

Scaling up Innovations in Education



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 **nirn** National
Implementation
Research Network

Ineffective Methods

Excellent experimental evidence for what does not work

➤ **Diffusion/dissemination of information by itself does not lead to successful implementation (research literature, mailings, promulgation of practice guidelines)**

➤ **Training alone, no matter how well done, does not lead to successful implementation**

Ineffective Methods

Excellent evidence for what does not work

➤ **Implementation by edict does not work**

➤ **Implementation by “following the money” does not work**

➤ **Implementation without changing supporting roles and functions does not work**

Paul Nutt (2002). *Why Decisions Fail*



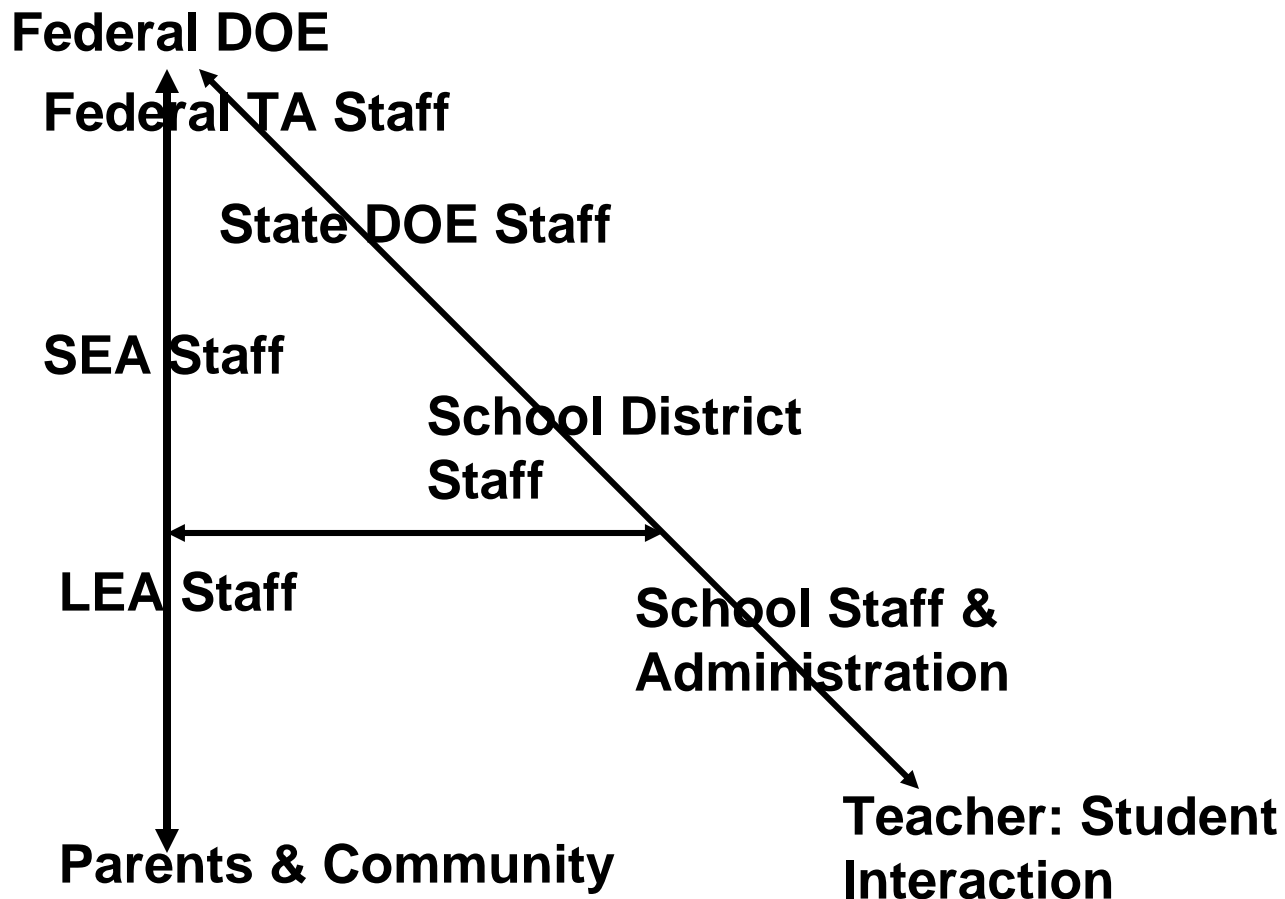
Systems Transformation

“Systems trump programs.”

Patrick McCarthy, Annie E. Casey Foundation






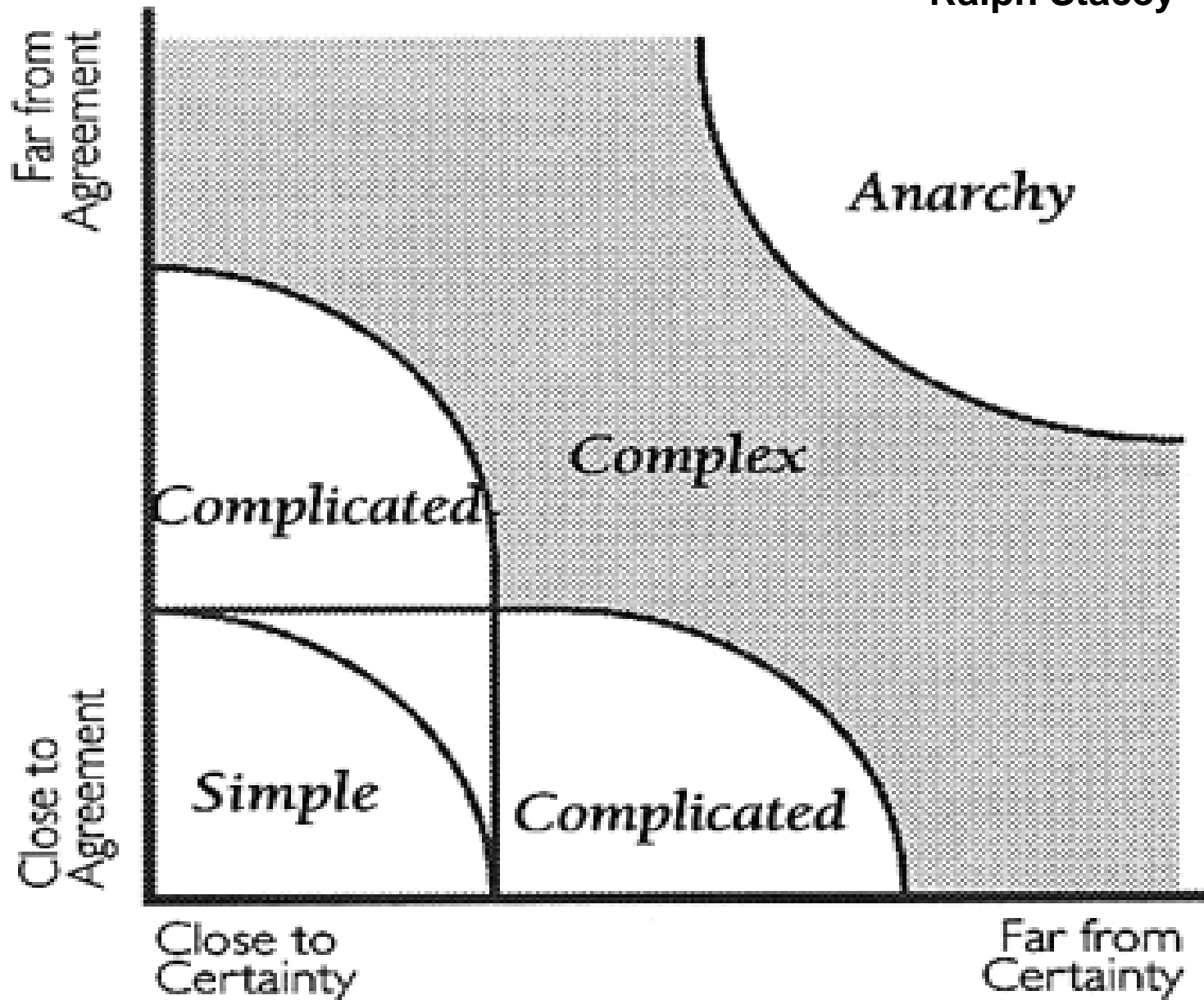
Scaling Up (and Down)



For every action, there is an opposite and equal reaction in ways that we would never expect.


Systems Thinking

-  We intuitively know that we are always operating within systems greater than ourselves and under conditions that are often unknown, unidentifiable, and unpredictable
-  We also know that there are times when we cannot reach agreement on the definition of the problems or the solutions and we are far from certain about what to do to move forward in resolving those issues.
-  So why do we think we can reduce that level of complexity down to a single, concrete, simple problems that everyone can agree on with all certain about the steps to resolution?



Kinds of problems

Tame

-  The majority of problem-solving tools people have are geared toward solving tame problems; usual approach to problems in organizations

Wicked

-  Often requires the use of counter-intuitive approaches and different types of tools address these problems

Tame problems

- A relatively well-defined and stable problem statement
- A definite stopping point (we know when a solution is reached)
- A solution that can be objectively evaluated as being right or wrong
- Have solutions that can be tried and abandoned without serious consequences

Wicked problems

- **Wicked problems are completely different from tame problems.**
- **Wicked problems are ill-defined, ambiguous and associated with strong moral, political and professional issues.**
- **Since they are strongly stakeholder dependent, there is often little consensus about what the problem *is*, let alone how to resolve it.**

Wicked problems

They are those complex, ever changing societal and organizational planning problems that you haven't been able to treat with much success, because you haven't even been able to structure and define them properly.

They are messy, devious, and they fight back when you try to “solve” them.

Tom Ritchey 2005; Swedish Morphological Society


Wicked problems

- **Wicked problems are “solved” through a series of successive approximations**
- **Wicked problems are never solved in any final sense – circumstances are always changing and solutions need to keep up**

Requisite Variety

 **Only variety absorbs variety.**

Ross Ashby, 1956

 **As the complexity of the environment increases, individuals and organizations need a larger repertoire of behavior to survive and flourish.**

Systems Transformation



The diagram illustrates a cyclical process for systems transformation. It features three blue curved segments arranged in a circle. The top segment is positioned above the text 'Initiate & Manage Change'. The bottom-left segment is positioned below the text 'Initiate & Manage Change'. The bottom-right segment is positioned below the text 'Implement Innovations'. The text 'Sustainable Infrastructure' is centered at the bottom of the diagram, between the two bottom segments.

**Initiate & Manage
Change**

**Implement
Innovations**

**Sustainable
Infrastructure**

Policy - Practice - Feedback

Policy (Plan)

Feedback

Study - Act

Practice (Do)

Policy

Structure

Procedure

Practice

Form follows Function

Stages of Implementation

Implementation occurs in stages:

 **Exploration**

 **Installation**

 **Initial Implementation**

 **Full Implementation**

 **Innovation**

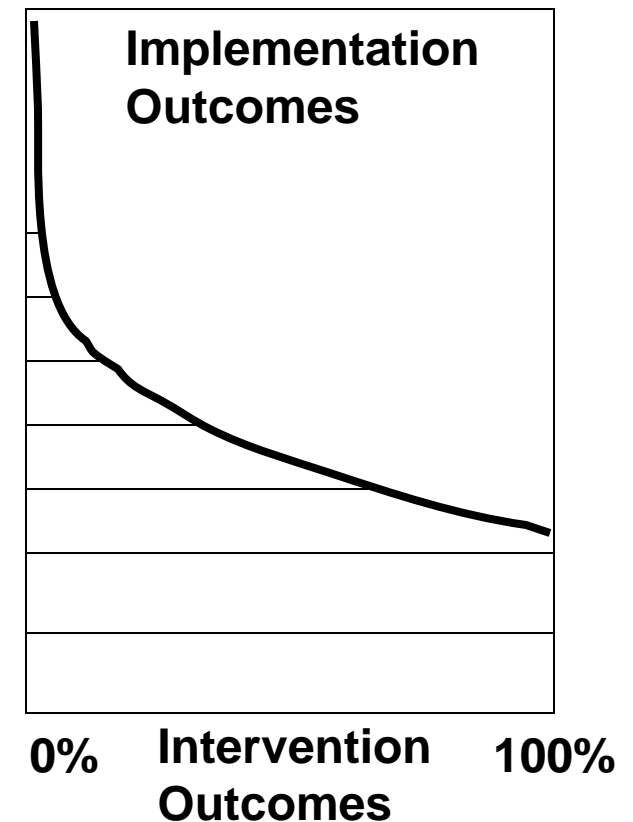
 **Sustainability**

2 – 4 Years

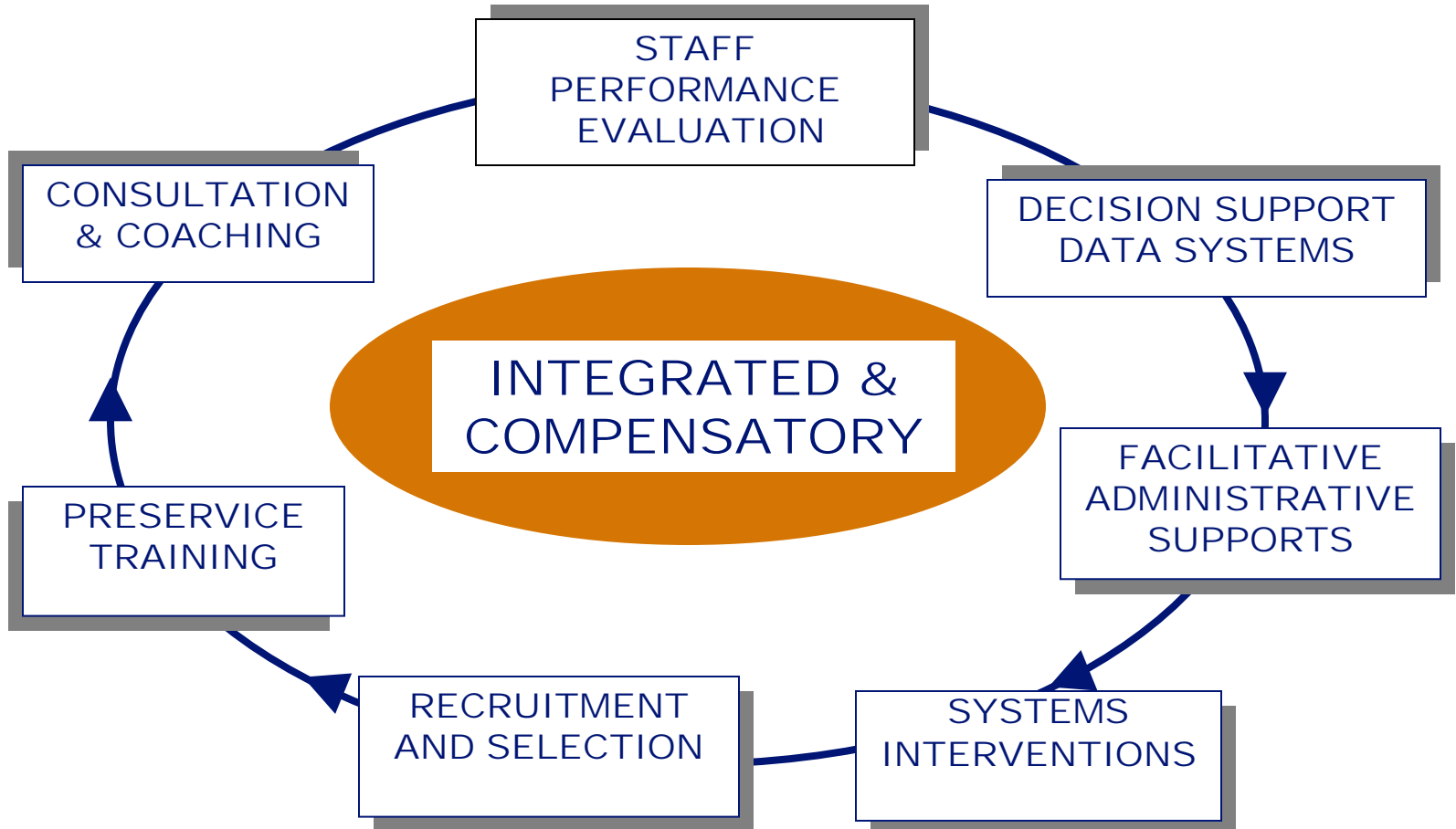
Stages of Implementation

Implementation occurs in stages:

-  **Exploration**
-  **Installation**
-  **Initial Implementation**
-  **Full Implementation**
-  **Innovation**
-  **Sustainability**



Implementation Drivers



Who does the work?

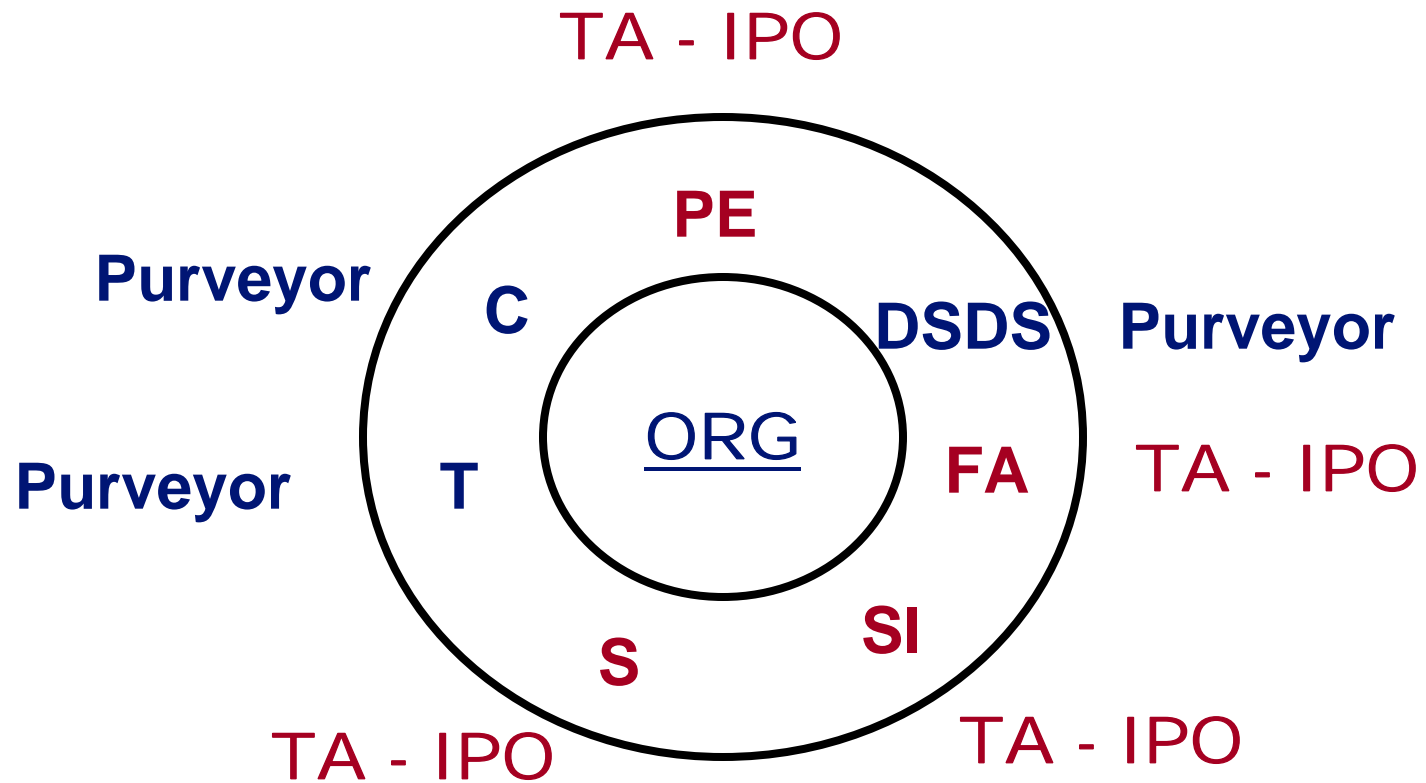
➤ Purveyors

➤ Implementation Teams (TA)

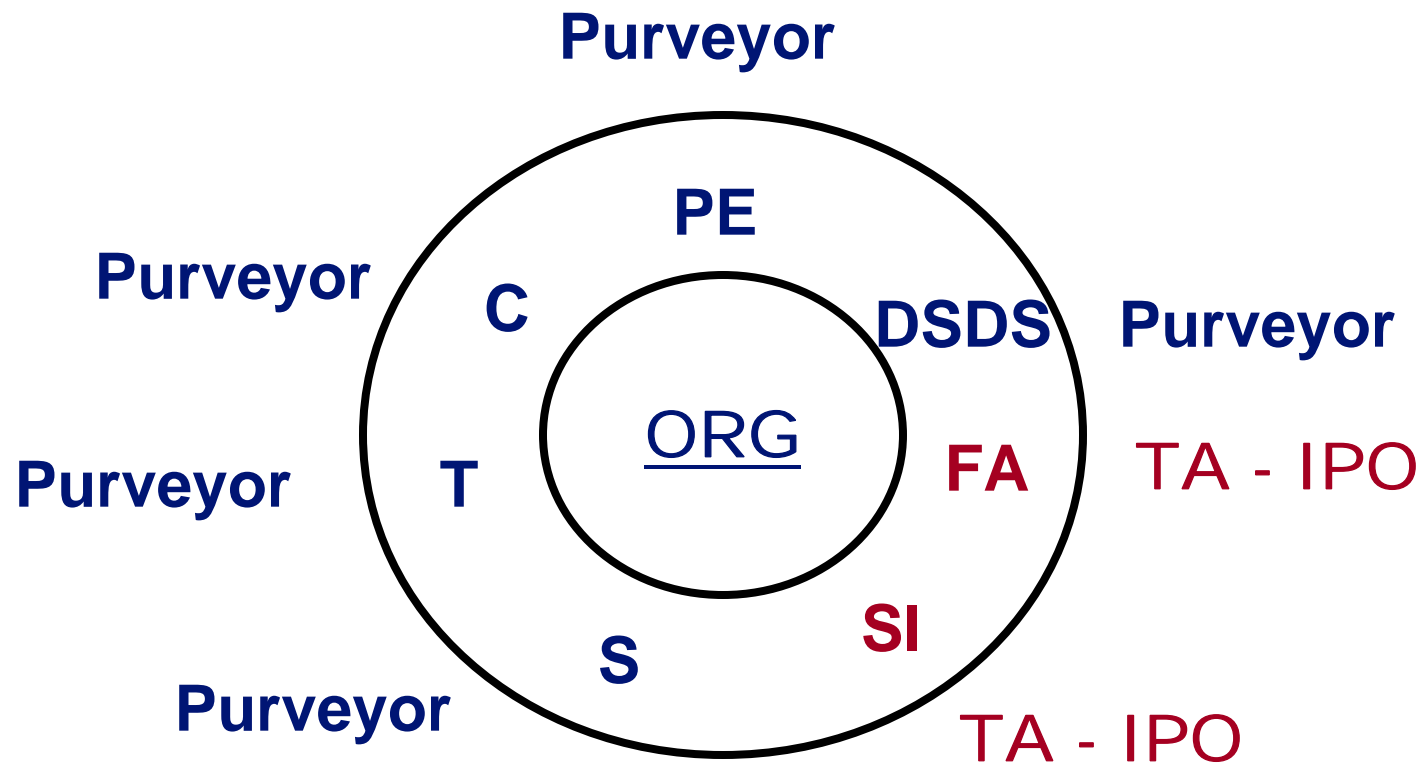
➤ Transformed provider organizations

➤ Transformed human service systems

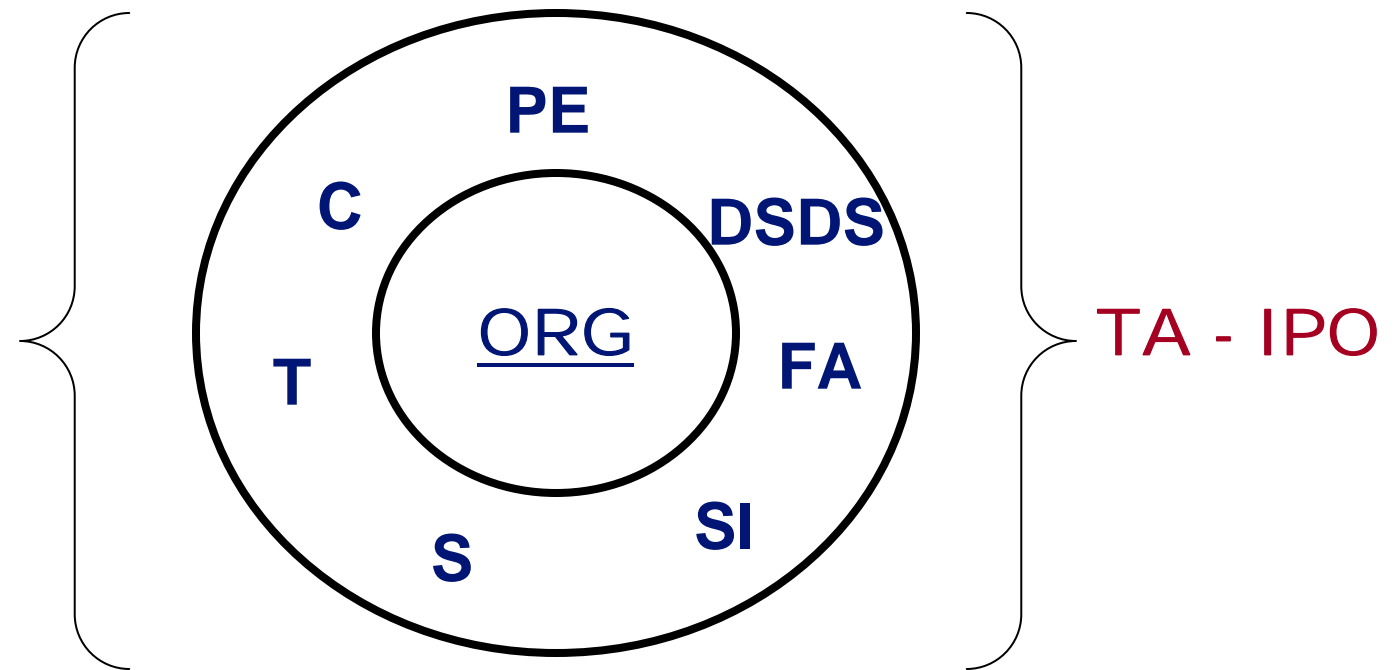
Some Purveyor Groups



A Few Purveyor Groups



Sustainability Stage



Active Purveyor Role

- **Change the behavior of adult education professionals**
 - **Change organizational structures, cultures, and climates**
 - **Change the thinking of system directors and policy makers**

Successful and sustainable implementation of evidence-based practices and programs **always requires organizational change.**

Active Purveyor Role

Simultaneous, Multi-Level Interventions



Education Implementation

- **What Works Clearinghouse**
<http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/>
- **National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities**
<http://www.nichcy.org/>
- **Council for Excellence in Government**
<http://www.excelgov.org>
- **Center for Implementing Technology in Education** <http://www.citeducation.org/>
- **National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.** <http://nasdse.org/>

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For More Information

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Download all or part of the monograph at:

<http://nirn.fmhi.usf.edu/resources/publications/Monograph/index.cfm>