING WITH SKEPTICS.** Expect skeptics to question the direction, and sometimes the role, of the diversity department and the investment of the institution (ROI). Skeptics will look for efficiencies and question why diversity efforts are even needed. They help to clarify your thinking but can undermine your efforts if they are not engaged. Skeptics will keep you focused on the rationale and help you to achieve conceptual clarity. Pay careful attention to what they have to say and provide them with well thought-out answers to any questions they may have.

### THE TRADITIONALIST PROFILE (16 percent)\*

- Wants to avoid involvement with the diversity change process
- Denies existence of opportunities or issues related to diversity
- Is pessimistic and hostile to change
- Associates the highest level of risk with valuing diversity
- Relies on the past and selective history to disprove the value of diversity
- Sees diversity as dangerous, a threat to the status quo
- Seeks stability and a return to the "good old days"

**WORKING WITH TRADITIONALISTS.** Expect traditionalists to help you get to the core or essence of the work. Traditionalists are living archives for your organization. They will help you define what is important to the institution and, most importantly, who needs to be acknowledged for previous efforts. Consider them your “wisdom council.” Traditionalists do not like to change, but they appreciate work that honors and acknowledges the mission and history of the institution.

\*Source: Loden M. 1995. *Implementing Diversity: Best Practices for Making Diversity Work in Your Organization*. New York: McGraw-Hill.