



THE CHAMPION'S TOOLKIT

The Open Educational Resources (OER) movement is changing the education landscape by making education more affordable and accessible to everyone.

Senior Leadership

Faculty/Librarians/Instructional Designers

Students

Equip yourself with the key facts about OER and the open education movement

Save time by working off our slide deck and strategies for engaging colleagues

Kick start your OER knowledge with resources and literature

Establish yourself as an OER champion at your institution

Communicate the value of OER at your institution



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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Technologies in Education

Created by Technologies in Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta.

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Author(s)

Krysta McNutt, Alberta OER Initiative / University of Alberta

Contributor(s)

Erik Christiansen, Mount Royal University, Dr. Janet Welch, University of Alberta

Graphic Design

Laura Sou, University of Alberta

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The Alberta Open Educational Resources (ABOER) Initiative is made possible through an investment from the Alberta government.

What is an OER?

Perhaps the best definition of OER comes from the OER Commons:

“Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that you may freely use and reuse at no cost. Unlike fixed, copyrighted resources, OER have been authored or created by an individual or organization that chooses to retain few, if any, ownership rights. In some cases, that means you can download a resource and share it with colleagues and students. In other cases, you may be able to download a resource, edit it in some way, and then re-post it as a remixed work.” ~ [OER Commons](#)

What is not an OER?

Anything that has a restrictive license agreement or terms of use is not an OER. For instance, most of your institutional library materials are not freely open, cannot be remixed or altered, and cannot be redistributed. These materials require special permission from the rights holder and therefore cannot be distributed openly.

What is the Open Education Movement?

The Open Education Movement has one simple goal: to reduce potential barriers to education through cost, increased accessibility, and distribution methods. Open Educational Resources are a key component to that movement, as these resources aim to replace cost prohibitive textbooks and other resources which students are often required to purchase.

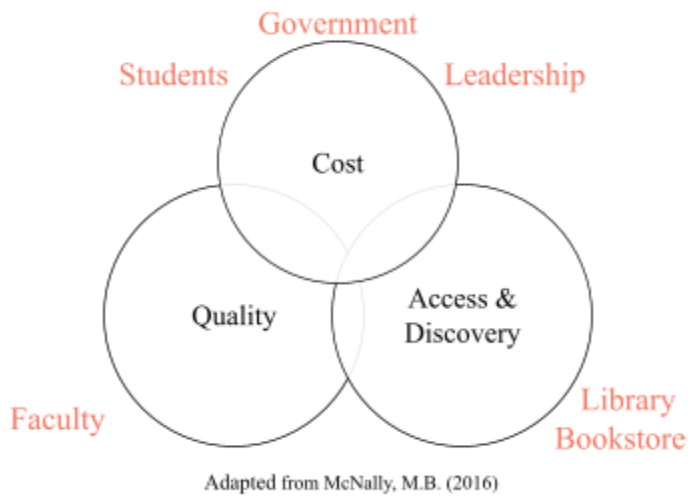
Key Messaging

Key messages are clear, concise and consistent messages which help people easily understand your objective, and help you stay focused on your audience's needs.

Tip 1: KNOW THEIR WHY	Tip 2: TEST AND ITERATE
<p>As an OER Champion, you are a leader. In his TED Talk and book Start with Why, Simon Sinek says <i>“Regardless of WHAT we do in our lives, our WHY—our driving purpose, cause or belief—never changes.”</i></p> <p>Focus on the why behind the people at the table. Emotionally connect their why with yours.</p>	<p>Just as educators formatively assess students, and just as software projects iteratively align with requirements.</p> <p>A great tip for effectively championing OER is to regularly assess if you are speaking your audience’s language and shift your approach when needed. Assess their understanding and connection to your message through community engagement.</p>

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CHAMPIONSHIP

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE



Open educational resources have a broad range of stakeholders. Sharing your passion and reason for being an OER champion is powerful, but what about your audience?

WIIFM - “What’s In It For Me” → WIIFT (them)

Before presenting on any change initiative, consider who you have in the room and “what’s in it for them”.

When you’re ready to start waving the OER flag, build your own institution-specific toolkit. The best way to be a champion is to have a quick answer for those who are ready to make the move. Open license it, too!

WHAT	WHY	HOW	WHO
what are OER?	why OER?	key resources	who has helped
common myths	various stakeholders’ interests	toolkits	who is interested
common fears			campus resources

Any change, whether it is personal or professional, can be reinforced by understanding the stage of change the individual or group is at, and the relevant response.

- Educate** - Awareness. What is the change?
- Attract** - Interest. Why is this change important?
- Teach** - What are others’ doing? What is possible?
- Equip** - How is it possible? Who can help me?
- Remind** - Commitment. Why is this important?



OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CHAMPIONSHIP TO: SENIOR LEADERSHIP

The why for senior leadership and open educational resources:

Senior leadership plays a pivotal role for open educational resources at an institutional level. Implementing OER in a course takes time and resources, so understanding of the value of OER at a senior leadership level is beneficial to ensure the time and money is allocated in support of implementation. When it comes to a cultural shift at the institutional level, senior and institutional leadership and action is *necessary*. The biggest obstacle to successful change is ineffective executive sponsorship. (SOURCE: Prosci Benchmarking Study, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2013)

1. Using OER can reduce costs to students, which is beneficial to institutions as a whole

SOURCE: Fischer, L., Hilton, J. I., Robinson, T. J., & Wiley, D. A. (2015). A Multi-Institutional Study of the Impact of Open Textbook Adoption on the Learning Outcomes of Post-Secondary Students. *Journal Of Computing In Higher Education*, 27(3), 159-172.

SOURCE: Open Educational Materials as Learning Materials - [UMass Amherst OER Initiative](#): After two rounds of Open Education Initiative funding “the total recurring savings from both grants came to just over \$205,000 from a \$27,000 investment.”

SOURCE: By replacing a paid math textbook with an OER at Scottsdale Community College, faculty found that students saved a total of \$255,375 - Hilton, J. I., Gaudet, D., Clark, P., Robinson, J., & Wiley, D. (2013). The Adoption of Open Educational Resources by One Community College Math Department. *International Review Of Research In Open And Distance Learning*, 14(4), 37-50.

SOURCE: [MIT's Opencourseware](#) project reports that its two largest user groups are Students and Self Learners (42% and 43% respectively). OERs that have institutional branding advertise the institution's commitment to open education and demonstrated the quality of teaching and learning.

Can lead to improved student retention, as students are less likely to avoid specific elective courses due to material costs.

SOURCE: [BCcampus](#) Survey - One of the main findings was that... “Adopting open educational practices promise in terms of significant cost savings, innovative pedagogy, and improved educational outcomes.”

2. By participating in the OER Movement, the institution is raising its reputation

SOURCE: [MIT's Opencourseware](#) project reports that its two largest user groups are Students and Self Learners (42% and 43% respectively). OERs that have institutional branding advertise the institution's commitment to open education and demonstrated the quality of teaching and learning.

SOURCE: [BCcampus](#) Survey - 77% of survey respondents using OERs in some capacity. 60% adopting or using in the classroom. 35% adapting OERs for their classes. 28% creation new OERs

3. Using OER brings in different perspectives and provides more variety for students

SOURCE: [BCcampus Survey](#) - two-thirds of OER users use them for ideas and inspiration, and 50% use OERs to broaden the range of resources

SOURCE: [Open Education Group: The Review Project](#) - 78% of respondents felt that the OER "provided access to more up-to-date material that is available in my print textbooks."

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CHAMPIONSHIP TO: FACULTY, LIBRARIANS and INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS

The why for faculty, librarians, instructional designers and open educational resources:

Faculty, Librarians and Instructional Designers are key to successful implementation and adoption of OERs. These are your key stakeholders. These individuals are potential champions themselves, and, they are the *change makers* among us. Without this stakeholder group educated, engaged and empowered, interest in OER will only stay as an observation and not an action.

1 OER supports innovation, exposure and reputation

SOURCE: [MIT's OpenCourseWare](#) project reports that its two largest user groups are Students and Self Learners (42% and 43% respectively). OERs that have institutional branding advertise the institution's commitment to open education and demonstrated the quality of teaching and learning.

SOURCE: [BCcampus Survey](#) - 77% of survey respondents use OERs in some capacity. 60% are adopting or using in the classroom. 35% are adapting OERs for their classes. 28% of respondents created new OERs

SOURCE: Open Education Resource as Learning Materials - The definition of a publication is widening, and "the metrics used to evaluate the impact of a publication are also changing." Creating OERs could potentially boost faculty's reputation and the reputation of their institution, as leaders in the open education movement.

2 OER improves learner understanding and drives engagement with open content

SOURCE: [MIT's OpenCourseWare](#) "96% of educators say the site has/will help improve courses."

SOURCE: [MIT's OpenCourseWare](#) "92% of students, 87% of alumni and 78% of faculty who have used the site rate it as very or somewhat valuable." "96% of students complementing their course materials say OCW improved their understanding of concepts covered."

Use of OERs opens students up to a larger pool of resources, in addition to their campus library.

SOURCE: "TCC saw a significant increase in the percentage of students completing courses with a C or better, while simultaneously cutting the cost to graduate by 20-30%. TCC also saw a significant decrease in withdrawal rates among students enrolled in the Z-Degree." ([Tidewater Community College](#))

3 OER can increase student accessibility

SOURCE: [BCcampus](#) Survey - When survey respondents were asked what "openness" meant to them, 44% highlighted *accessibility* as a key factor.

Open educational resources are, by definition, openly accessible. Using OERs in your classroom will not only reduce cost barriers to students, but open resources also reduce technological barriers as OERs are generally published using open formats such as

SOURCE: [MIT's OpenCourseWare](#)

Many student stories of how OERs from MIT's Open Courseware made a huge impact on their life.

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CHAMPIONSHIP TO: STUDENTS

The why for students and open educational resources:

Students are the primary stakeholders in open educational resources. Students will receive the value of OER adoption, and, students are the core purpose of global open educational resource development. The re-use of OER to replace paid resources directly saves money for students, and, models the philosophy open access.

1 Using OER results in direct cost savings to students and/or institutions:

SOURCE: [MIT's OpenCourseWare](#) project reports that its two largest user groups are Students and Self Learners (42% and 43% respectively). OERs that have institutional branding advertise the institution's commitment to open education and demonstrated the quality of teaching and learning.

Chronicle of Higher Education reported that 78% of undergrad students did not purchase a required textbook due to cost ([original source](#))

SOURCE: "College students spend an average of \$900 per year on textbooks - 26 percent of the cost of tuition at a public, four-year university" in the United States - Wiley, D., & Green, C. (2012). Why openness in education? In D. G. Oblinger (Ed.), *Game changers: Education and information technologies*. Educause.

SOURCE: “Over the last 34 years, college textbooks have risen more than three times the amount of the average increase for all goods and service” - Perry, M. (2012). The college textbook bubble and how the “open educational resources” movement is going up against the textbook cartel. American Enterprise Institute.

SOURCE: Open Educational Materials as Learning Materials - UMass Amherst OER Initiative: After two rounds of Open Education Initiative funding “the total recurring savings from both grants came to just over \$205,000 from a \$27,000 investment.”

SOURCE: By replacing a paid math textbook with an OER at Scottsdale Community College, faculty found that students saved a total of \$255,375 - Hilton, J. I., Gaudet, D., Clark, P., Robinson, J., & Wiley, D. (2013). The Adoption of Open Educational Resources by One Community College Math Department. International Review Of Research In Open And Distance Learning, 14(4), 37-50.

2 Using OER brings in different perspectives and provides more variety for students

SOURCE: [BCcampus](#) Survey - two-thirds of OER users use them for ideas and inspiration, and 50% use OERs to broaden the range of resources

MINDSET OF A CHAMPION

Focus on Why.

If your objective is to champion the use of OER to solve a problem, focus on the problem. If your *why* does not solve an existing problem, you’ll be in a far better position by identifying that problem. Focus on your *why* and the audience’s *why*. The challenges ahead are less likely to stall progress if everyone maintains focus on the reason for the change.

Maintain Objectivity.

This is the key to enduring naysayers. It’s a given that if you are stepping up to champion OER that you are passionate. However, championing change is not personal, forced, or opinion-based. In a culture of change, everyone has a say. Being aware of the *barriers to change* will better equip you to understand other’s stance and relate to their challenges. Your job as a champion is to listen, provide an equal platform, and maintain your position of *why*, not how.

Engage the Open.

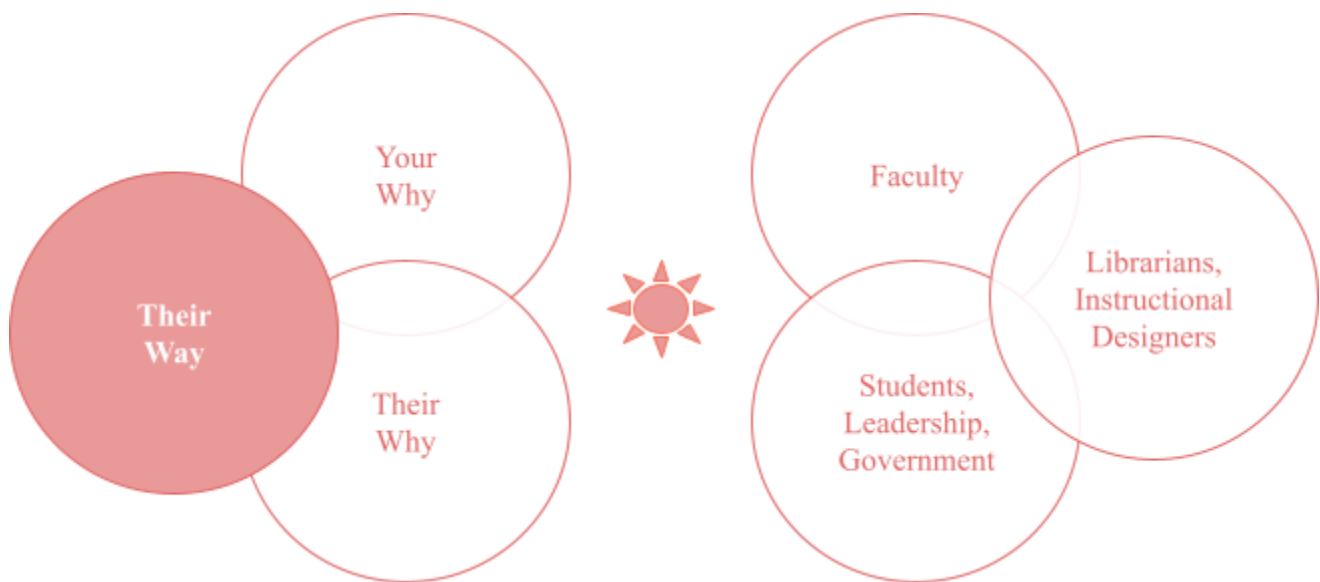
There will always be a group of people who disagree. You needn’t be worried about them right now. Let them speak, maintain your objectivity, and *engage the stakeholders who are listening*. These are often referred to as early adopters or enablers. They align with your *why*. This is your tribe. Their ears are open, they are listening, inquiring; they are ready to take action. Before you tackle the naysayers, help the early

adopters... *adopt*. At the early stages of change, spend a high percentage of your effort with this stakeholder group. Showcase their feedback, methods and statistics to reinforce the possibilities of change.

Reinforce the Change.

Too often we move on to the next adopters or project and forget to monitor, evaluate and tactfully encourage change to sustain beyond implementation. Proactive, thoughtful reinforcement means assessing what barriers there may be to sustaining the change, and what could encourage the change to maintain or grow after adoption. It's important to keep your early adopters engaged and support them in becoming champions of the change through reinforcement strategies. Seek their feedback on future implementations. Reference their work when you are supporting a new initiative, and keep up on what they are doing next. After all, the OER movement is not one implementation, it's a series of changes to create a new culture of open learning. Elevate them as a local benchmark of adoption where they feel recognized, appreciated, and respected. (Inspired by Buy In by John P. Kotter; A Counterintuitive Strategy for Saving Your Good Idea, pg 87-103)

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES



Approaching your championship of OER as an educational effort can help you utilize unconventional and high impact ways to disseminate your knowledge, passion and interest. Considering your audience and how their interests and agenda ("their why") intersects with yours is just the start of mobilizing change. Engaging this audience ***their way*** is the next step.

Below are some engagement strategies which have been contributed by OER implementation project leads, or, are encouraged for exploration.

Educational Sessions	Individual Discussions	Conference Presentations	E-mail Announcements
Posters & Multimedia	Collaborative Projects	Public Forum / Panels	Web & Social Media

Formal Presentation	<p>Securing a time slot with one stakeholder group can allow you to focus on their interests and create a pivotal moment of change in their perspective on OER and be the stepping stone to cultural change.</p> <p>Speaking the language of those at the table or in the audience is a foundational stepping stone to cultural change. If you don't know who will be in the audience, consider them all potential champions, and address the interests of all stakeholder groups.</p>
Informal Presentation	<p>Sharing your personal story is a great way to declare yourself as an OER champion in your community, and, can draw engagement and interest from people in a way that educating and informing may not.</p>
Special Interest Groups	<p>Dedicated topic groups are a great way to gather the right people in a room. With the right structure, this group can collectively navigate the landscape of change. With topics dedicated to a specific outcome, the individuals in the group can quickly shift into an empowered mindset of leadership and championship. In groups like this, it is important to equip people with roles and the knowledge required to support their success in such a role. This could look like an educational seminar, information gathering session or implementation project. Special-interest groups are likely to leverage the engagement strategies listed here, and can be quite powerful to enact change.</p>
Facilitated Group Discussion	<p>It is impossible to know how change will affect people without speaking with them directly. In addition to understanding the impact of change (such as adopting OER in a course), people are more likely to engage in change if they feel consulted. Facilitated group discussions can be a great way to uncover the common barriers to adoption, connect people with the support they need, and ensure that change is happening collaboratively.</p>
Modeling / Exemplars	<p>The "unknown" of change can be the biggest barrier of all. Modeling the outcomes of change and helping people observe what the end state will or can be is a great way to alleviate change related apprehension.</p>
Collaboration <i>ie: with libraries, edtech or pedagogy units</i>	<p>Projects which create collaborative work between faculty, instructors, and pedagogical or edtech unites on campus are an opportunity to organically introduce the opportunity for OER in a way that can avoid challenging the status quo. Simply presenting OER as an option and weighing the benefits are a great way to support faculty in choosing to adopt OER.</p>
Embedded Championship	<p>This would involve identifying one or multiple individuals in an institution, who have high-touch roles, to personally champion OER. Ideally this person would be an active participant on pedagogical / teaching and learning projects where opportunities for OER use can be organically raised during project activities.</p>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Hilton, J. I., Gaudet, D., Clark, P., Robinson, J., & Wiley, D. (2013). The Adoption of Open Educational Resources by One Community College Math Department. *International Review Of Research In Open And Distance Learning*, 14(4), 37-50.

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