



Supporting Decision Making Through Student Surveys in Higher Education: A Multi-Campus Model



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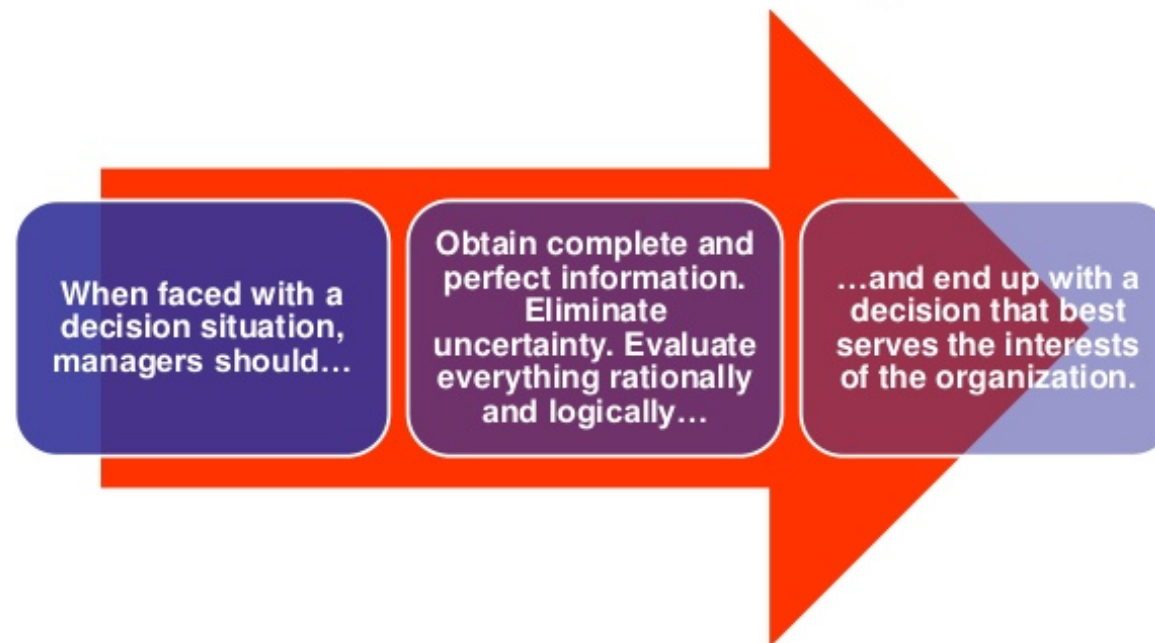
BACKGROUND

- HEIs constantly strive to achieve their institutional missions in the face of increasing competition and limited resources.
- They make crucial short- and long-term decisions as they do so, however critical questions remain:
 - Do institutions have necessary facts to make well-informed decisions?
 - Are some decisions being made based on intuition because relevant data is unavailable?
 - Student analytics systems typically draw on data that is easy to measure and capture and ignore information that is intangible- surveys
 - The importance of accurate, relevant and accessible data to support short and long-term decision making can not be overstated.



WHAT IS DECISION MAKING?

The Classical Model of Decision Making





STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

- Data collected from the surveys serve a number of purposes including but not limited to:
 - Enhancing the student experience
 - Contributing to monitoring and review of quality and standards
 - Ensuring the effectiveness of course design and delivery
 - Enabling a dialogue with students
 - Helping students reflect upon their experiences
 - Identifying good practice
 - Measuring student satisfaction
 - Contributing to staff development

(Nair, Mertova & Murdoch, 2012).



RATIONALE



Performance Management



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CONTEXTUALISATION

- TUT is a multi-campus university
- Result of a merger
- 9 campuses
- 4 provinces
- 56 000 students





METHODOLOGY

- Data collected from
 - research reports of surveys conducted by the Office of Surveys and Institutional Research - 2004 to 2014
 - reflections of 2 practitioners who worked in that office in that period.

Therefore

- Document Analysis- research reports
- Reflective practice- reflections



DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

- refers to a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study (Bailey 1994).
- It requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009, Lekená 2013).





REFLECTIVE PRACTICE- FOUNDATIONS



- **Relationships are at the HEART of Reflective Practice**
 - **Organizational Relationships**
 - **Relationships between supervisors & supervisees**
 - **Relationships between co-workers**
 - **Relationships between staff and enrolled families**
-
- **“ALL LEARNING TAKES PLACE IN THE CONTEXT OF RELATIONSHIPS & IS CRITICALLY AFFECTED BY THE QUALITY OF THOSE RELATIONSHIPS”**



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE REFERS TO A WAY OF WORKING THAT SPANS DISCIPLINES AND ENCOURAGES STAFF MEMBERS TO ...

- Consider the possible implications of their interventions while in the midst of their work
- Slow down, filter their thoughts, and more wisely choose actions and words
- Deepen their understanding of the contextual forces that affect their work
- Take time afterward to consider their work and the related experiences in a way that influences their next steps.



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE-KEY CONCEPTS



Reflection –in-action



Reflective practicum



Willing suspension of disbelief



REFLECTION-IN-ACTION

- The kind of reflection that takes place while a problem is being addressed.
- It is “action-present” and is often in response to a surprise – where the expected outcome is outside of our knowing-in-action
- Challenging our assumptions



REFLECTIVE PRACTICUM

- •A setting designed for the task of learning a practice
- •Learn by doing with the help of coaching
- •The “learning by doing” provides opportunities to develop “reflection-in-action”, and
- •The dialogue between “coach” and “learner” becomes a form of reciprocal “reflection-in-action”



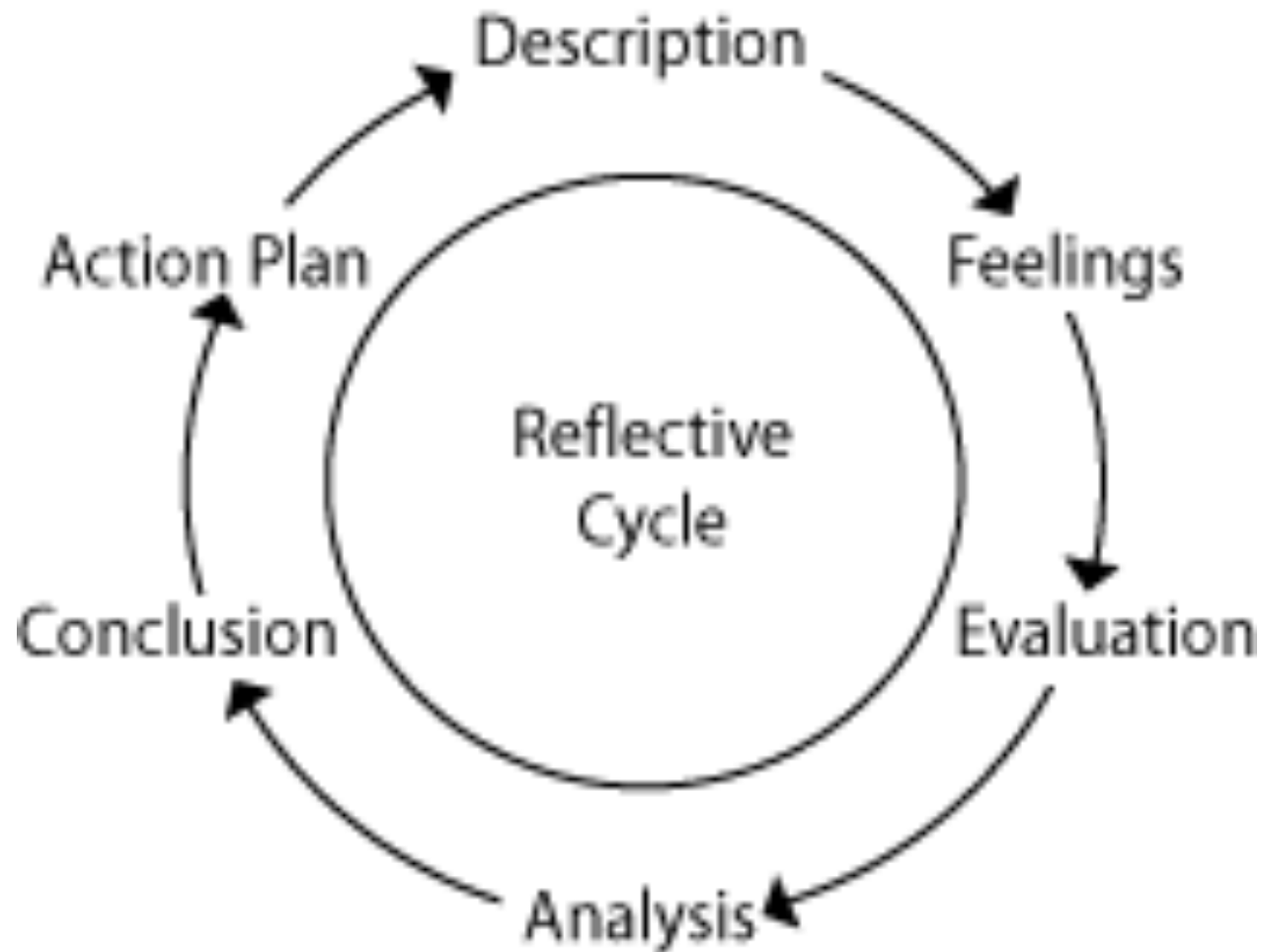
WILLING SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF

- **•Suspension of disbelief or willing suspension of disbelief** is a term coined in 1817 by the poet and aesthetic philosopher Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who suggested that if a writer could infuse a "human interest and a semblance of truth" into a fantastic tale, the reader would suspend judgment concerning the implausibility of the narrative.
- **•It describes the process of entering into an experience, without judgment, in order to learn from it.**
- Schön uses the term in relation to the idea of learning by doing. One cannot will oneself to 'believe' until one understands. But understanding often will only arise from experience. So it is necessary first to allow the experience to happen.



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning.

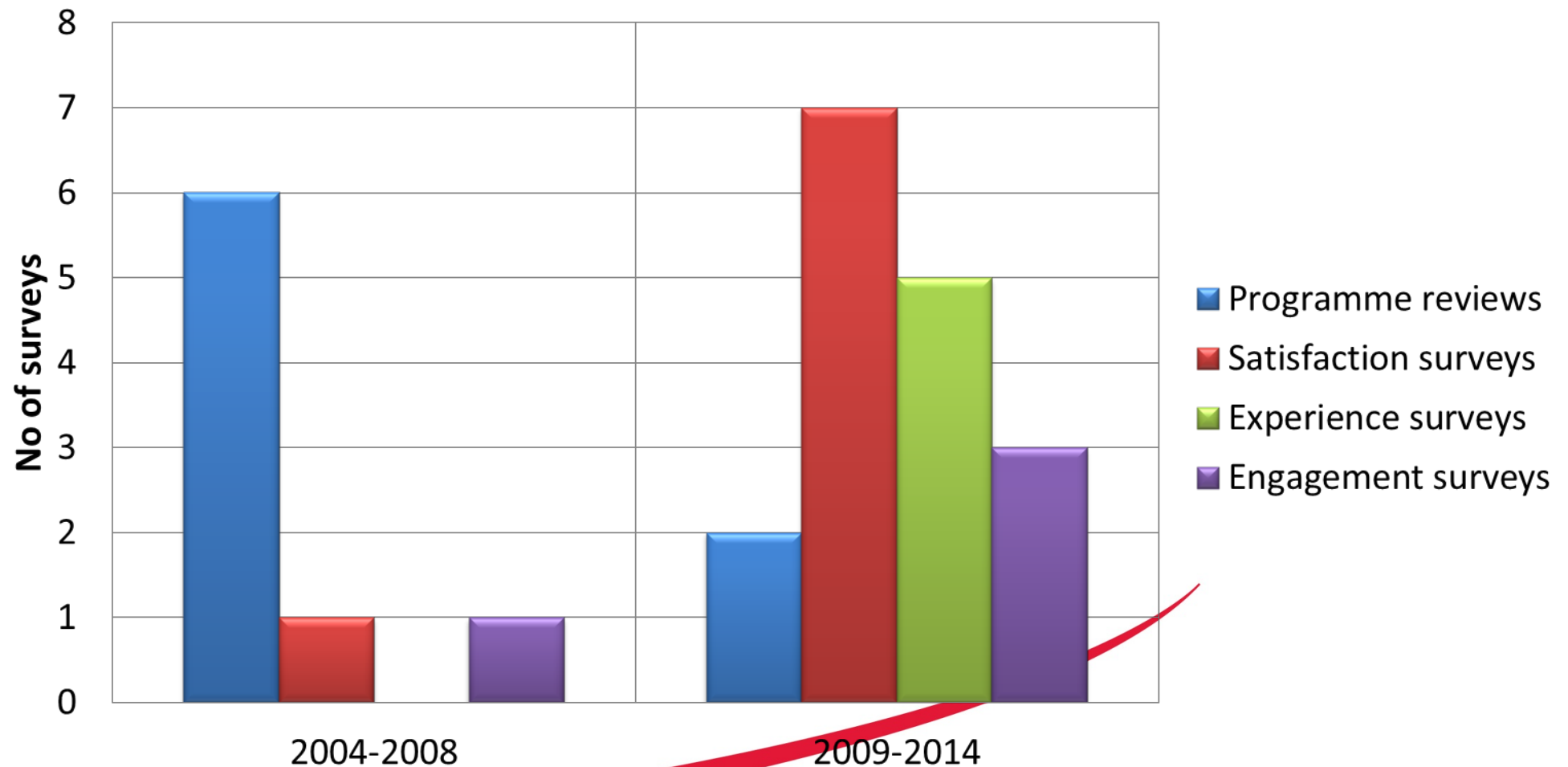


Gibbs' (1988) Reflective Cycle



FINDINGS- TYPES OF SURVEYS

Types of surveys





METHODOLOGIES

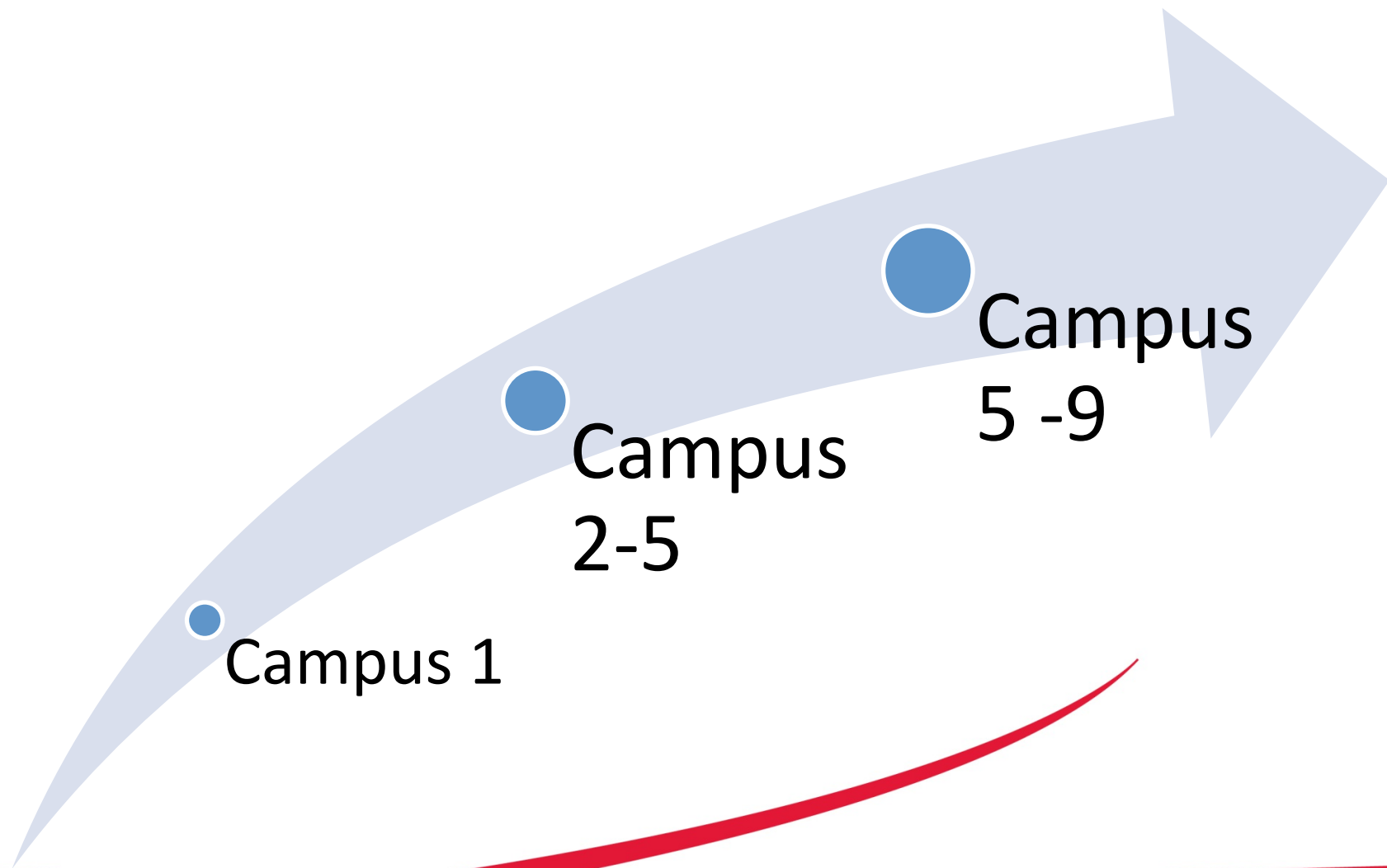
Methodology	2004-2008	2009-2014
Quantitative	6	6
Qualitative	0	1
Mixed Methods	2	10

Paper-based vs On-line Surveys

- No on-line surveys in the period 2004-2008
- 2 on-line surveys in the period 2009-2014

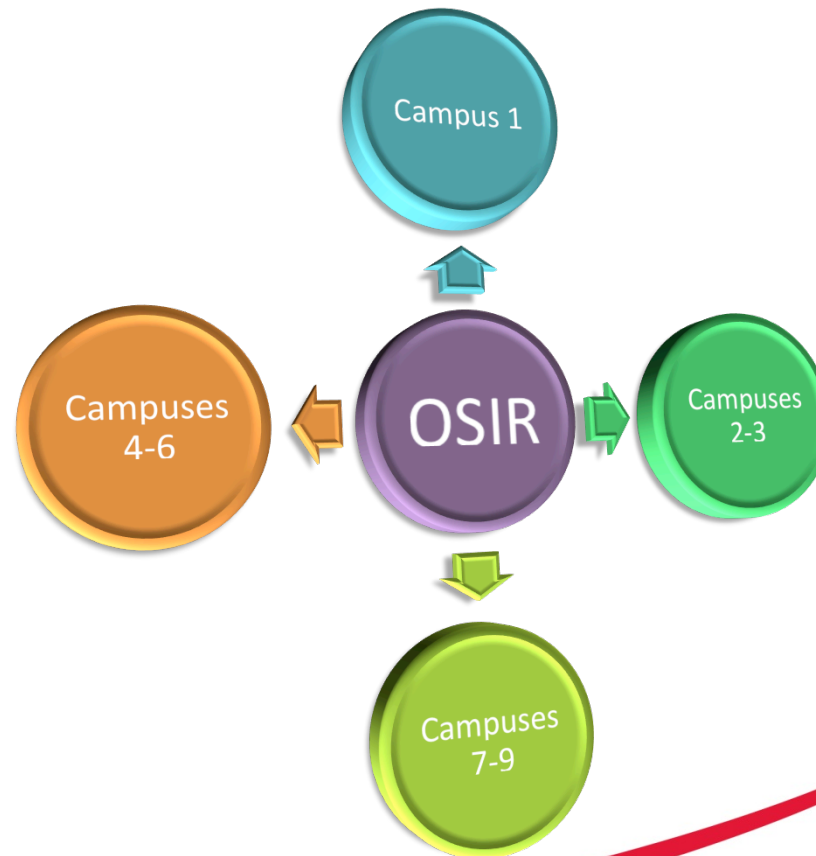


DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES 2004-2008



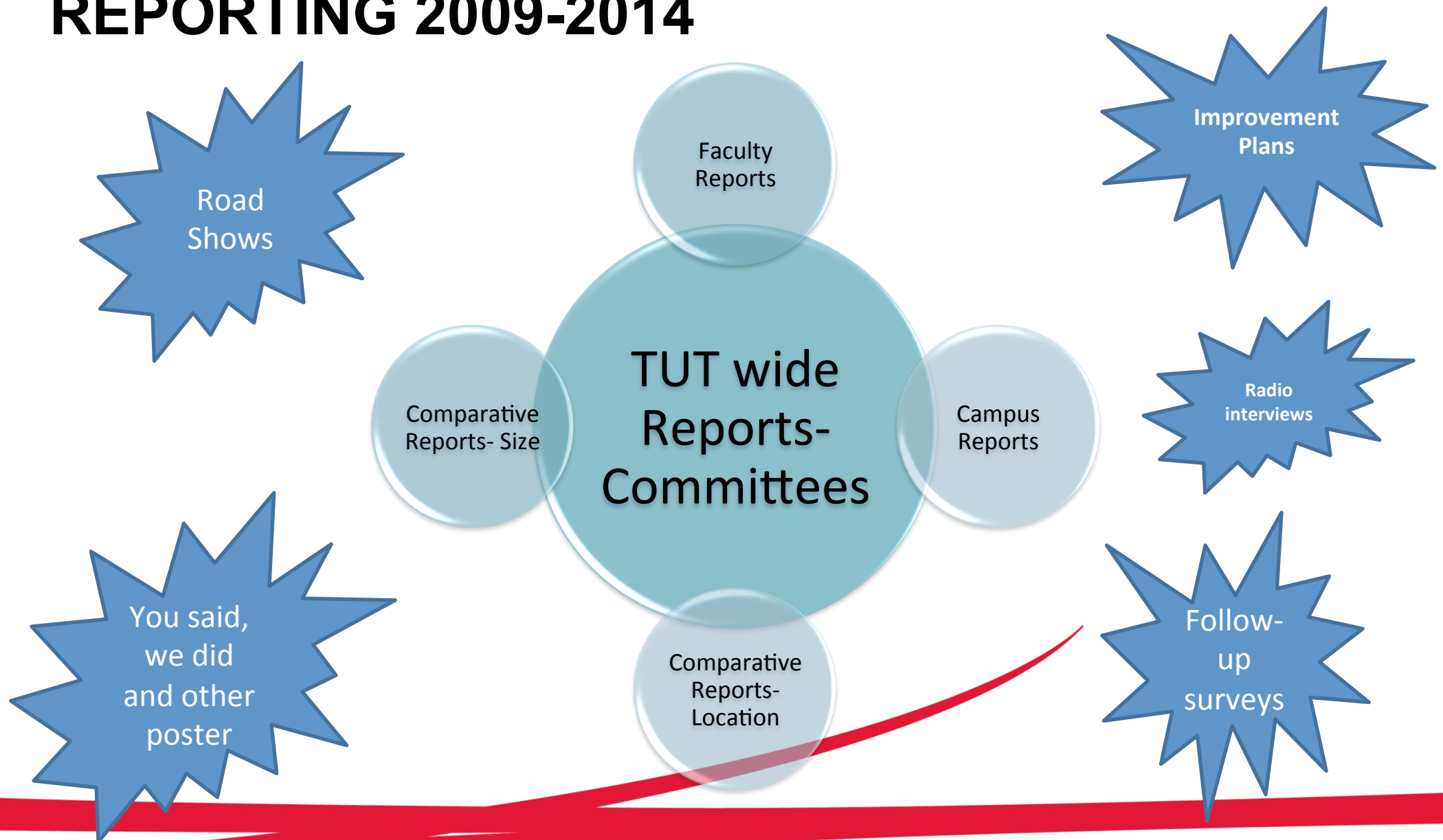


DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES 2009-2014





REPORTING 2009-2014





REPORTING PLATFORMS

- Infographics- periodically
- E-tutor article
- Flyers
- Narrative Reports
- Conference presentations
- Journal publications
- Trend analysis reports-predictions

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CONCLUSIONS

- Roles of the have changed
- Changing data collection methods
- Reporting strategies
- Trend analysis and predictive analytics
- Environmental scanning
- Increasing support for data-driven decision making
- Supporting decision making using student surveys in a multi-campus university is a very complex exercise



FINAL CONCLUDING REMARKS

- “It is less about data analysis and more about communication – that is how you become part of the decision-making process. You have to have very good data analysis skills, of course, as the information has to be totally credible.
- But it is how you communicate the information that determines if you become part of the decision-making process. We have to be integral to that process, or we will end up sitting in the basement wondering why we weren’t asked to be in the meeting upstairs”.

John Pryor, 2015



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