

Teacher Manual

Defining Adopter Categories Characteristic Sheets

* Copy these sheets with characteristics and cut them into individual strips and distribute to the class. There are enough strips for 30 students. If your class contains less than 30 then only give out one #1 characteristic, a few #2 characteristics, about 1/2 of the class should receive #3 characteristics, about 1/2 of the class should receive #4 characteristics, and about 1/4 of the class should receive #5 characteristics.

1 The Gung- Ho Innovator

#2 Integrated into local system

#2 Looked to for advice

#2 Respected

#2 The one to check with

#3 Goes with the flow

#3 Kind-of cosmopolitan

#3 Deliberates for some time

#3 Seldom leads

#3 Not the first but not the last

#3 Adopt before the majority

#3 Goes along with peers

#3 If someone else did it first it might be alright

#3 It seems like its working so I'll try it

#3 Don't want to get left behind

#4 Adopt after the average

#4 In the last 1/3 of adopters

#4 Adopting may be an economic necessity

#4 Forced to adopt

#4 Adopting may be a result of networking pressure

#4 Still has uncertainty about new ideas

#4 Skeptical

#4 Skeptical, but I better adopt

#4 Everyone else has done it, should I?

#4 Peer pressure is prerequisite for adopting

#5 Last to adopt

#5 No opinion leadership

#5 Suspicious of Change Agents

#5 Must be assured that innovation will not fail

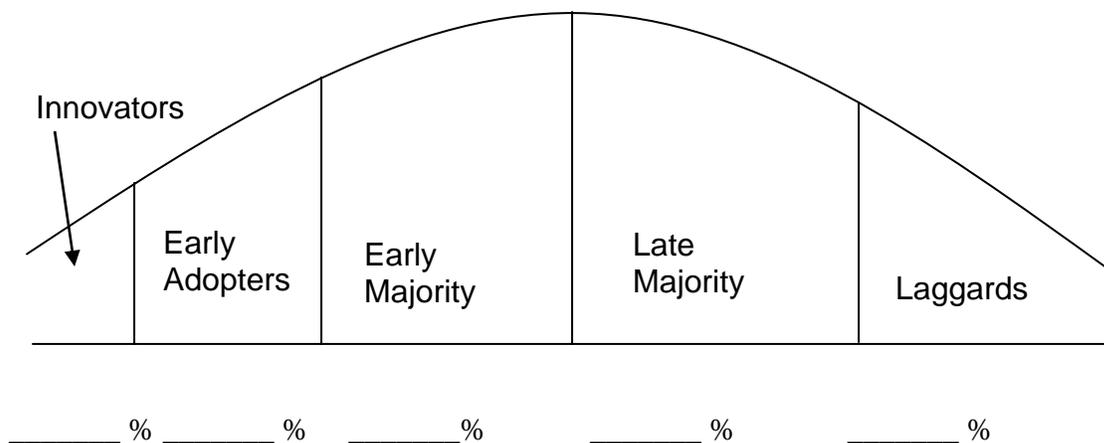
#5 Die-Hard, you don't need to adopt

The Saucio model and the Classic Adopter Curve

The Saucio model was a classic diffusion study that is commonly used to describe the adopter curve. This study occurred in the early 1960's in the small peasant village of Saucio in Columbia. Until this study, all of the diffusion studies conducted were conducted in developed areas of the world. The Saucio study was the first to be done in a country characterized by high levels of illiteracy, poverty, and with limited mass media contact. The researchers wanted to see if diffusions in peasant villages occurred in the same ways as they did in developed areas.

The two innovations that were presented to this village were a new vaccine for chickens and a new variety of potatoes. The diffusion of these innovations were studied and the adopters of the two innovations were divided into five different categories and the adoption curve was formed.

Following is the classic adopter curve that applies to most diffusion/adoption studies.



Percentages are:

<i>Innovators</i>	2.5%
<i>Early Adopters</i>	13.5%
<i>Early Majority</i>	34%
<i>Late Majority</i>	34%
<i>Laggards</i>	16%

Why are the percentages of the adopter curve the way they are?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Only a few are brave enough to try something new, but as more and more people try something new then the uncertainty about this innovation will decrease and cause more people to want to adopt it. Also, there will always be a group of people that do not want to change and will always lag.

What are some characteristics of people that would be in the innovator category?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

*Innovators are:
Venturesome
Interested in new ideas
Have the ability to understand and apply complex technical knowledge
Possess the ability to cope with high levels of uncertainty
Take part in social gatherings*

Who would be a person that would likely be an innovator?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

*Bill Gates
Thomas Edison
Henry Ford*

What are some characteristics of people that would be in the early adopter category?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

*Early Adopters respect:
More integrated into the local social system
Are looked to for advice from potential adopters
Respected for use of ideas
Decreases uncertainty of innovations by using new innovations
Conveys ideas of innovations to others
The one to check with*

Who would be a person in your community or state that would be considered an early adopter based on the characteristics of early adopters?

What are some characteristics of people that would be in the early majority category?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

*Early Majority are:
Deliberate
Adopt new innovations just before the average member of a system
May deliberate for some time before adopting a new innovation
Seldom lead
Not the first, but not the last*

Who would be a person in your community or state that would be considered in the early majority category based on the characteristics of the early majority category?

What are some characteristics of people that would be in the late majority category?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Late Majority are:

Skeptical

Adopt new ideas after the average member of society

Adoption of an innovation may be more of an economic necessity rather than a choice

Peer pressure is necessary

Much uncertainty about new ideas

Who would be a person in your community or state that would be considered to be in the late majority category based on the characteristics of the late majority category?

What are some characteristics of people that would be in the laggards category?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Laggards are:

Traditional

Last to adopt an innovation

No leadership

Tend to be suspicious of new innovations

Must be certain that a new innovation will not fail prior to adoption

Who would be a person in your community or state that would be considered a laggard based on the characteristics of laggards?

Characteristics Based on Movie and Television Characters

Matching

Place the appropriate letter of each movie character in the correct space below.

A. Captain Kirk from *Star Trek* was in a position of leadership and respect and other crew members looked to him for advice

B. Norm from *Cheers* didn't have much leadership and only tried new things when most others have already tried them

C. Homer Simpson from *The Simpsons* is an old stick in the mud that does not like to take part in social events and does not like new ideas

D. The professor from *Back to the Future* was always trying new things out

E. Tim Taylor from *Home Improvement* has an average income and waits to hear what his neighbor Wilson says before he tries something new.

_____ Innovator

_____ Early Adopter

_____ Early Majority

_____ Late Majority

_____ Laggard

Answers: D, A, E, B, C