



*Opportunity in North Central  
Massachusetts*

# **The Arc of Opportunity**

Diversity / Equity / Inclusion / Belonging





# BOLD & BRAVE

A Renewed commitment

- Recognizing a departure from our roots and origin story.
- Critical question: Who's at the table, who's not?
- Hiring for lived and learned experiences.



# Organizational Prep

Building a safe space for crucial conversations.

- CEO and VP of HR attended weekend long DEI workshop
- Board introduction and commitment to learning
- All staff attended a workshop on belonging



# Funding & Shared Leadership Transition

- Submitted grant proposal & Secured funding – 11/20
- DEI Consultant RFP – 02/21
- Organizational search & formation of DEI Committee – 03/21
- Shared Leadership –
  - DEI Committee reviewed RFPs & selected consultant

# Phase One - Equity Assessment

- Meeting Observations
- Based on three types of observational behaviors:
  - Homeostasis
  - Multicultural
  - Equity Based
- 08/21 to 01/22





## Phase Two – Skill building

- Consultant facilitated multiple unconscious bias skill building sessions.
- Leadership workshop – holding tension for growth
- Caucus group meetings – BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, New Hire, etc.



## Phase Three - Application

- Applying the lens of unconscious bias
- Teams across the organization
  - Select a work product to examine for unconscious bias
  - Identify ways they will examine their selected work product for unconscious bias
- Follow-up Meeting with consultant in late April to start next steps.

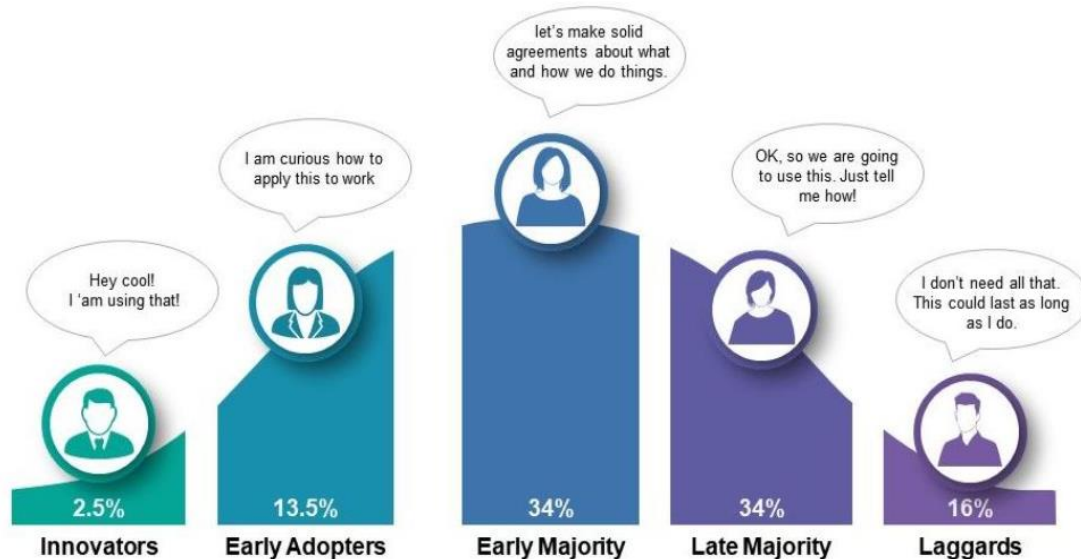


# Early Outcomes

- Employee Engagement Survey results up year over year.
- Positive effect on recruitment.
- Ability to leverage Culture in hiring.
- DEIB – One of three goals on strategic plan.
- Turnover



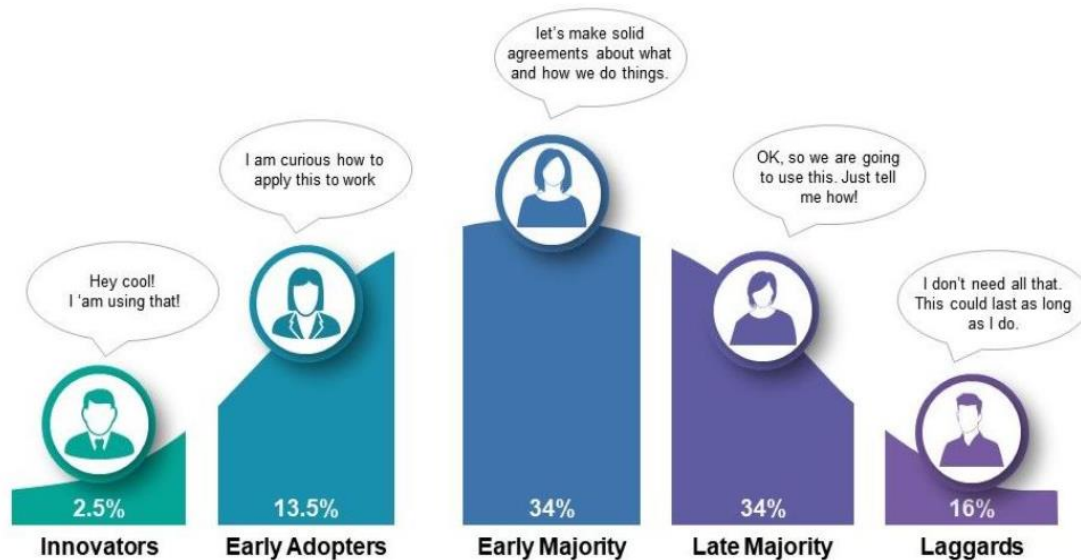
## ROGER'S INNOVATION ADOPTION CURVE



## Lessons Learned

- Everyone starts this journey from their own perspective.
- Always assume someone new is in the room, include people by offering explanations.
- Connect DEIB to your mission early and often to help staff through the adoption process as new skills are introduced.
- Incorporate DEIB questions in every single interview.
- Expand phrases used to include all aspects of diversity.
- Include your board of directors in the journey – The Arc of Opportunity has attracted a board with diverse lived and learned experiences as a result of our DEIB work.
- BIPOC candidates report a reluctance to apply for jobs when they don't see other staff with similar lived and learned experiences.

## ROGER'S INNOVATION ADOPTION CURVE



## More Lessons Learned

- Staff who identify as white need to do their own learning.
- BIPOC staff are not the source of answers about the lived experiences of all POC.
- Use tools like MailChimp and/or Constant Contact to monitor engagement with messages sent.
- Have messages come from a DEI team, not just the execs.
- Share leadership consistently in meaningful ways.
- Use LMS to manage workshop attendance & compliance.
- Be mindful of schedule conflicts to ensure DEI initiatives are given the proper time and attention to support greater outcomes.



# THANK YOU



**Mary Heafy**  
**President and CEO**  
Pronouns: She/Her  
P: 978-343-6662  
[m.heafy@arcofopportunity.org](mailto:m.heafy@arcofopportunity.org)

**Marshall Gaye**  
**Vice President of Human Resources**  
Pronouns: He/Him  
P: 978-343-6662  
[m.gaye@arcofopportunity.org](mailto:m.gaye@arcofopportunity.org)