# Leading Change from the Bottom Up

College of Business
RMIT University

Joanne Austin, Director Planning & Resources
Maddie Sandall, Associate Director, Students & Progams

RMIT
UNIVERSITY

# Who are we?

Joanne Austin
- Director of Planning and Resources

Madelaine Sandall
- Associate Director, Students & Programs

# Future vision –
# Asia-focused university & business school



Shanghai (SUIBE)

Hanoi

Ho Chi Minh City

Singapore

Jakarta

Melbourne



Singapore Institute of Management

SUIBE, China

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Jakarta, Indonesia – in progress

# We're big and we're global

**29,387** Students

**1,208** Staff
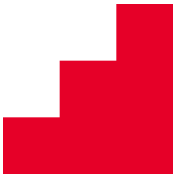
**7** Research priorities

44% of our students are offshore or online

**7** Schools

- Accounting
- Business IT & Logistics
- Economics, Finance & Marketing
- Graduate School of Business & Law
- Management
- Vocational Business Education
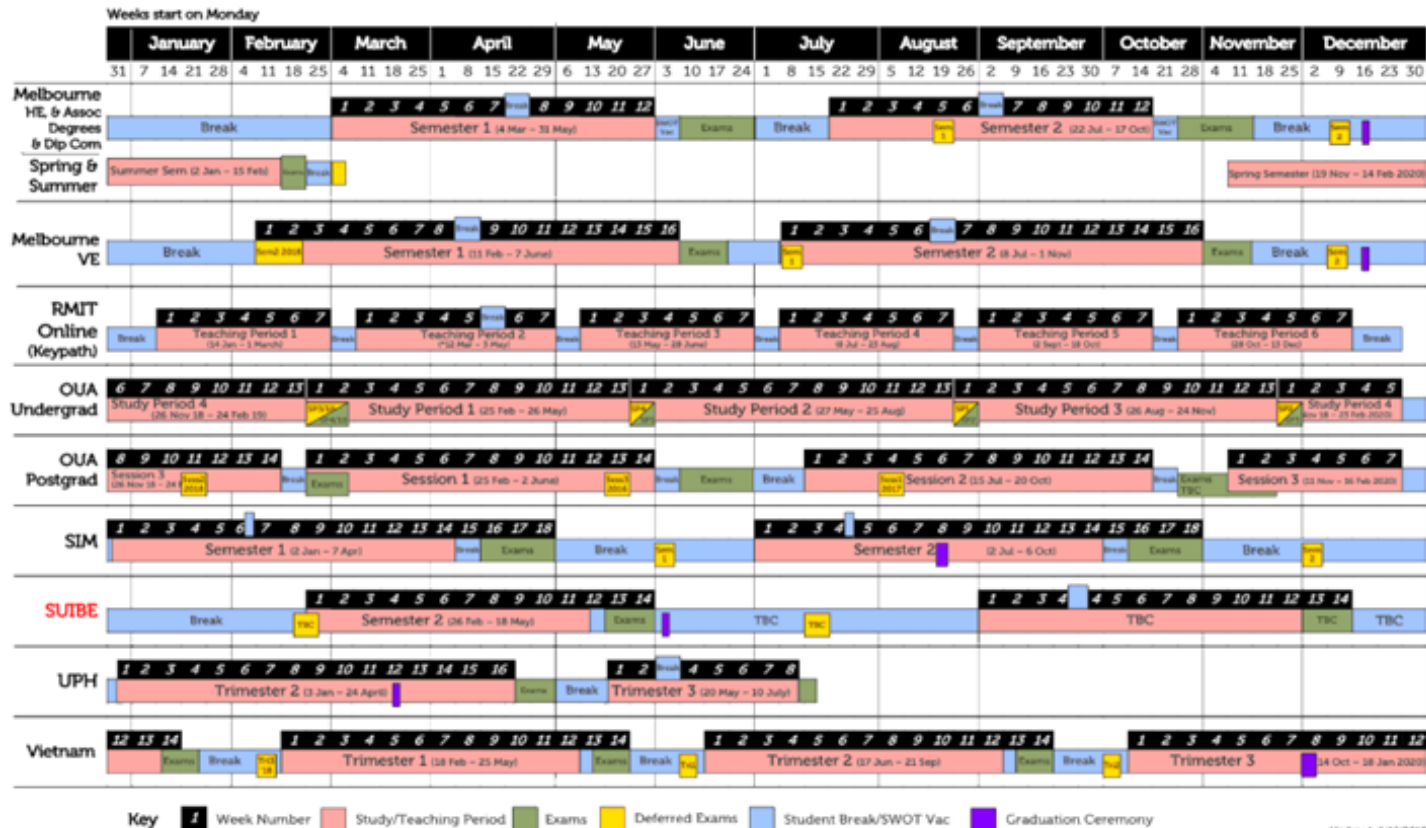- Business & Management (VN)

# We're complex … year round operation

# **Using your devices...**

PollEv.com/2019ecofin

"Describe your challenges in leading change in a single word"

**RMIT** UNIVERSITY

# PollEv.com/2019ecofin

# "What % of staff in your university are impacted by change every year"

RMIT
UNIVERSITY

# The History

- Changes in 2012
- Functional based teams
- Focus on streamlining processes, innovative practice and establishing new relationships
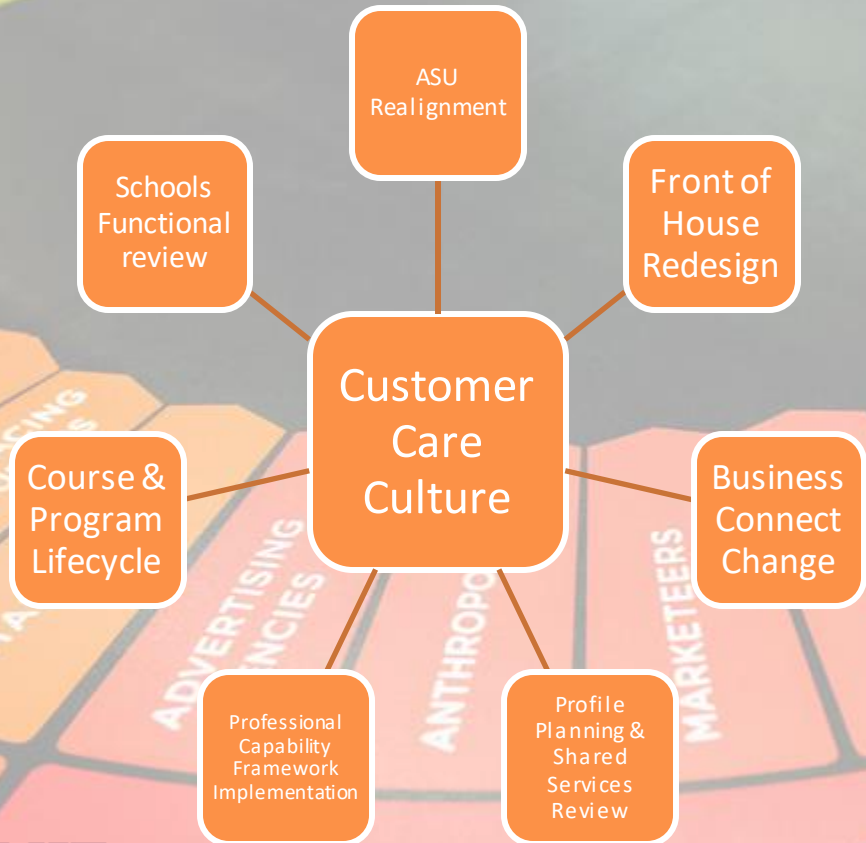
# Why did we do this review?

- New Director, Planning and Resources
- Perceived silos
- Handoffs
- Informal feedback
- Unhappy staff
- Poor opportunity for career paths
- Lack of detailed knowledge of programs
- Stakeholder confusion

**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

# What did we do?

- Customer Care Culture Project (2017)
  - Review of functions across the Portfolio
  - Focus groups across the University
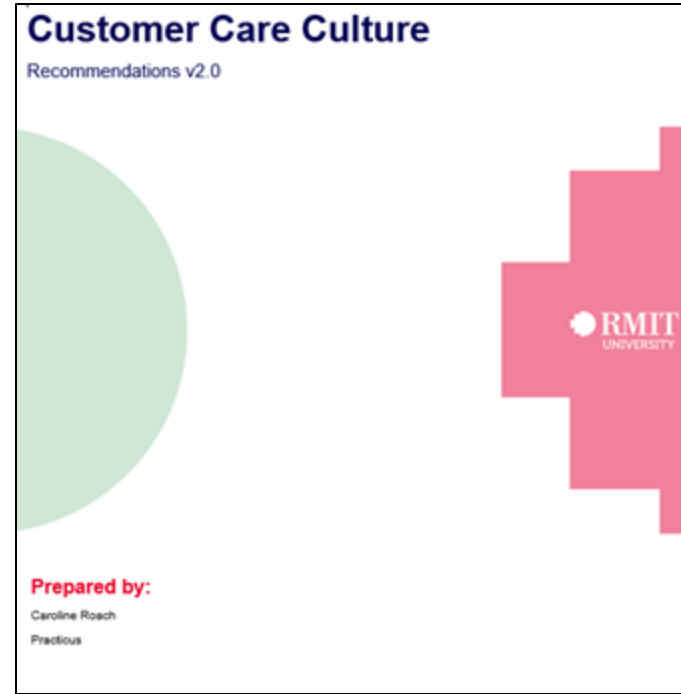  - Solutions Team

# Customer Care Culture



Central node: **Customer Care Culture**

Surrounding nodes:
- ASU Realignment
- Front of House Redesign
- Schools Functional review
- Course & Program Lifecycle
- Business Connect Change
- Professional Capability Framework Implementation
- Profile Planning & Shared Services Review

Customer Care Culture is a **programme** of work, consisting of several projects and activities designed to deliver a positive **transformation** and to meet RMIT's strategic objectives.

Some of those projects were completed in 2018 and some will be delivered this year and beyond.

**RMIT UNIVERSITY**

# Pre-change engagement

- 23 recommendations
- 14 projects
- Meetings
- Away Days







**Customer Care Culture**

Recommendations v2.0

**RMIT** UNIVERSITY

**Prepared by:**

Caroline Roach

Practious

**RMIT** UNIVERSITY

# Next Steps

- Shared Services and Schools review - identified as separate projects based on feedback
- Project Manager appointed
- Largest project - Academic Services Realignment

# Even our own team agreed..
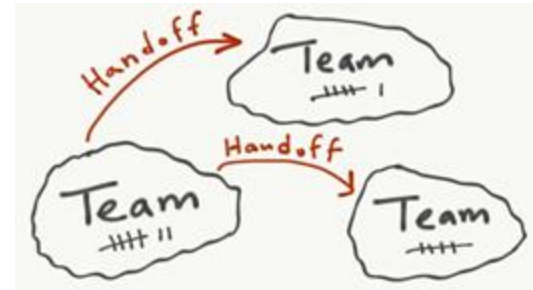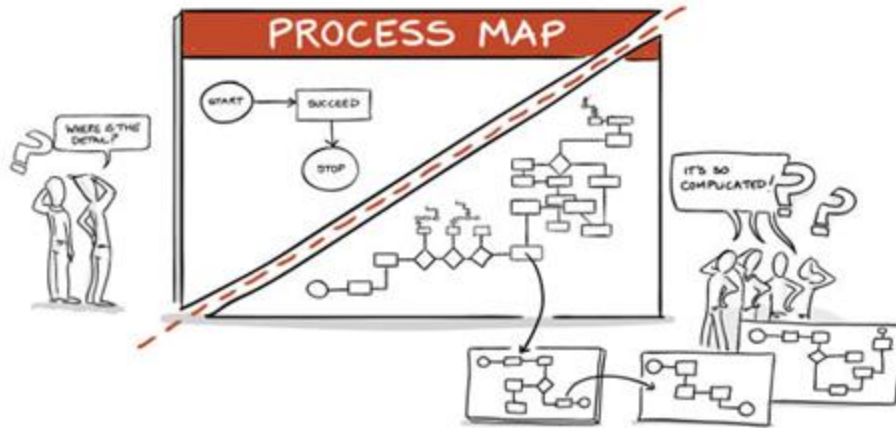
# Our Vision

**SOLVE THE CASE RIGHT FIRST TIME, EVERY TIME**

- Student Lifecycle Services

**RMIT UNIVERSITY**

# Change goals

- Greater collaboration with stakeholders
- Improved service to our students and stakeholders
- Clearer roles and responsibilities for our staff
- Stronger career progression
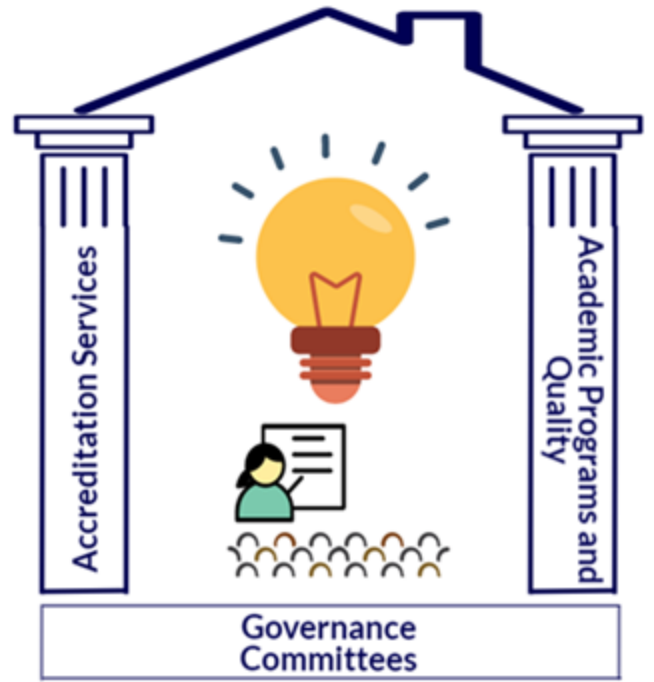- Focus on staff capabilities and professional development

**RMIT**
**UNIVERSITY**

**Student Lifecycle Services**

Student Experience
Student Progress
Timetabling
Credits
Admissions
Assessment

Online Offshore

HE UG HE PG

VBE

Graduation

Student Enrichment

Projects

BusinessConnect

RMIT Connect

Partnership Model

Schools

RMIT Partners
RMIT Online

Accreditation Services

Academic Programs and Quality

Governance Committees

RMIT UNIVERSITY
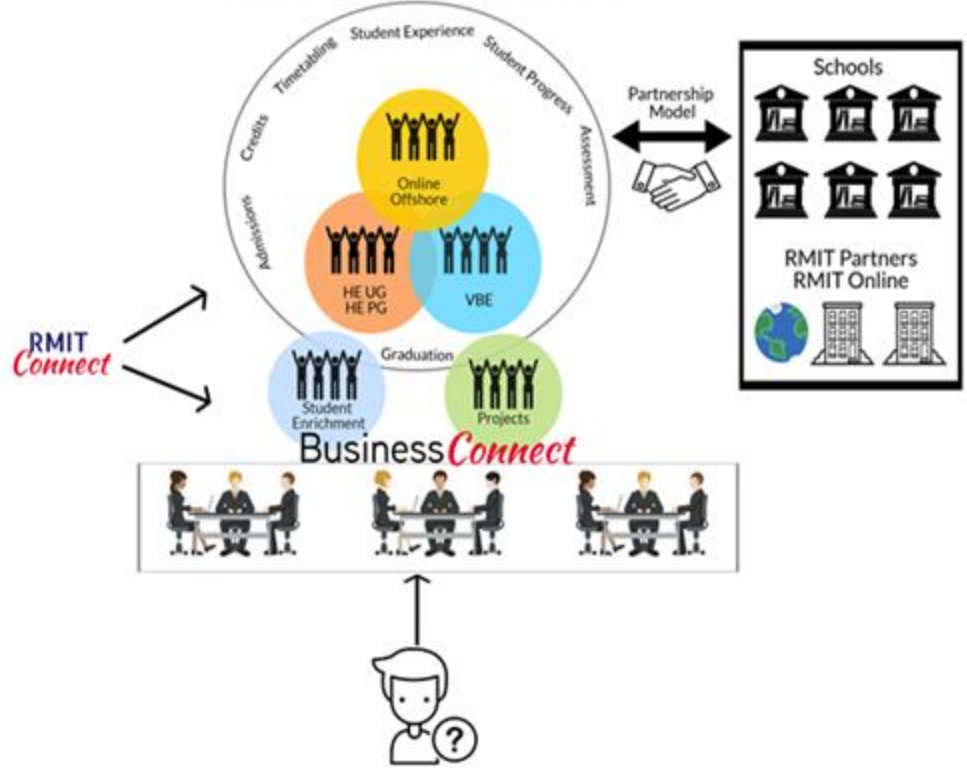
# Change Approach

- Project and Change Management plan
- Change Agents (Champions)
- Regular Surveys
- Co design workshops
- Clear communications plan
- Stakeholder identification and inclusion
- Continued engagement



**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

# Considerations

- Staff still feeling 'hurt' from disruption 6 years ago
- Apprehension about why things need to change
- Staff more concerned about change impacting:
  - who they report to
  - who is in their team
  - where their desk is

# Change Champions

- Recruited a team of 6 Change Champions (HEW levels 5-7)
  - Weekly Meetings
  - Regular Feedback
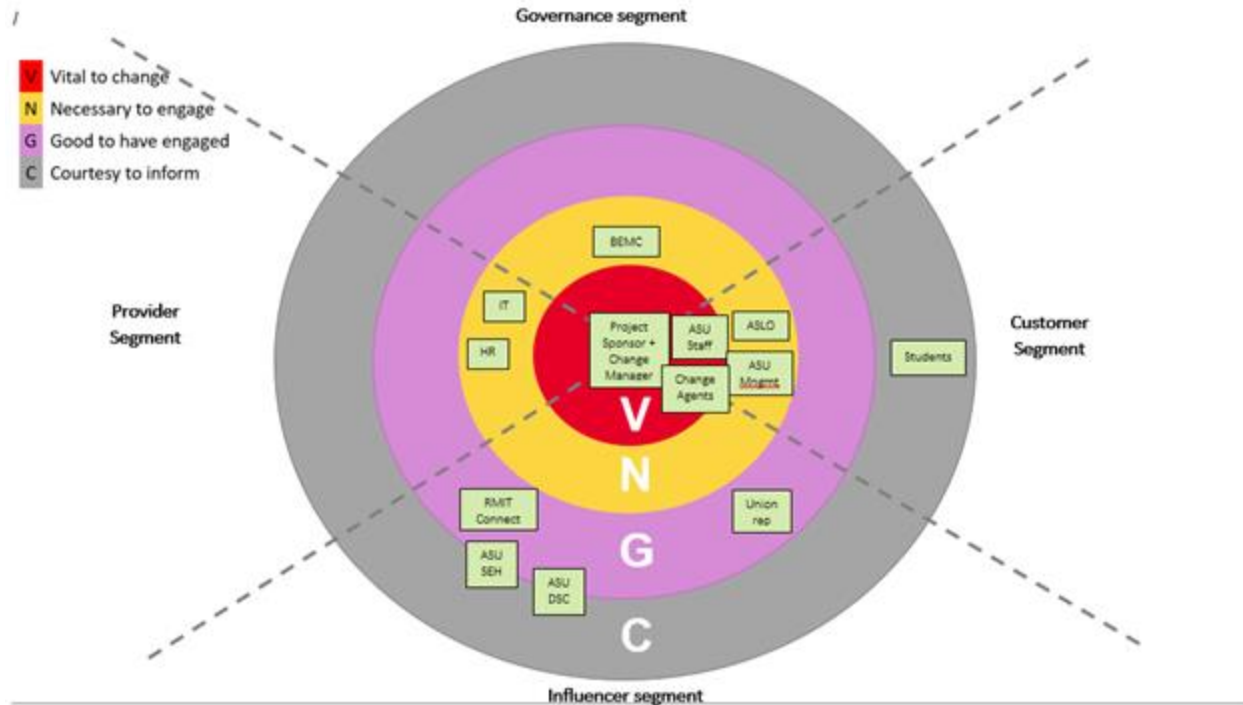  - Expertise and insights
  - Establish effective relationships



Project/Change Team

Change Champion

ASU Teams

CoB Change Champion RMIT UNIVERSITY

RMIT UNIVERSITY

# **Regular Surveys**

- Every 6 weeks
- 5 questions covering:
  - Consultation?
  - Feeling listened to?
  - Sufficient support
  - Assistance in new role?
  - Overall satisfaction?



**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

# Co-design our new team

- First cut at design - based on solutions group
- Messaging
- Continual review
- Ultimately - staff were ready for the change

# Stakeholder Identification



Stakeholder radar with CPIG Segmentation

# Measure Change Effectiveness



**A** — **Awareness**
- CCC Program Update
- ASU Brief
- Share proposed structure to the leadership team

**D** — **Desire**
- Benchmark
- Survey – how staff feels about the change/ current skills

**K** — **Knowledge**
- Skills audit (HR)
- Training/education, questions staff asks,
- Change Champions
- Small group updates

**A** — **Action**
- Ongoing management of new process
- Focus groups with change agents how staff are coping with change
- Survey and compare with previous results (D)

**R** — **Reinforcement**
- KPI comparison – run charts
- Student feedback
- Interviews with team leaders to check how embedding works

# Continued Engagement

- 4 x ASU wide workshops
- 2 x Leadership groups
- 1 x session with MPRs in Schools
- All contributed to co-design and feedback
- Regular Communications to team and stakeholders
- ASU Realignment website



RMIT
UNIVERSITY

# **Major Change**

- No surprises!
- 2 weeks for feedback:
  - 15 elements submitted
  - 9 positively addressed and incorporated

- Main outcome -review Front of House separately

# Implementation

- Expression of Interest for 12 new positions overall
- 30 staff submitted preferences for new cohort based team
- 91% received 1st/2nd preference



Organisational Structure – Students & Programs Team

**RMIT UNIVERSITY**

# What did the staff say about the change?

# Change Champions

Genuinely being heard

Makes me feel included

Doesn't feel 'top down'

Removed the barriers

I've been here 17 years and been through 7 restructures and never experienced one like it - it was so positive and collaborative
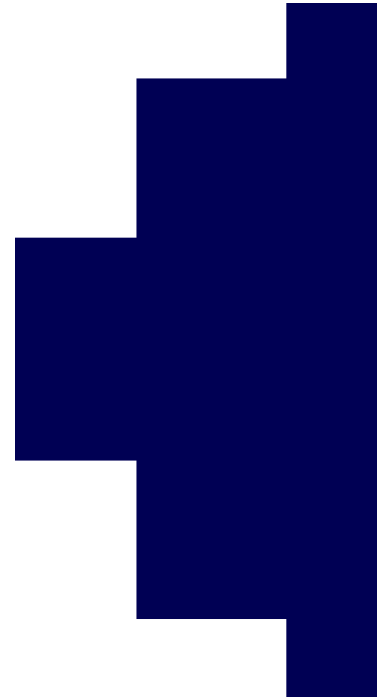


**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

# Change Survey



So far so good. This is the best managed and communicated change I have experienced at RMIT

Very happy with the change. Management did a great job. Smooth process

### Changes over time

| | Detractors | Neutrals | Promoters |
|---|---|---|---|
| Survey 1 | 7% | 20% | 73% |
| Survey 2 | 8% | 4% | 88% |
| Survey 3 | 0% | 12% | 88% |
| Survey 4 | 6% | 24% | 71% |

RMIT UNIVERSITY

# Successes



THE KEY TO SUCCESS IS HAVING PASSION FOR WHAT YOU DO!
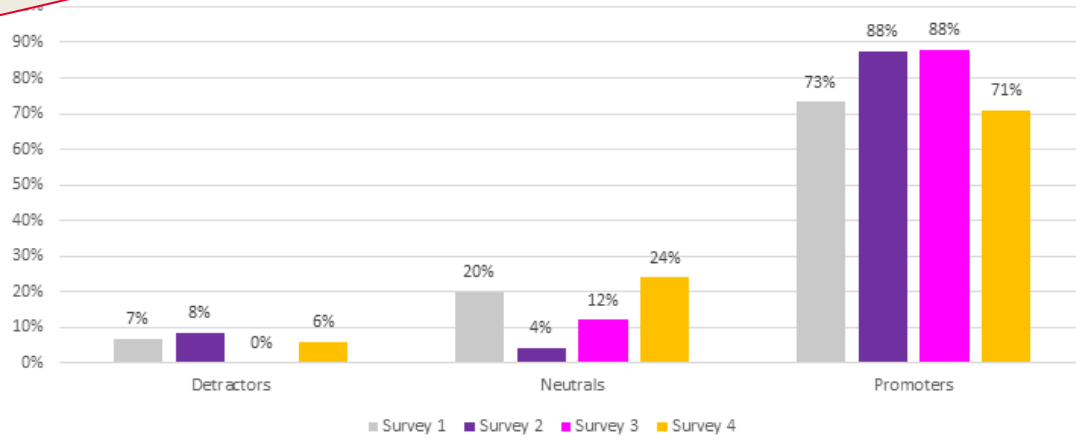
- Staff Engagement
- University recognition
- Open and Transparent
- Culture transformation
- Strong Leadership
- Strong Project/Change Management

**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

# Implementation/ Transition

# However hard you plan....

In preparation for the launch of our new teams

- Continued engagement and support
- Clear detail of who does what
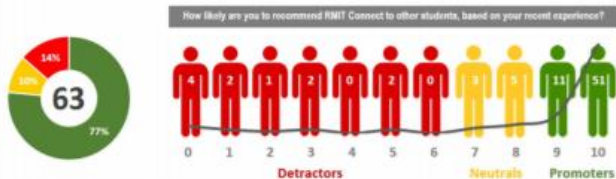- Training strategies owned by whole team
- Team Building





**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

# Stumbling blocks

- Staff quickly lose positivity when the hard work comes along!
- Transition to new roles while still doing previous role
- Desks and proximity to each other
- Forming new teams….Storming
- Performance issues – good and bad!
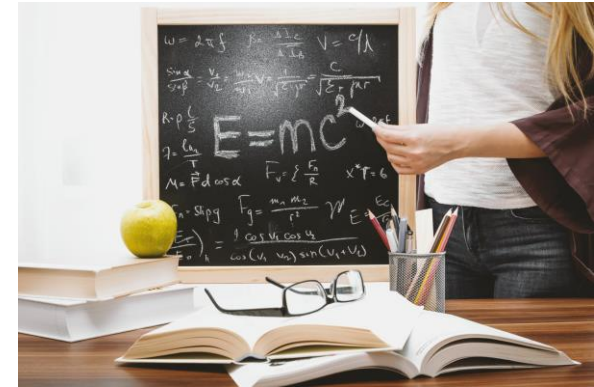- Stakeholders not knowing who did what



**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY
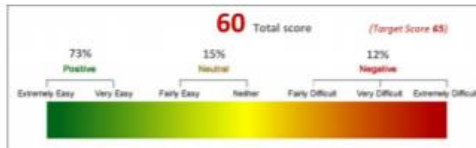
# Lessons learnt

- **Too much training and PD too soon**
- **Recruitment of internal candidates**
- **Underestimating Complexity vs High Volume**
- **Planning to review too soon**
- **Engaging difficult people early on**

# PollEv.com/2019ecofin

# "What stood out for you in our presentation"

**RMIT** UNIVERSITY