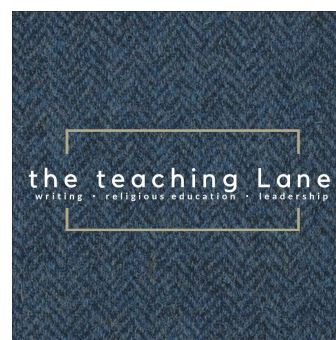


**NATRE SYMPOSIUM: CHANGE
MANAGEMENT** |

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Thank you to Fiona and Ben for organising this excellent Symposium and the opportunity to speak to such an illustrious crowd.

I am Matthew Lane, a primary teacher from Norfolk. I've been teaching for 10 years and before this was an Officer in the Royal Navy where I was a Warfare and then a Teaching Officer. I also write for a various educational publications. My school has recently undertaken the RE Quality Mark where we were proud to have been awarded a Gold Award.



Our superb previous speakers have told us the WHYS and WHATs of curriculum design. This presentation is focused upon the HOW to deliver that curriculum change.

As humans we do not like change. Try buying a new car or house or even a new brand of shampoo. The chances brought with the change can be outweighed by the fear of the unknown.

WHY DO STAFF RESIST CHANGE?

- fear of the unknown
- lack of good information**
- fear of loss of security
- no reason to change**
- fear of loss of power
- lack of resources**
- bad timing
- habit

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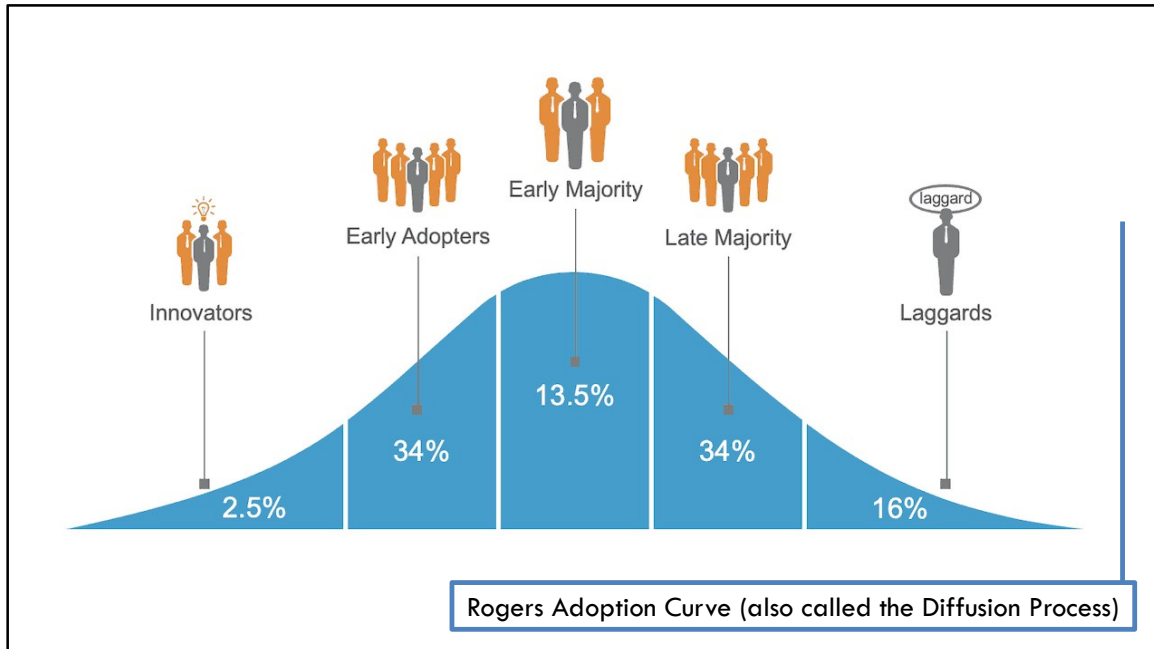
There are many reasons that people do not like change in the workplace. These 8 have been highlighted as the most common factors. The ones in bold are, from my experience, the biggest barriers in schools.

Fear of the unknown is the most commonly cited, it is that human distrust of the unknown that makes us dislike the dark or the new. Change takes us from what we know which brings with it a loss of security. It's why we never throw away those cosy old jumpers. In schools there can be the perception of loss of power. We all emotionally invest in our learning and planning. We enjoy reteaching those units beloved by our students. Losing those units can bring with them a perceived loss of status. Or it might just be breaking a long standing habit and the pain that can bring.

In schools the three biggest hurdles to change are shown in bold. The first hurdle can be staff not understanding the rationale for change. They cannot understand the background to the decision so are dislocated from the process. If staff are onboard with the change it may be that they then do not have enough information or knowledge to realise that change effectively. Or after that they may not have the resources to bring their professional knowledge to the classroom.

A well explained reason for change, with solid information and a good resourcing can win over the majority of staff. At my school we rolled out our new Religion and Worldview scheme just before Covid hit. Staff continued with the change as the project was well explained (according to them) and they had all the resources and training at hand to deliver the project.

Which is the vital point with leading change: whilst we are the people leading the change, it is our staff, our team who will be delivering that change.



How do people react to change?

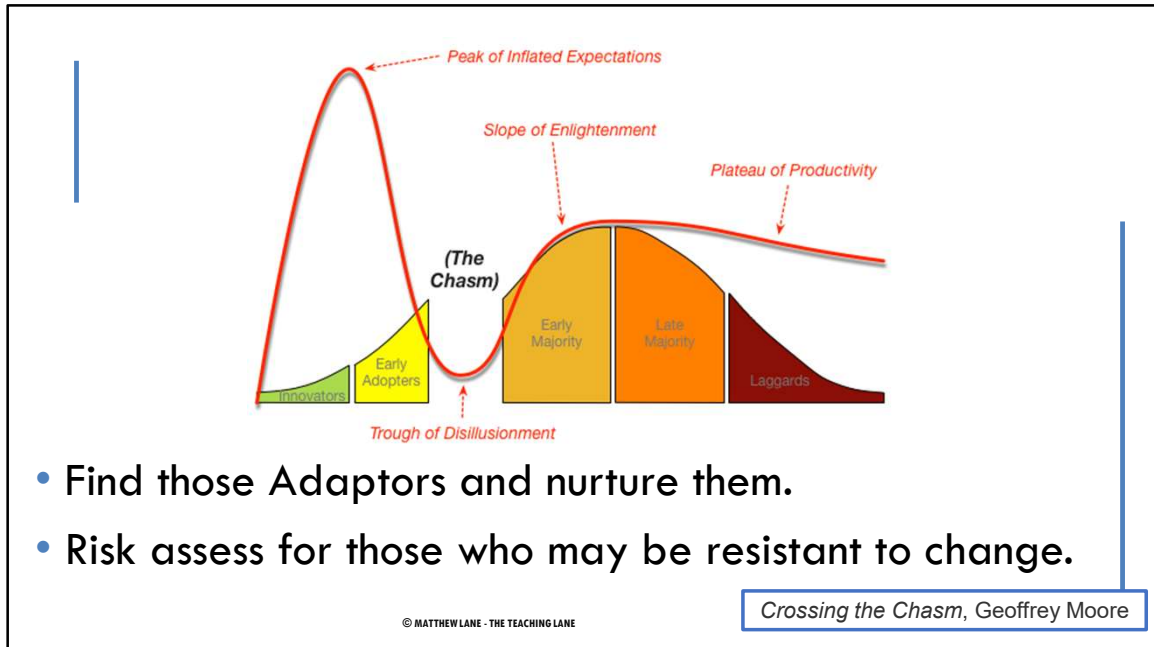
Any change is going to involve us speaking about the staff in our schools. They will be the ones delivering the curriculum changes we have envisioned. And people are messy. As I talk about change you will hear me use terms like Early Adopters and Laggards which is taken from this model. This is based upon research in the technology world where products or ideas and their uptake over time is characterised by 5 phases. As a group we are in the Innovators group, giving something new a good go. A small select bunch.

The bulk of staff usually fall into the Early Adopters (enthused by the Innovators) and the Early Majority. People who can see why the change is needed and are enthusiastic. Your Late Majority are usually those in need of training or a more bespoke solution to support them with the new way of working.

The stumbling block for some projects I have worked on is the Laggards. Those old hand grumbling voices in the back who can sow dissent, mistrust and malaise in half the staff over one cup of coffee at breaktime when you are out on duty. And where these staff are can be a help or a hindrance. A Royal Navy project I worked on had a

Laggard as the commanding officer. The staff were enthused for the changes my department had been brought in to oversee but the CO had been upstaged and was trying to make our lives difficult by resisting every change. These people need dealing with as soon as possible.

Risk assess your staff – especially the possible Laggards – as well as the job at hand.



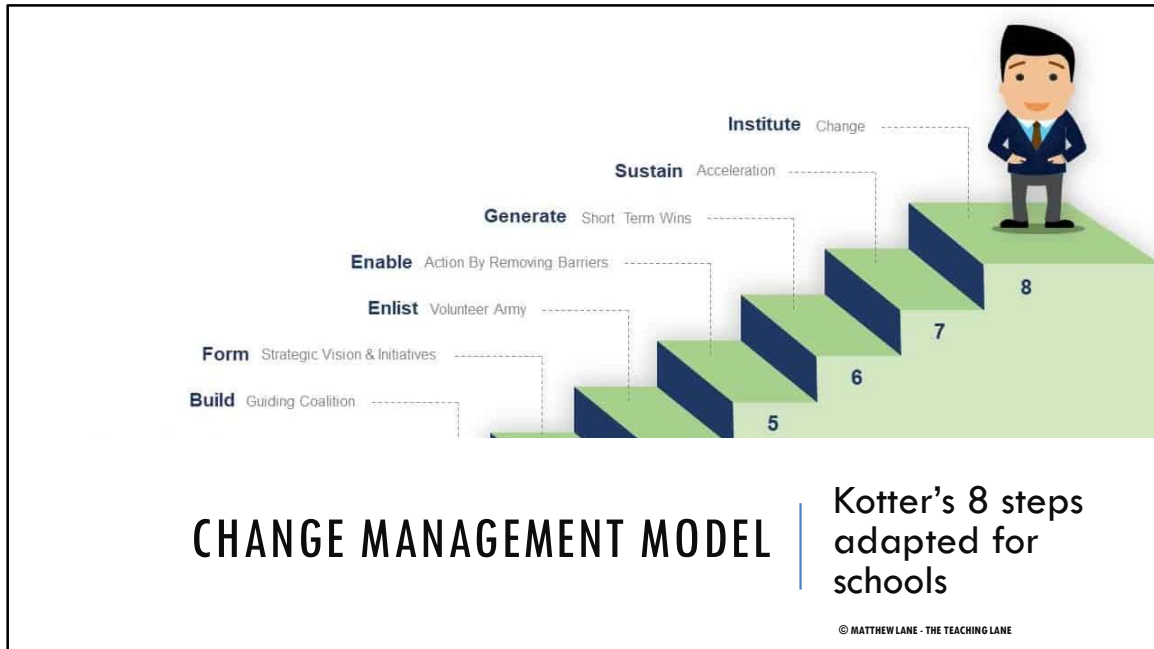
- Find those Adaptors and nurture them.
- Risk assess for those who may be resistant to change.

What are staff's emotions like over time?

Moore added to Roger's model when discussing project progression, adding in the emotional component. He shows how the initial enthusiasm of the Innovators can sweep along the Early Adopters, but this can then lead to Disillusionment when the initial excitement is not realized. Plan for The Chasm (which I will mention again later). The part of the project when initial excitement starts to run out and the hard work is beginning. This is the point when staff will get aboard or jump ship. Think about how to smooth the curves: how can you build excitement but not unfounded optimism?

Fill the chasm with early wins (which we will discuss later) and think about how to bridge the Chasm.

In a recent project in my school, staff were given a book of trial lessons to have a go at. To build a sense of purpose and ownership as the project began and to keep them engaged in the project.

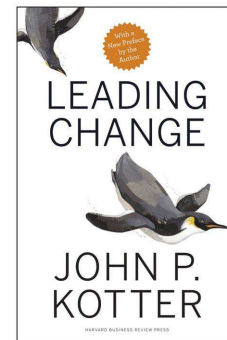


How do we plan for change?

A model I like, which I've adapted for school reforms is the one proposed by Kotter. Good model – lots management jingoism. Kotter has great books worth a read. From testing this model in a number of school-based reforms, I've made some adaptations and tweaks.

We do not have the hierarchical structure of the American office nor are our results measured in quarterly profits and weekly team meetings. Yet it offers good ideas. I have found it helpful to look to the business and military worlds to look for models of leadership and escape the school bubble with its own forms of thinking.

1. Help others see the need for change
2. Build a team of pioneers
3. Codify the vision; nail down the practical
4. Get everyone to work
5. Remove barriers
6. Generate the first wins
7. Sustain the change
8. The “new” becomes “normal”

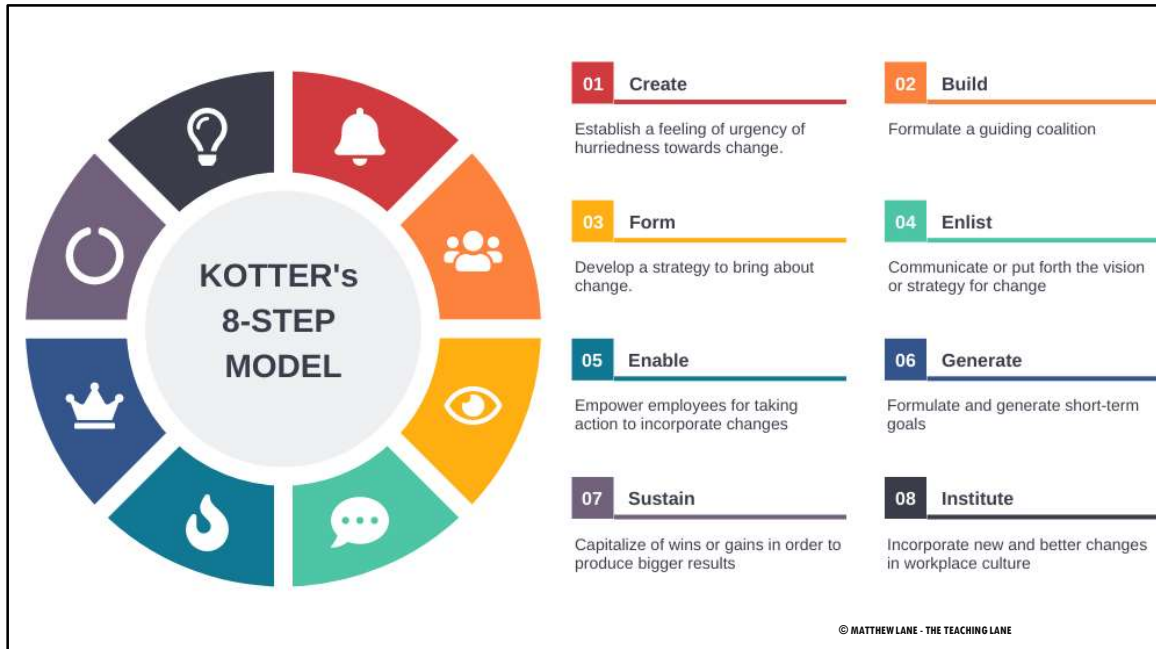


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What are the steps to plan for?

Kotter uses snazzier names than me (as shown on the next slide) but the steps are the same. Not all stages are the same length. Some are Main Gates, such as 4, whilst others are activities that run concurrently and continuedly, such as 3. The longest in every project I have been involved in has been Step 7. That is when the polish has rubbed off and the hard work of multi-month or multi-year change is taking place.

Kotter recently released a new book on capitalising on Change in uncertain times which is well worth a read.



Kotter's original change model.



1. HELP OTHERS SEE THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Why are we doing this?

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What is the purpose of this change? Is it change for changes sake? What new needs are leading to this change? This needs to be authentic - because I need UPS3 will not cut it. Weak founding ideas lead to a weaken project. For us at this symposium and in the RE classroom we have the Commission on RE report (CoRE); Ofsted research review and publications by Theos and new Local Agreed Syllabuses with a move to Religion & Worldviews to name but a few.

When I was in the Royal Navy I worked as part of an intervention into a Navigation school. The Fleet had moved on to using electronic charts, and the fundamental shift this meant in the driving in ships. The school were still using paper charts which caused a short-term spike in students failing their courses. This spike in failures and the need to update the school to reflect current practice gave a solid reason for the change.



2. BUILD A TEAM OF PIONEERS

Who do you know that can lend a hand – and support?

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Step 2 – Building your team of pioneers to help you as you begin turning that idea into classroom reality.

Look for those who can help you get going. Who are your friends or profession allies? These will become your cheerleaders and road testers. Your private cadre of Innovators who get Read-Into the project before its launch and become your support team. Get them working and enthused before anyone else knows about the project. Of course, they will promptly tell others but then that helps.

They can help "soft launch" your project. I used this approach when beginning a whole school deployment of a Generative Learning pedagogy. I have minimal experience of KS1 so asked for the help of a colleague in KS1 to road-test and advice on our use of Cornell Notes. This helped highlight blind-spots I had missed. I did not have the experience to authentically advise in KS1 and this affirmed my view. Equally, the findings from the KS1 soft launch informed our use of Cornell Notes with LPAP and SEN students in KS2. There were many productive unintended consequences from that soft launch.

SOFT LAUNCHING A PROJECT

- Great for knocking off the rough edges.
- Make the mistakes in private.
- Answer the Laggards questions before they arise.



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Soft Launching is brilliant. It builds your own confidence and stops you making mistakes in public that can undermine staff's confidence in the project and/or your leadership. It is a change to knock off those rough edges and make any mistakes in private. Mistakes that can become fuel for those Laggards trying to resist change.

Equally you will identify and then be able to answer questions that staff may have at your full launch. There is a difference between knowing a question but not the full answer and being blindsided by a question at the launch.



3. CODIFY THE VISION; NAIL DOWN THE PRACTICAL

What are we doing again? Oh
yeah, we wrote it all down!

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Get writing. Write everything down. Put it all in one document you can link to and update as you go. Email everything. And then do it again. Bug people with little updates and success stories. Sweat the details.

Our R&W curriculum runs to 40 pages and 12,000 words. I didn't write it all at once, it grew organically over 18 months. It has been revised and edited each term. It contains everything in one place: vision, pedagogy, terminology (some Christians, most Muslims); assessment methodology, curriculum maps. Everyone knows what everyone is doing. Everyone can see in black and white what they are doing and how it fits as part of the bigger whole picture.

This is not so much a phase as a starting point. You need to keep updating the central written record as you go. KEEP WRITING. Many projects I have been involved with have succeeded or failed due to effectiveness of communication and team understanding.

If there is only one lesson you take from this presentation, take this: get writing and keep writing. Many projects I have been part of have succeeded or failed due to poor communication and not their intrinsic merits.



4. GET EVERYONE TO WORK

Move fast and break stuff

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So, time for that full and proper launch of your project to the whole staff. And this means a trial run to see what works and what doesn't work. How those ideas in your head and in your plan work in the real world of the classroom.

Give people something to work on. It won't be the finished article – that is what they will make whilst getting to work. This is the point when you let the team take your vision and start to shape it into the practice.

Encourage feedback; shape the resources and curriculum. Get people working on different versions of your idea. Then you can road test what works, what doesn't and then blend the best bits. Have a staff meeting to launch your project and then follow it up with emails and sharing your codified vision and initial plan. A shared document is great for this as it can remain a "live" text which staff can refer back to and see updates. Have a staff meeting at the beginning of a half-term for the launch and one near the end to shared feedback.

For our Religion & Worldviews roll-out we used Understanding Christianity units to support teachers in delivering the multidisciplinary pedagogy. This was new and required a lot of new learning – and therefore cognoscitive load – from staff It wasn't

the perfect solution and was no where near what I envisioned our final product to be but it go people to work. This also in turn highlighted training/CPD needs from staff. As they knew it was a rough trial, they were more confident to discuss their training needs. They had confidence to move fast and break stuff.

TIME TO HAND OVER THE REIGNS

- Let the team start to set the direction.
- Do you have the experience to provide full oversight?
- What did you envision that now isn't working?



At this point in your project staff will be taking your idea for a test drive. You may have been working on this idea in private for months but it is now time for your team to road test it and see what happens. Let them get messy, make mistakes and push your ideas to their breaking point. In industry projects that fail are still seen as successes due to what companies learn from the failures. The same can be true in schools: even if the idea did not materialize in practice, we will still have learning what doesn't work or how the idea can be adapted.

This is the tricky middle stage. You need to start letting go. If teams have what they need and understand the end vision let them run with it. At primary you cannot have enough knowledge to see how a plan for 10 years old will work with 5 year olds. Let the staff shape the final product whilst holding firmly (ish) to your vision.

Keep the vision – sweat the details. Let your staff do the innovating at this stage.



5. REMOVE BARRIERS

Knowledge, equipment – personalities?

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This is will most likely be training or knowledge. Buy people books. Buy in training. If the training doesn't exist, find someone smarter than you and make it together. Removing them doesn't have to be expensive, but it will take time. Invest in staff, not in students. The training needs will become apparent from discussions and monitoring or staff using your trial units from Step 4.

There is no point investing in the shiny toys for the students if the staff do not know how or why to use them. How many primary schools have shiny science kits gathering dust in cupboards, never used, because staff did not have the training or subject knowledge to deploy the equipment effectively?

We did this for our Worldviews curriculum. No one had theology training for primary teachers, so we made some with the help of our school vicar and secondary staff. Equally, sometimes it is people. At one school the person in charge was the issue. Staff wanted to change but she was resisting them and held all the power. We tried a few approaches, but ultimately they were removed from post. Her resistance to change had rung up a £3million bill in unnecessarily due to refusing to implement change.

TODAY'S FORECAST: 100% CHANCE OF WINNING

6. GENERATE THE FIRST WINS

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Time to get properly working. To fully launch your project and give it a proper go. In schools this will mean a full term of half-term of lessons using your full plan.

Plan for the first real successes. That first full (fullish) and proper unit of learning in your curriculum. A stage to manage carefully as those first wins can build false confidence and you can all fall into The Chasm without warning. Those first wins can become barriers to latter success if not handled gently. Use these to enthuse people and try out different approach.

Staff feedback from these from these first wins will give them greater ownership of the later project. It also helps show the Laggards that the plan and vision are working – even if they don't believe it can. Just ensure it is a real win and not fluff. An easy starter task will not lead to real success and then a great sense of failure when the next stage of the project begins and staff find it much harder. Plan a staff meeting at the end of your first stage to celebrate and share successes. And name the people who had them – just be mindful that you are not accidentally playing favourites.

It is time to take your hand off of the back of the bicycle seat and see if the team ride in the direction you had hoped for. And don't crash!



7. SUSTAIN THE CHANGE

Handing off the project

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The tricky part. This is settling in for the long haul and keeping a light touch on the direction. If staff are enthused and working you need to direct their energy and stop dragging them in your wake. This is the time to take a planned step back.

Celebrate in public; coach in private. Update staff regularly with emails and meetings. Set short term goals, send reminders, celebrate and then set new goals.

With our Worldviews curriculum the whole process took 3 years with various Main Gates to tick off along the way. I planned for the long-term role out so staff did not become overwhelmed with new content. We tackled units and lessons; then long term planning and then assessment. No point looking at assessment until learning had been undertaken. The new assessment spec was very different to before so needed its own time and energy to bring online.

This is about continued change and progression. Adding in more and more of your plan, expanding staff capacity and capability in the medium to long term.

When you need to, send good news in an email and deliver bad or difficult news in person. Getting a moaning email about that new project after an afternoon of difficult lessons will kill enthusiasm for your project stone dead.



8. THE “NEW” BECOMES “NORMAL”

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Step back and monitor. Keep celebrating, keep coaching. Your initial meetings in Stage 4 and 6 will have been monthly or half-termly. Keep up the follow-on emails and meetings at termly intervals. Don't get too contented. Get the word out to other schools and organisations. Blog, tweet, write. Meet with other schools. Stay hungry. Keep moving fast around the edges and breaking small things.

Share and swap experiences in follow-on staff meetings. Plan when to do these so you can keep celebrating successes and keep the conversation going with staff shaping and filling the curriculum as it grows. Keep hungry – keep moving fast and braking (little) things around the edges. Keep polishing and refining by sharing and discussing your curriculum with other schools.

REQM is a great process for seeing how well your new normal is working.

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Thank you for listening to this presentation. If you would like to read more about change management, my writings can be found on my website www.theteachinglane.co.uk

If you would like to discuss these ideas further, please send me a tweet or get in touch via the website.

Thank you.