



# COMPASS EDUCATION

## The AMOEBA of Cultural Change

Saturday 14 March 2015



*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

*- Margaret Mead*



## Innovations are ...

... interventions in systems. They do not have to be “new” ... just new to that part of the system.

## There are many, *many* types of innovation

... and they range from actual “light bulbs” to process changes, mindset changes, you-name-it

## Sustainability innovations ...

are interventions at a system leverage point that are designed to produce multiple benefits, around the whole Compass (or whatever framework you use)





# The “Critical Characteristics”

- (1) PERCEIVED RELATIVE ADVANTAGE
- (2) RELATIVE SIMPLICITY
- (3) LEVEL OF OBSERVABILITY
- (4) TRIALABILITY
- (5) COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING SYSTEM

**Source:** Everett Rogers, *“Diffusion of Innovations,”* 1962, Revised 1995, 2006, Free Press



## *Some Questions...*

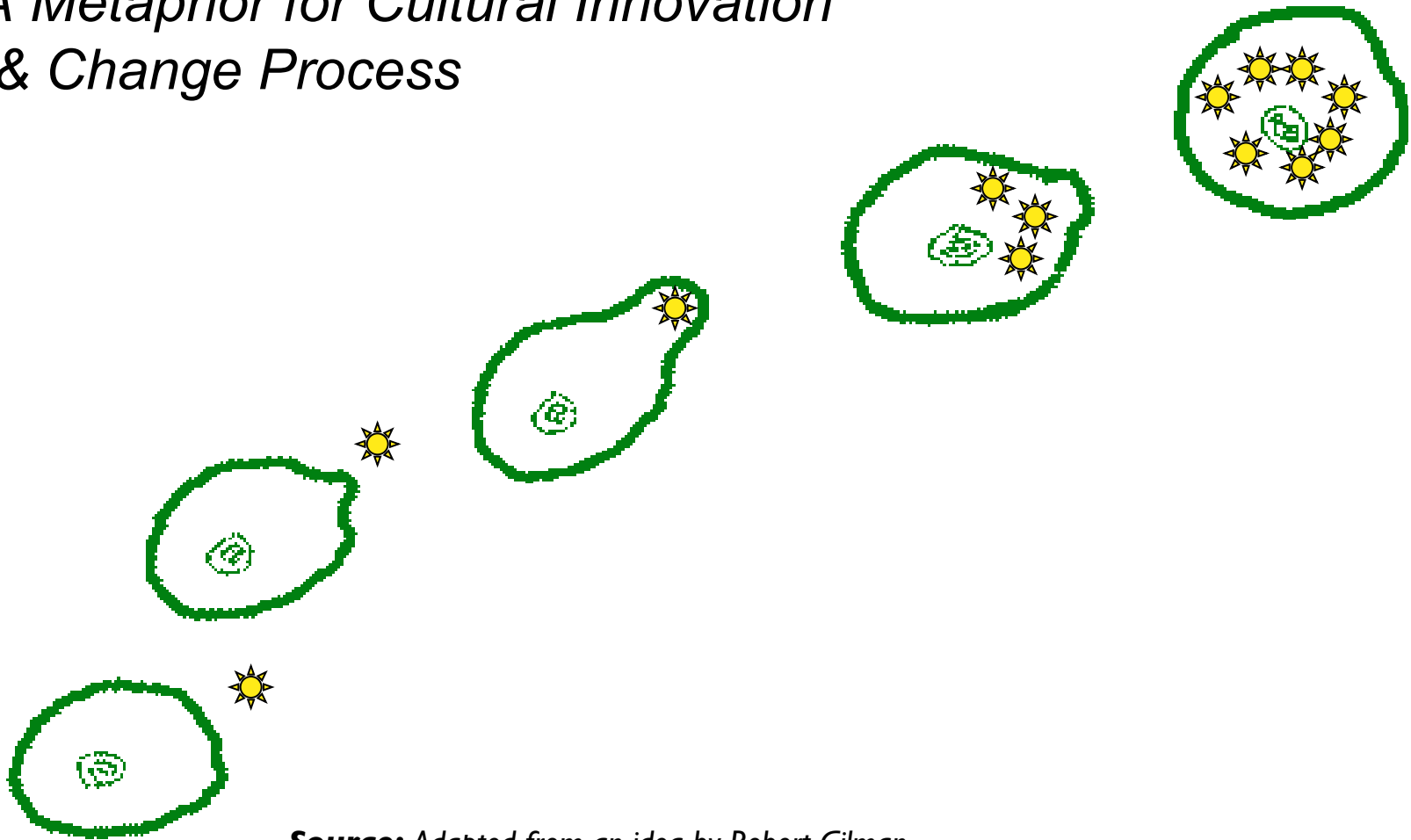
- ❖ How does a small group spawn historical changes?
- ❖ How do new ideas (or technologies, or values) spread through an entire culture?

Remember....regardless of whether the innovation is A new technology, a slang word, or a new understanding of what it means to be a human being, the process by which it spreads is called innovation diffusion.



# The Amoeba of Culture

*A Metaphor for Cultural Innovation  
& Change Process*

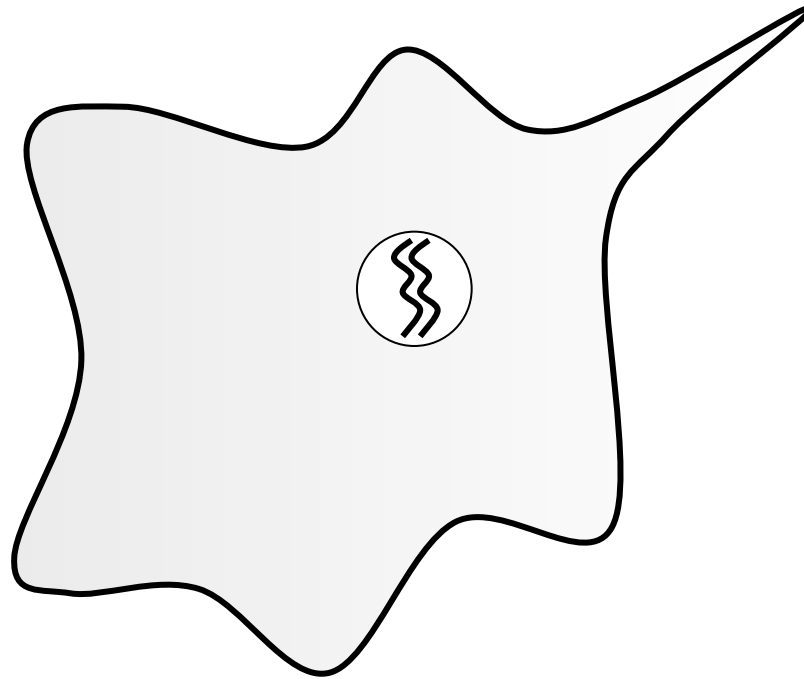
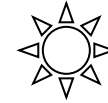


**Source:** Adapted from an idea by Robert Gilman



# The Amoeba Metaphor

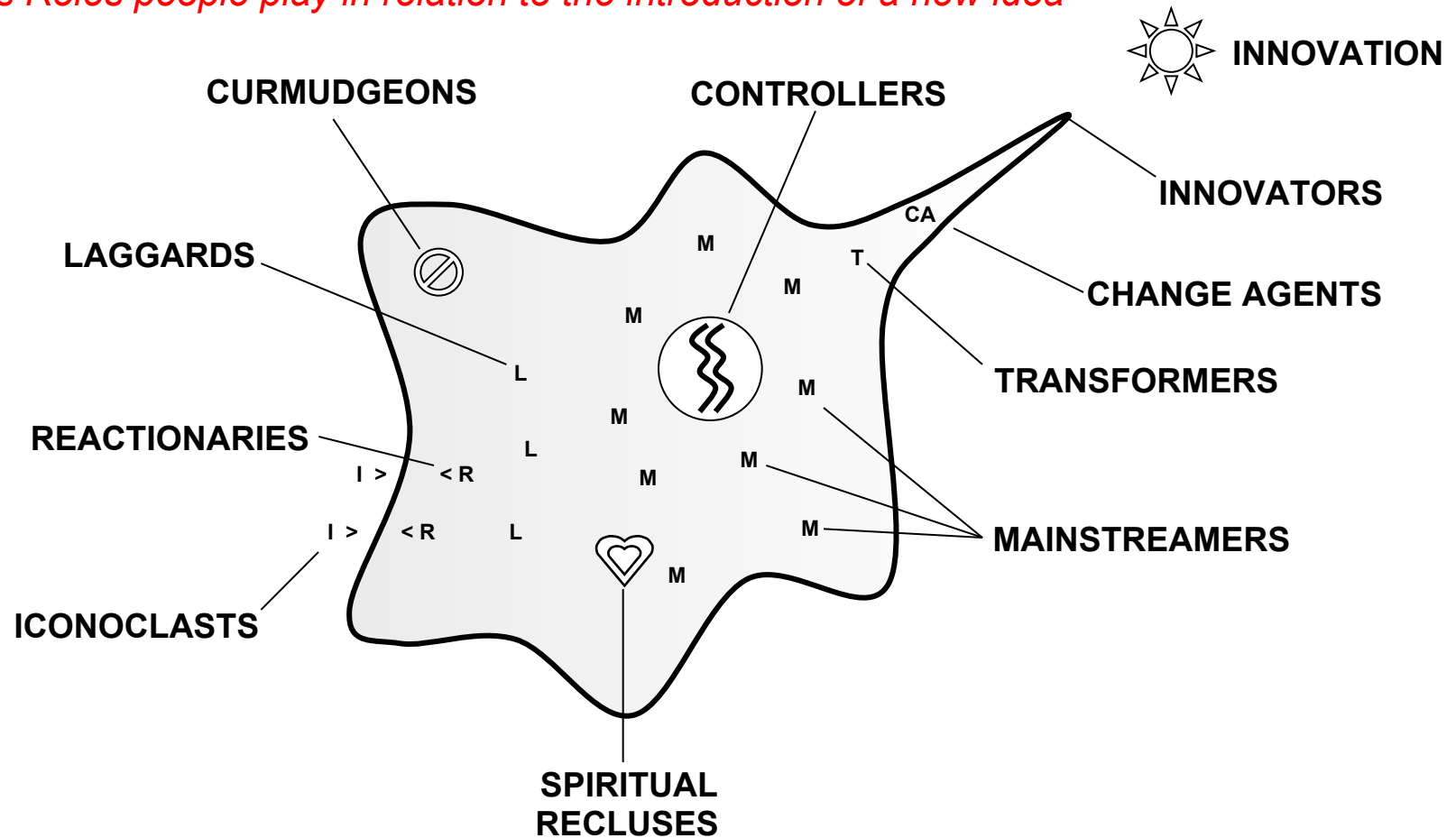
*Various Roles people play in relation to the introduction of a new idea*





# The Amoeba of Cultural Change

*Various Roles people play in relation to the introduction of a new idea*



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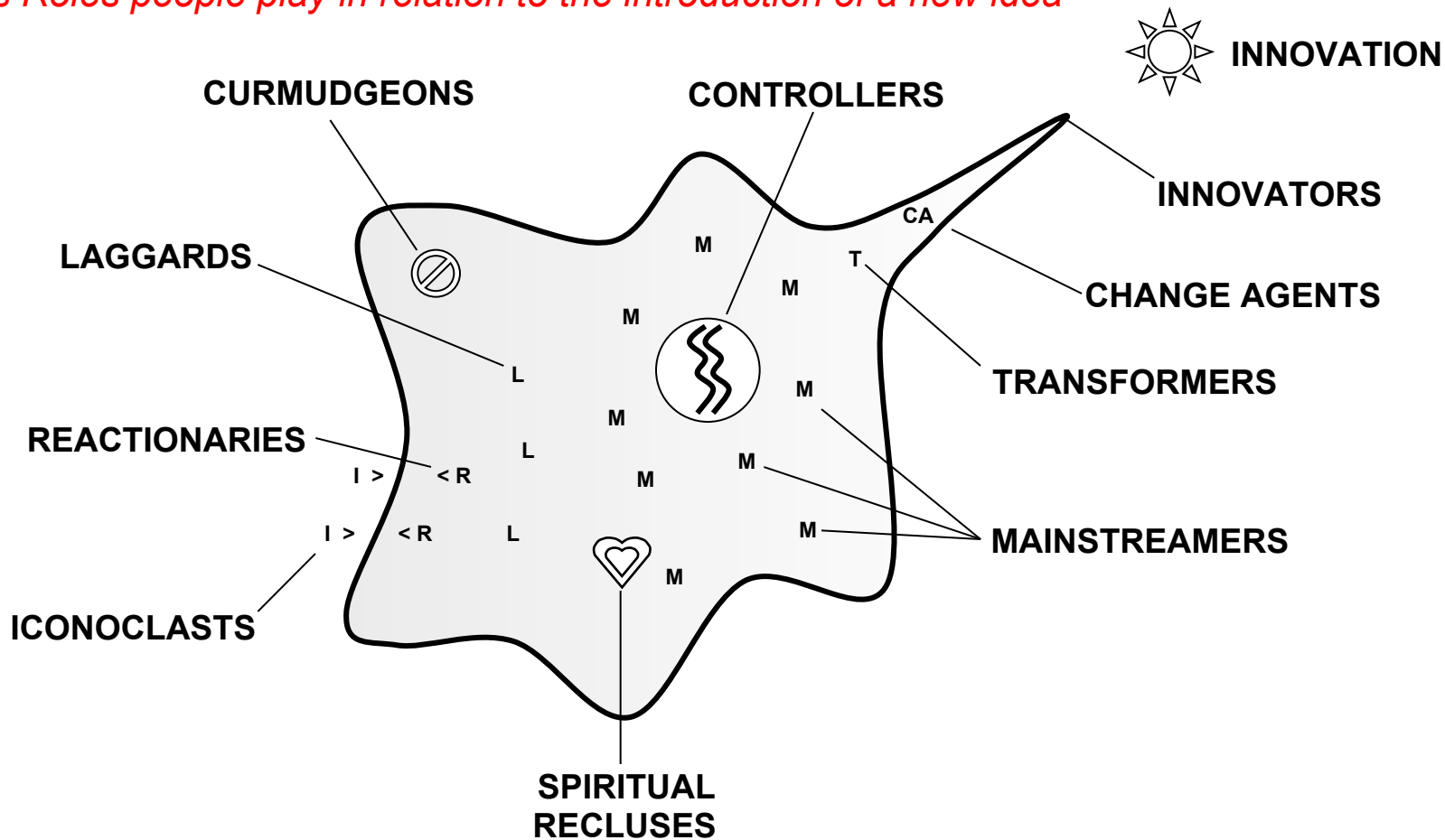
# INNOVATOR





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# CHANGE AGENTS

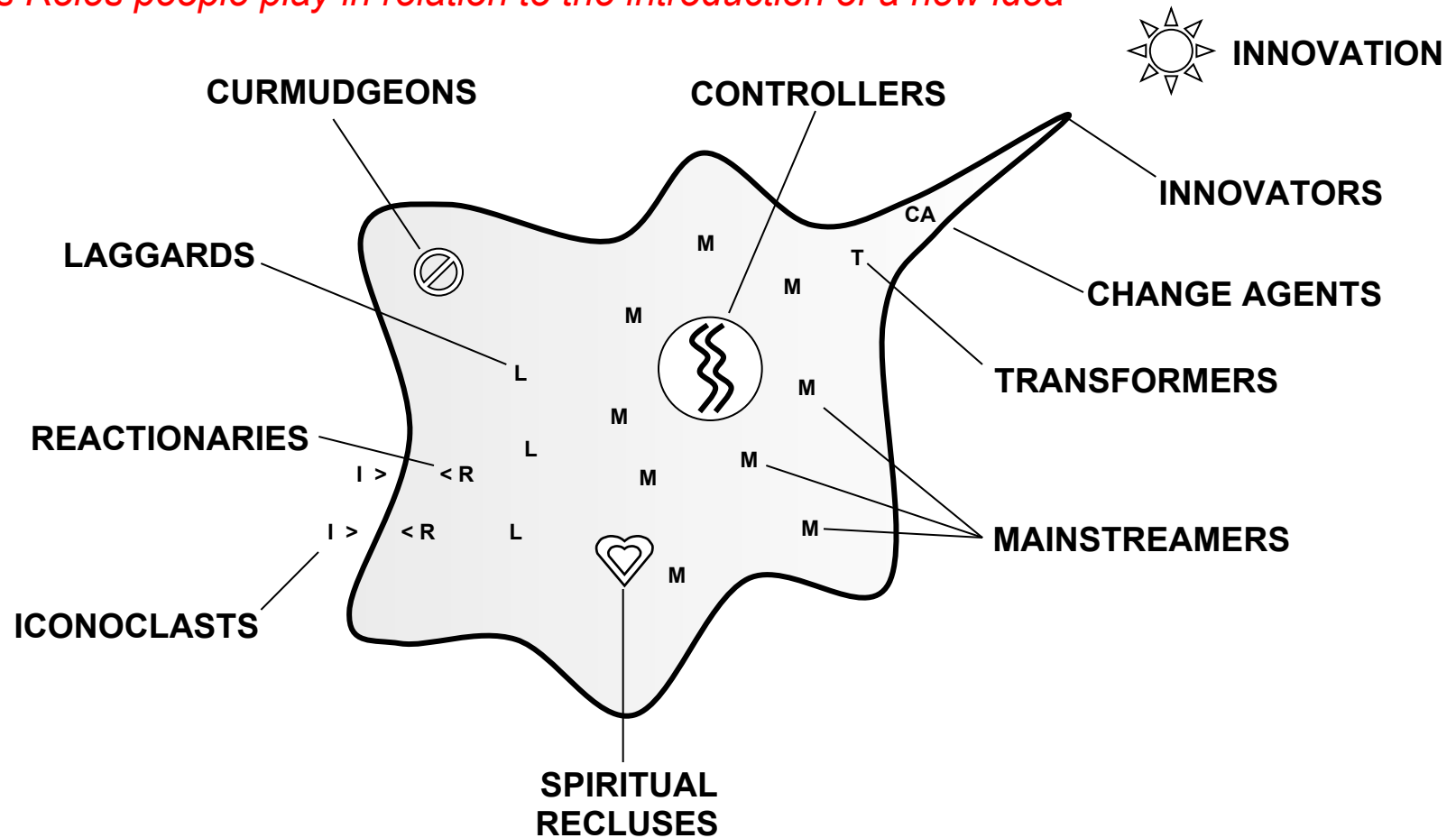


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# TRANSFORMERS



**Hamish Clark** @mrclarksclasses · 21h

@YongZhaoOU YES! Around about time! Goba! connectivity! ObaWorld : Global Education [buff.ly/1j6u7zB](http://buff.ly/1j6u7zB) #etc2014

Expand

Reply Retweet Favorite More



**Jayson Richardson** @JaysonR · 22h

Student autonomy <-> Global campus <-> Product-oriented learning.

@YongZhaoUO #etc2014

Expand

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**John Nash** @jnash · 22h

Very much appreciated @YongZhaoUO keynote at #etc2014 — very in line with @uceacastle notions of how the world is changing.

Expand

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**Jayson Richardson** @JaysonR · 22h

Brilliant keynote...funny and on point. @YongZhaoUO @jnash #etc2014

View conversation

Reply Retweet Favorite More



**Claire Hewson** @ChewyHewson · 23h

I don't want to be a sausage maker- how not to kill creativity #etc2014

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**Myron Buck** @myroniusbuckus · 23h

"A good education gets children out of the basement" IOW....makes people independent. Agreed #etc2014

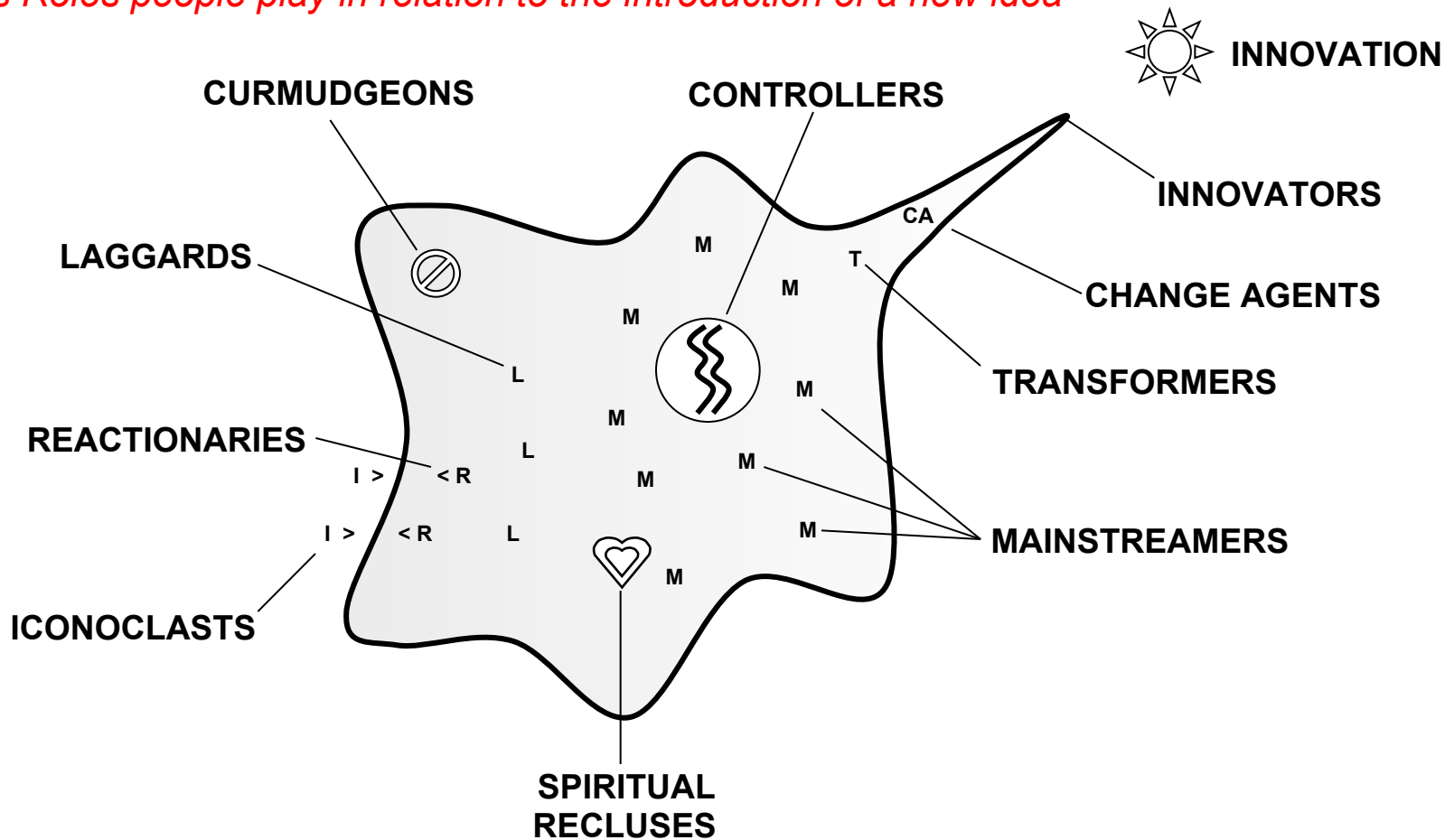
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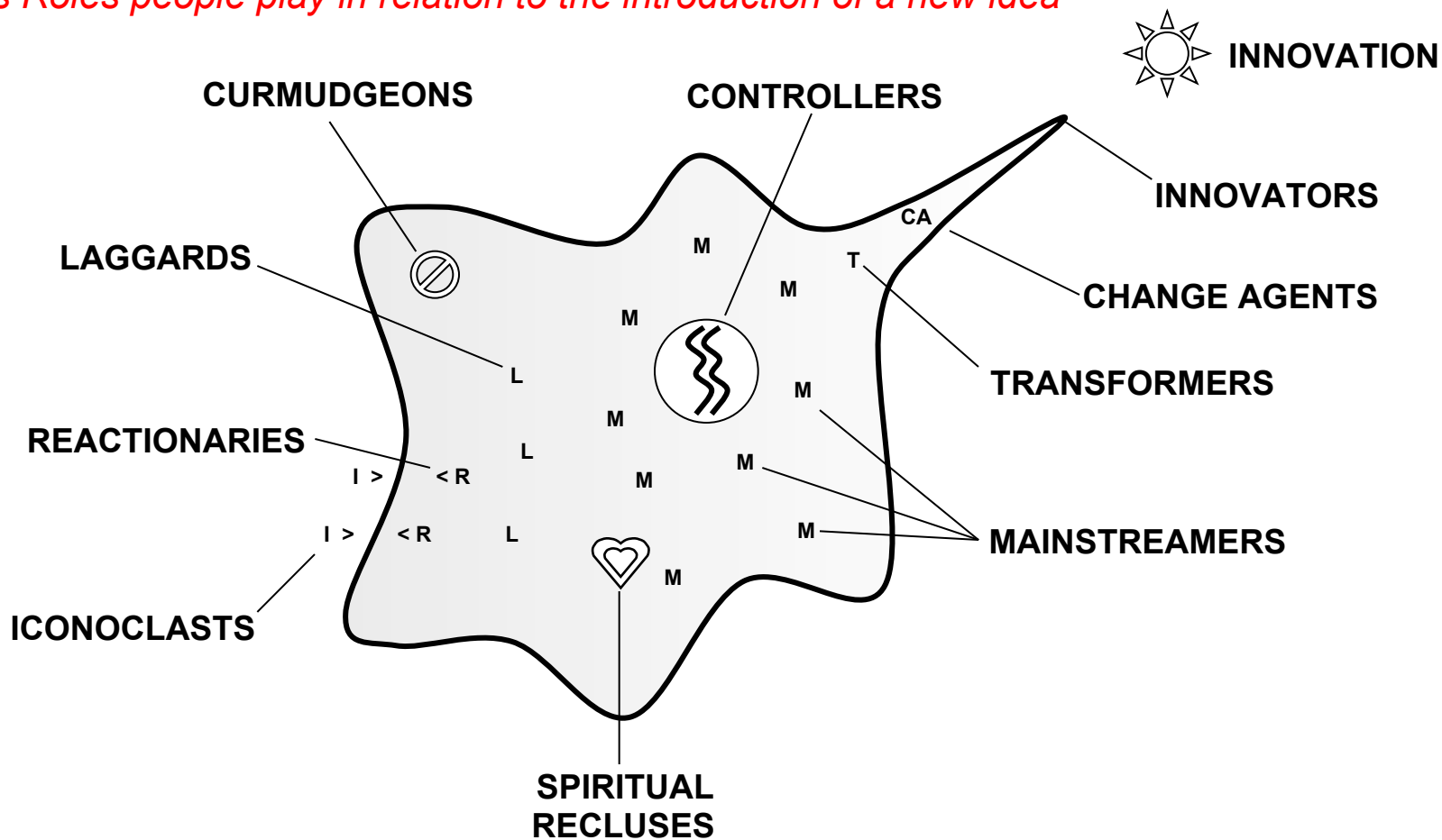
# REACTIONARY





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# SPIRITUAL RECLUSE

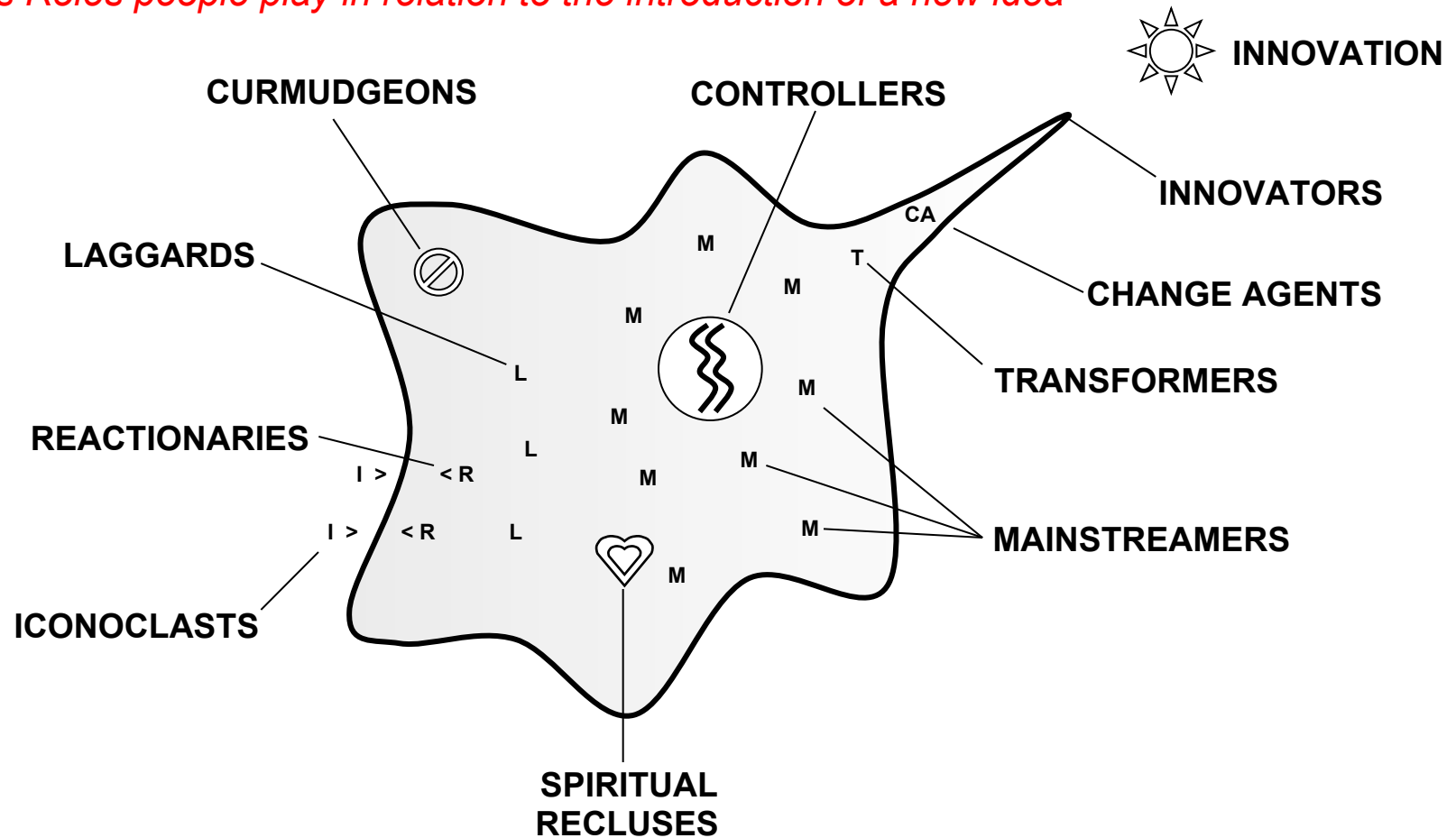


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# MAINSTREAMERS

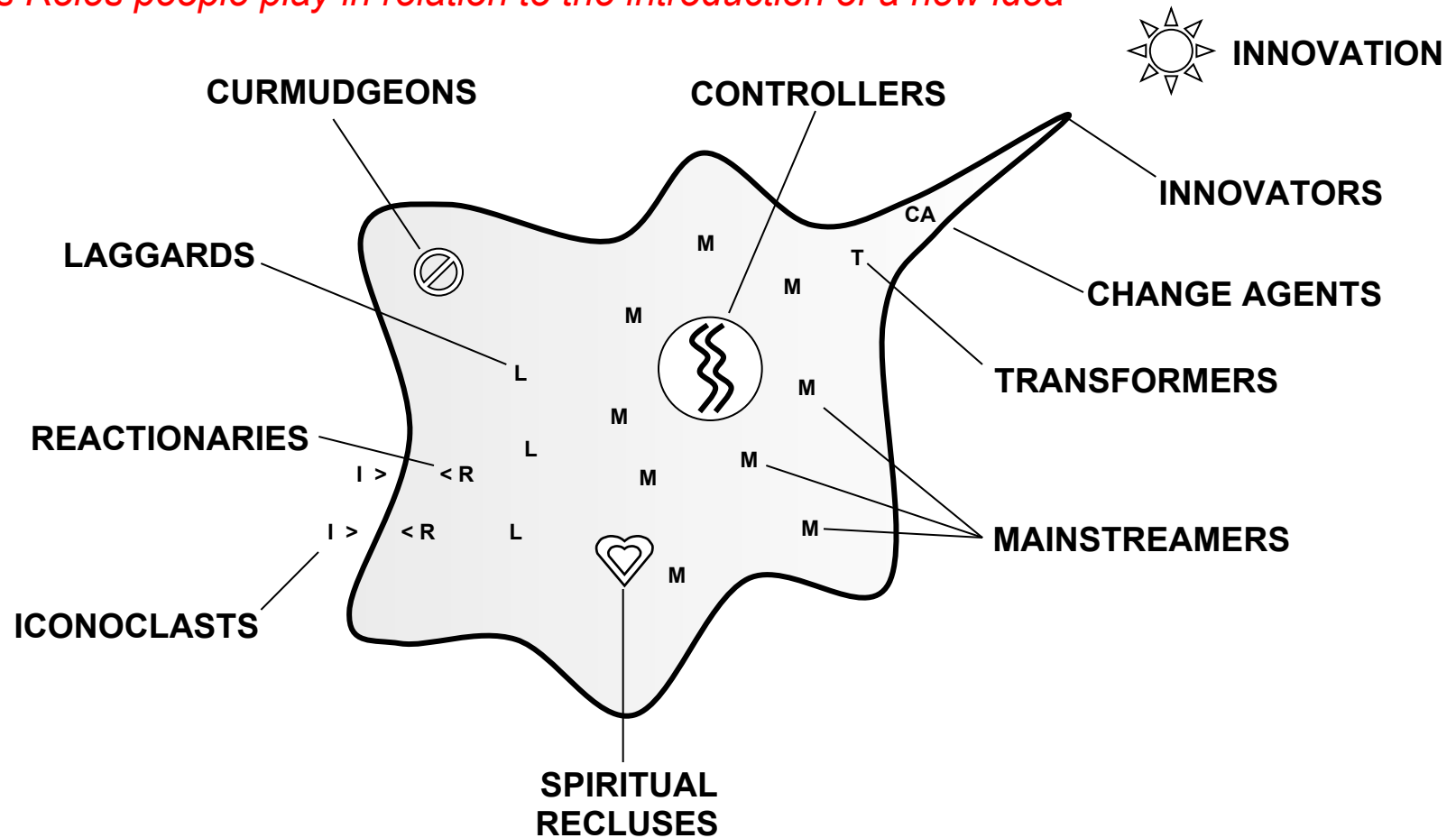


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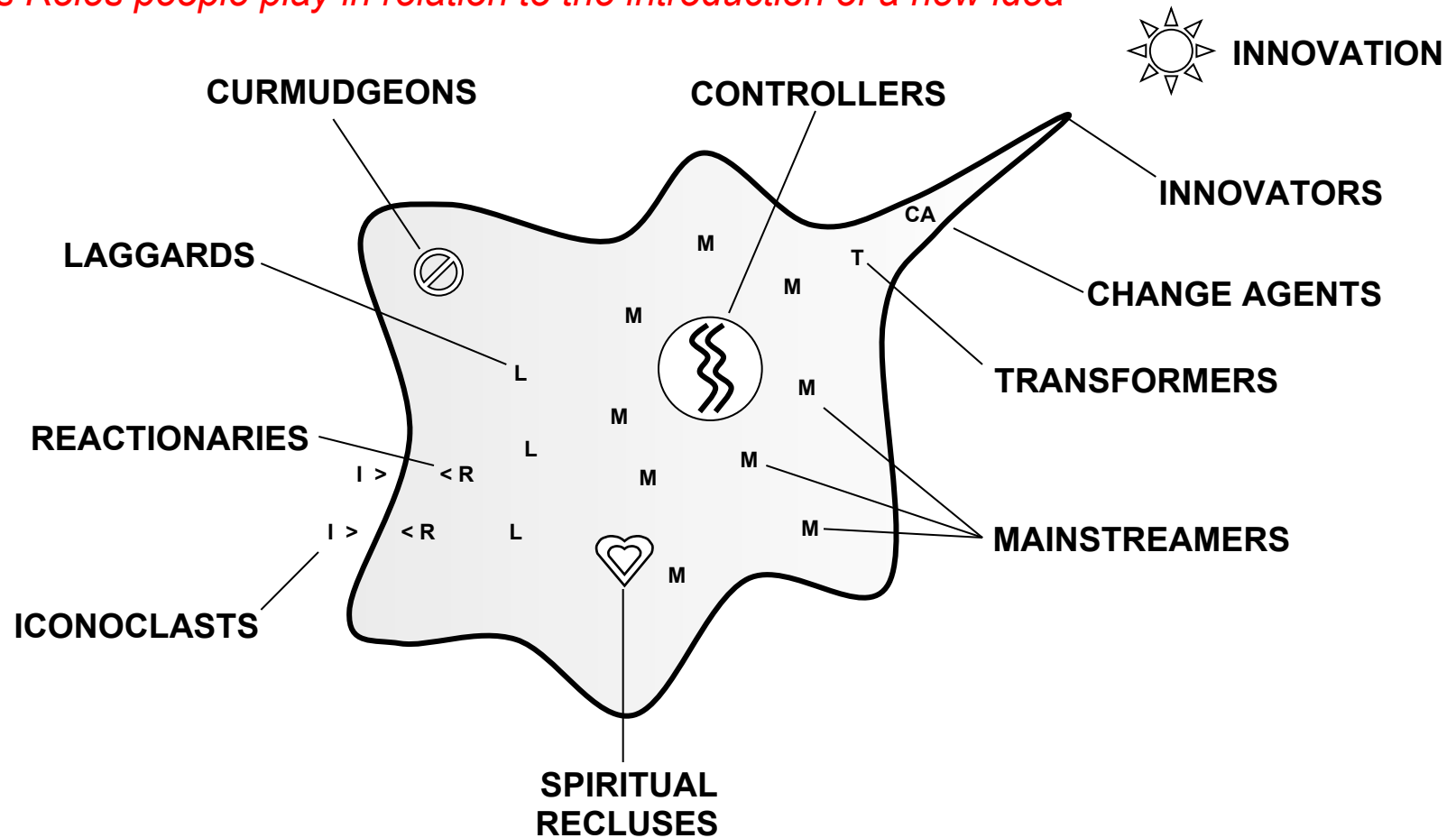
# LAGGARD





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# CRUMUDGEON

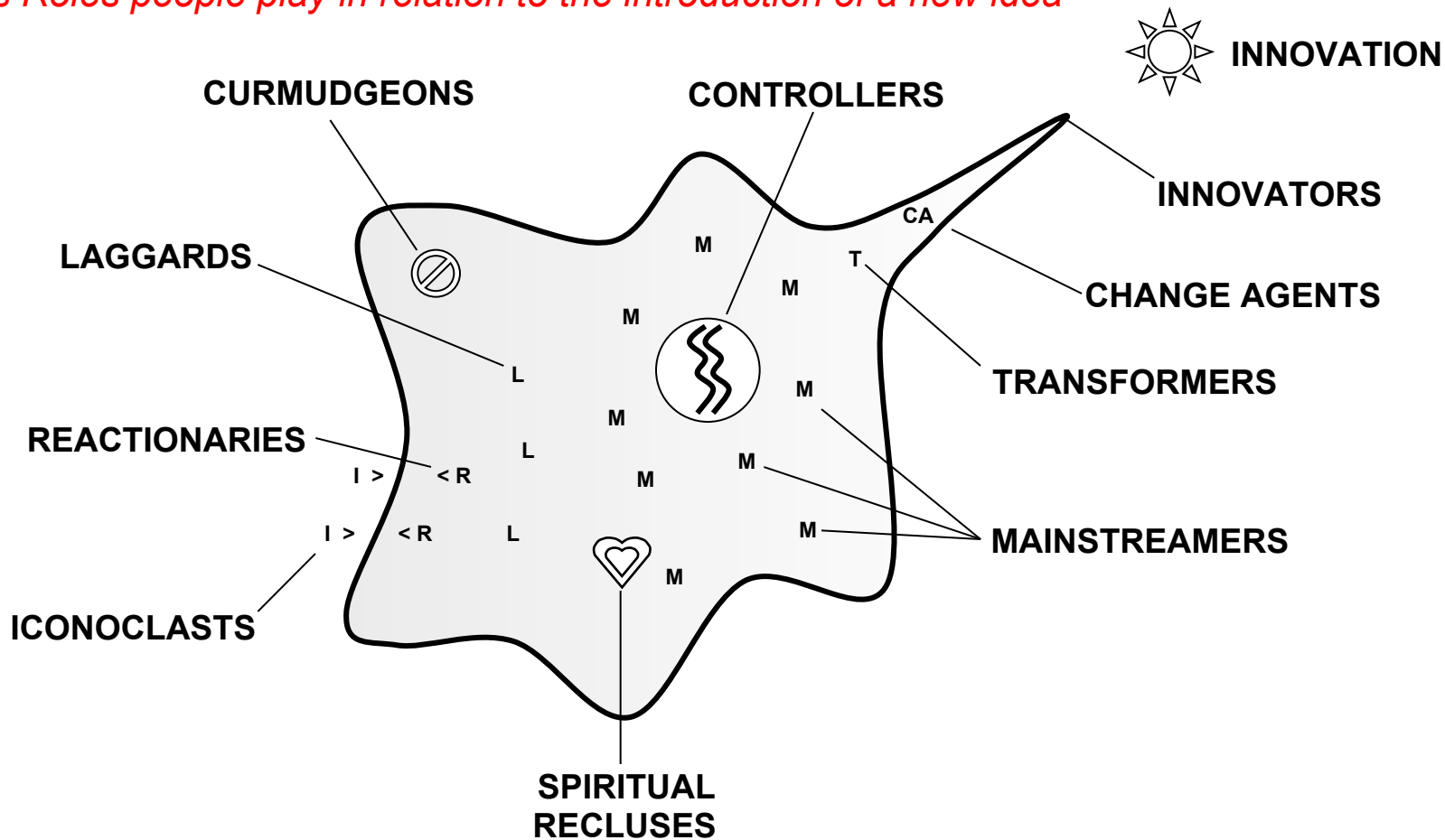
Yeah right.  
Been there.  
Done that.  
Didn't work.





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# ICONOCLAST



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# Amoeba Roles



Each receive a **role**, and they *must not* tell each other what their role is.

The role will instruct you **how to act and behave** in a scenario.

Take 2 minutes to read your role for understanding. Any questions about the role pleas ask.





# The AMOEBA Game







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# Amoeba Scenario

## ***Millennium International School***

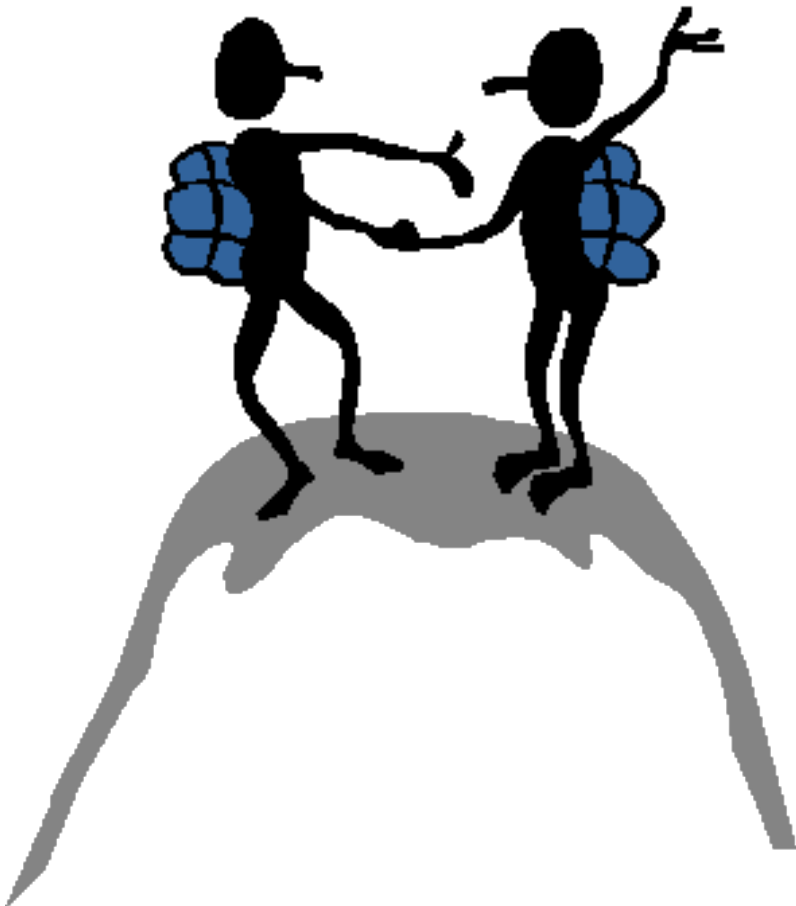
Global Leader in Student Leadership and Next Generation Learning.



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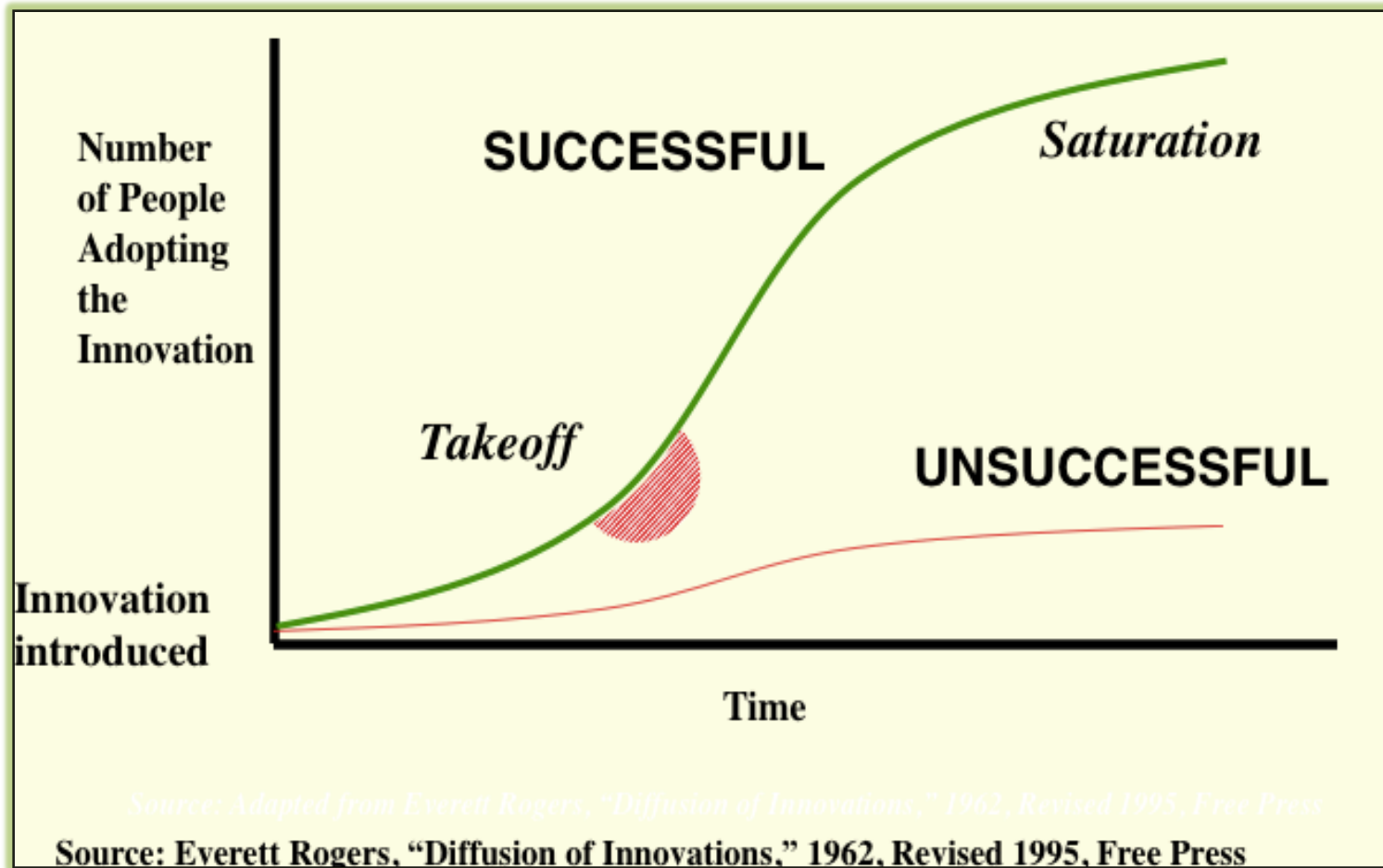
## Cultural Diffusion



## Perspectives for strategic thinking



# The Innovation Adoption Curve





# The “Critical Characteristics”

- (1) PERCEIVED RELATIVE ADVANTAGE
- (2) RELATIVE SIMPLICITY
- (3) LEVEL OF OBSERVABILITY
- (4) TRIALABILITY
- (5) COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING SYSTEM

**Source:** Everett Rogers, *“Diffusion of Innovations,”* 1962, Revised 1995, 2006, Free Press



# Key Strategy Points

- ✓ **Change Agents** need to **work with Transformers**
- ✓ **Change Agents** are more effective when they **work together**
- ✓ **Reactionaries** are most effective when they discredit or disempower **Change Agents**
- ✓ **Change Agents** may **waste time** if they spend it trying to change **Reactionaries**
- ✓ **Innovators** often make **ineffective Change Agents**.
- ✓ **Innovators** and **Change Agents** often **neglect to model** the innovation themselves.
- ✓ **Innovators** often remain attached to a "**pure**" **formulation of their idea**, at the expense of the innovation's diffusion potential.





# Key Strategy Points

- ✓ But it's **easier to stop real change** — to be a **Reactionary** — than to be a Change Agent.
- ✓ **Reactionaries** usually feel that their actions are contributing to the **good of the whole**.
- ✓ **Iconoclasts** should **keep Reactionaries busy**.
- ✓ **Iconoclasts** often make **terrible Change Agents**, and vice versa.
- ✓ **Curmudgeons** can make **change difficult**.
- ✓ Many Curmudgeons used to be Change Agents, but they became disappointed and disillusioned.
- ✓ **Recluses** can either **facilitate change or retard it**.



# Remember the *A.M.O.E.B.A.*

*A* = **Adapt** the Innovation

*M* = **Motivate** the Change Agents

*O* = **Organize** the Transformers

*E* = **Easy** Does It for the Mainstreamers

*B* = **Build** Momentum

*A* = **Avoid** the Reactionaries



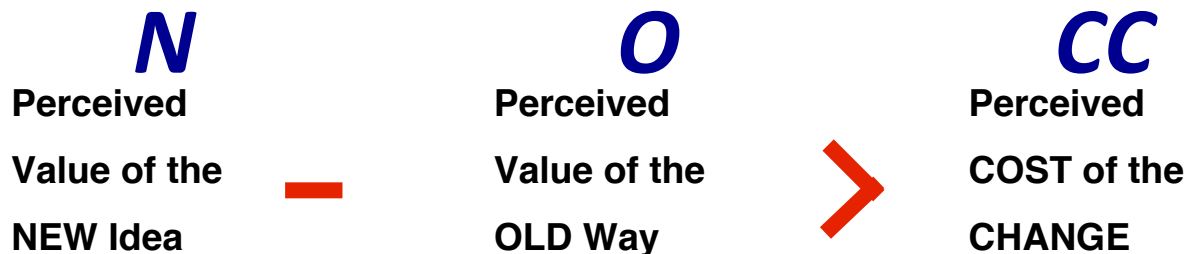
# **Additional Thoughts about Successful Change Agency and Innovation Diffusion**



# The “Gilman Equation” and the “Avenues for Action”

$$N - O > CC$$

*For a person or organization to adopt a new idea,  
the following must be true:*



**Source:** Robert Gilman, cited in AtKisson, *Believing Cassandra* (1999 and 2010)



## *Derived from the **Gilman Equation***

1. Increase the Perceived Value of the New Idea (Marketing and Promotion)

**Perceived  
Value of the  
NEW Idea**



**PROMOTE**



**Perceived  
Value of the  
OLD Way**



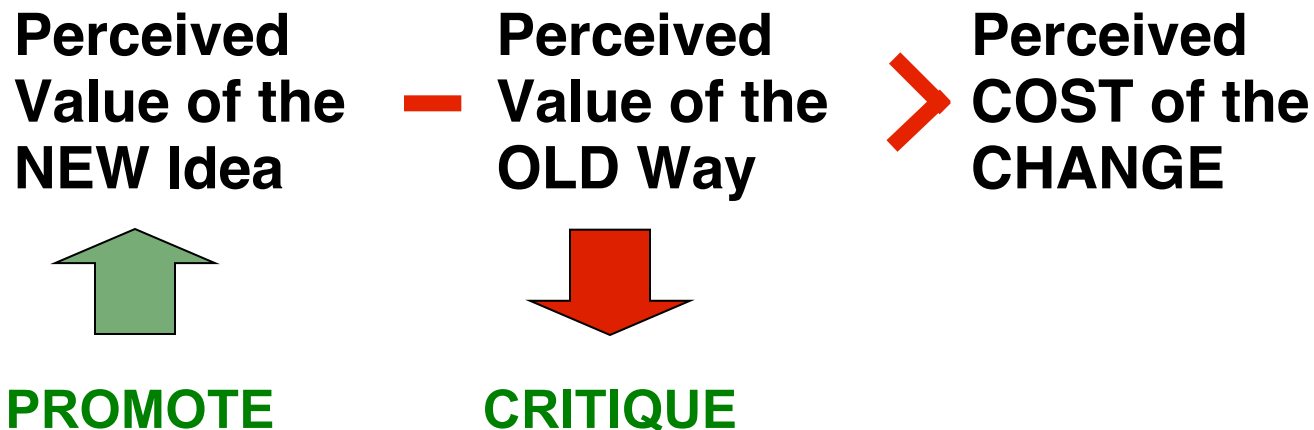
**Perceived  
COST of the  
CHANGE**

*Source: Robert Gilman, cited in AtKisson, **Believing Cassandra** (1999 and 2010)*



## *Derived from the **Gilman Equation***

2. Decrease the Perceived Value of the Old Way (Protest and Criticism)



*Source: Robert Gilman, cited in AtKisson, Believing Cassandra (1999 and 2010)*



## *Derived from the **Gilman Equation***

3. Decrease the Perceived Cost of Change (Facilitation, Assistance, Subsidies, etc.)



*Source: Robert Gilman, cited in AtKisson, Believing Cassandra (1999 and 2010)*



## **Some Essential Activities for change implementation**

- ❖ Enlisting the support and involvement of key people: team has right blend of skills, authority, resources and leadership.
- ❖ Crafting a good implementation plan: Keep it simple, flexible, separated into achievable parts, with clear roles and responsibilities
- ❖ Supporting the plan with consistent behaviours: the need to “walk the talk” and model change
- ❖ Developing “enabling structures”: training, pilot programmes, alignment of reward systems with change goals
- ❖ Celebrating milestones: identify and celebrate achieving targets
- ❖ Communicating relentlessly: tell them why, how and tell them often.





# The Amoeba and Your Own Innovation

- Think who to target with your innovation
- Think how they will respond to your innovation
- Think of STRATEGIES to target them

AMOEBA Strategy Worksheet: Download at -



### Different roles people play in relationship to a specific innovation



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