



# **Adventures in KT: Travel tips for researchers and trainees**

**KT Connects Series**

**Drs Bev Holmes and Marla Steinberg**

**Friday October 14, 2016**



**By the end of this webinar, you should be able to:**

- 1. Explain why KT is important for researchers**
- 2. Distinguish among different KT purposes and processes**
- 3. Discuss some critical success factors for KT (the travel tips!)**
- 4. Decide whether KT is right for you**
- 5. List ways you can learn more about KT**



# A few words about us and our KT journeys





# Getting to know you.....

Please let us know how you typically describe yourself.....

- ☐ Researcher
- ☐ Trainee
- ☐ Health care practitioner
- ☐ Both (researcher and practitioner)
- ☐ Other



In your work, have you been  
on, or begun, a KT journey?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ *What the bleeeeeeeeep is  
KT?????*



What is KT and  
why is it  
important?



# A formal definition: Canadian Institutes of Health Research

## CIHR Definition

“a dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically-sound application of knowledge to improve the health of Canadians, provide more effective health services and products to strengthen the health care system”.

An informal definition.....



**Knowledge To Action**

Anything is possible

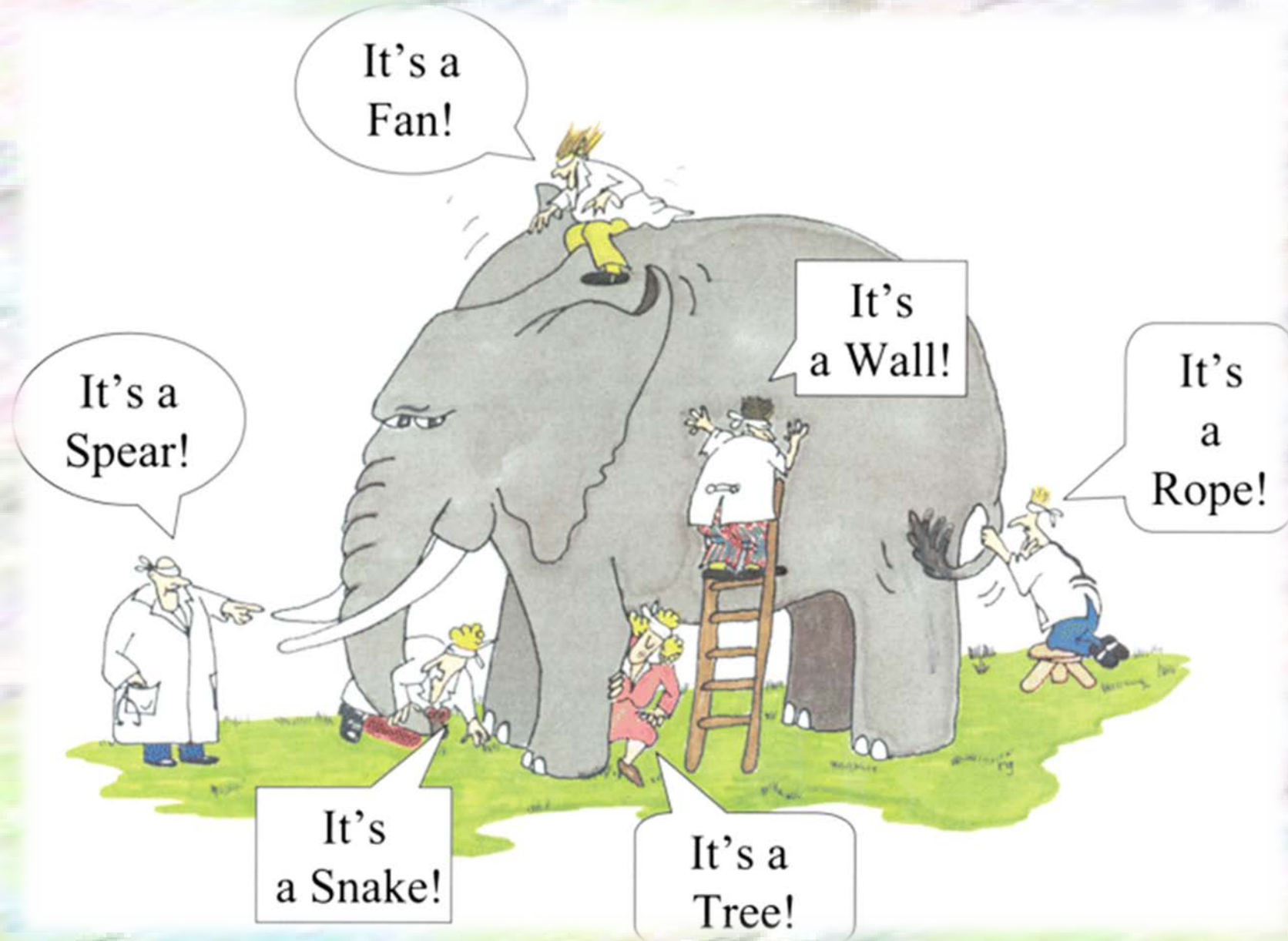


# Tip #1 - KT encompasses a range of different processes

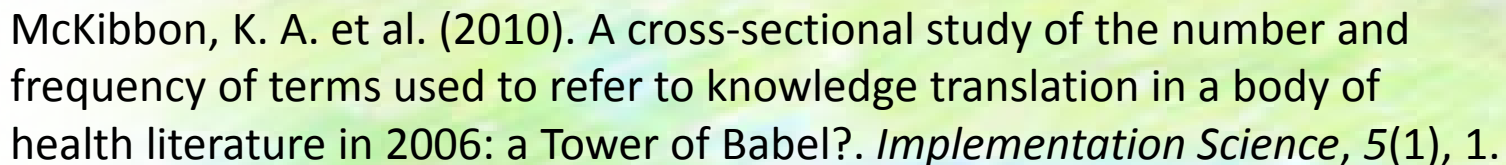
Knowledge production  
Knowledge synthesis  
Diffusion  
Dissemination  
Implementation  
Scale-up and spread

---

## Evaluation



- McKibbin et al (2010) collected 100 KT-related terms





# Tip #3 - “Déjà vu all over again”

## I say KT, you say.....

- Applied research
- Action research
- Participatory research
- Community-based research
- Engaged scholarship
- Intervention research
- Translational research
- Program science
- Dissemination & implementation science
- Evaluation



- Estabrooks, C. A., et al. (2008). The intellectual structure and substance of the knowledge utilization field: A longitudinal author co-citation analysis, 1945 to 2004. *Implementation Science*, 3(1), 1.

# Tip #4 - KT is (usually) more than communications

Some people think that “...whether or not the best and most relevant research reaches the person with the problem depends on the efficiency of the communications. Therefore...the usual prescription for improving the use of research is to improve the means of communication...” (p. 427)





Why is KT important?



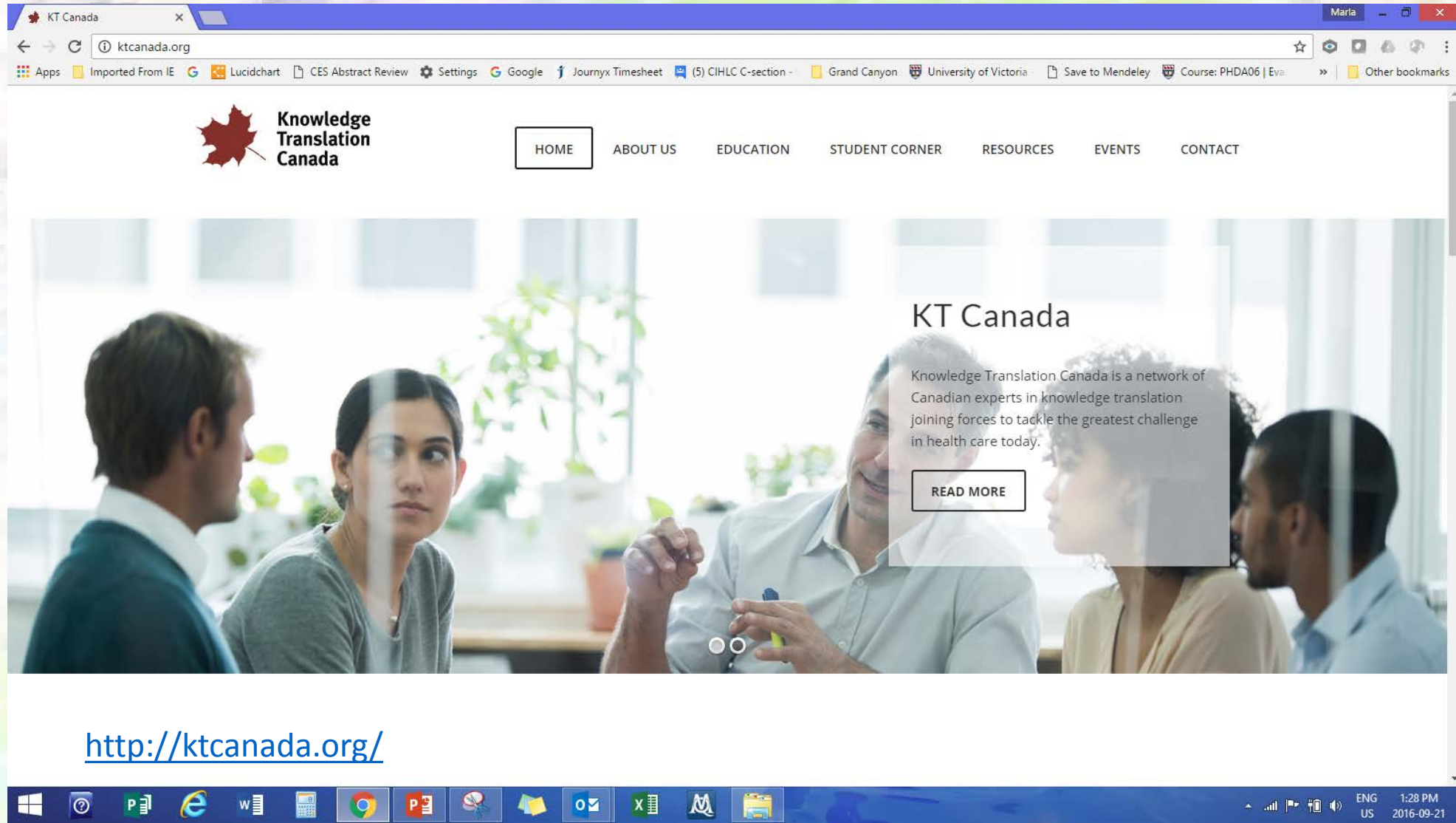
“Despite the considerable resources devoted to health research, a consistent finding in the literature is that moving evidence into practice and policy is slow and haphazard...” (p. 13)

Graham, I. D., et al. (2006). Lost in knowledge translation: time for a map?. *Journal of continuing education in the health professions*, 26(1), 13-24.





# KT has emerged to help move evidence → practice



<http://ktcanada.org/>

# A KT travel guide



- Before you go (because planning is half the fun)
- En route (expect the unexpected)
- Reflecting on the trip (and planning the next one)



# Before you go...



# Tip #5 – There are three main routes for evidence to inform policy and practice

## 1. Researcher **push**

- Typically end of grant KT

## 2. Knowledge user **pull**

- Commissioning specific studies, syntheses, or policy briefs
- Expert panels, “Best Brains Exchanges”



**PUSH**



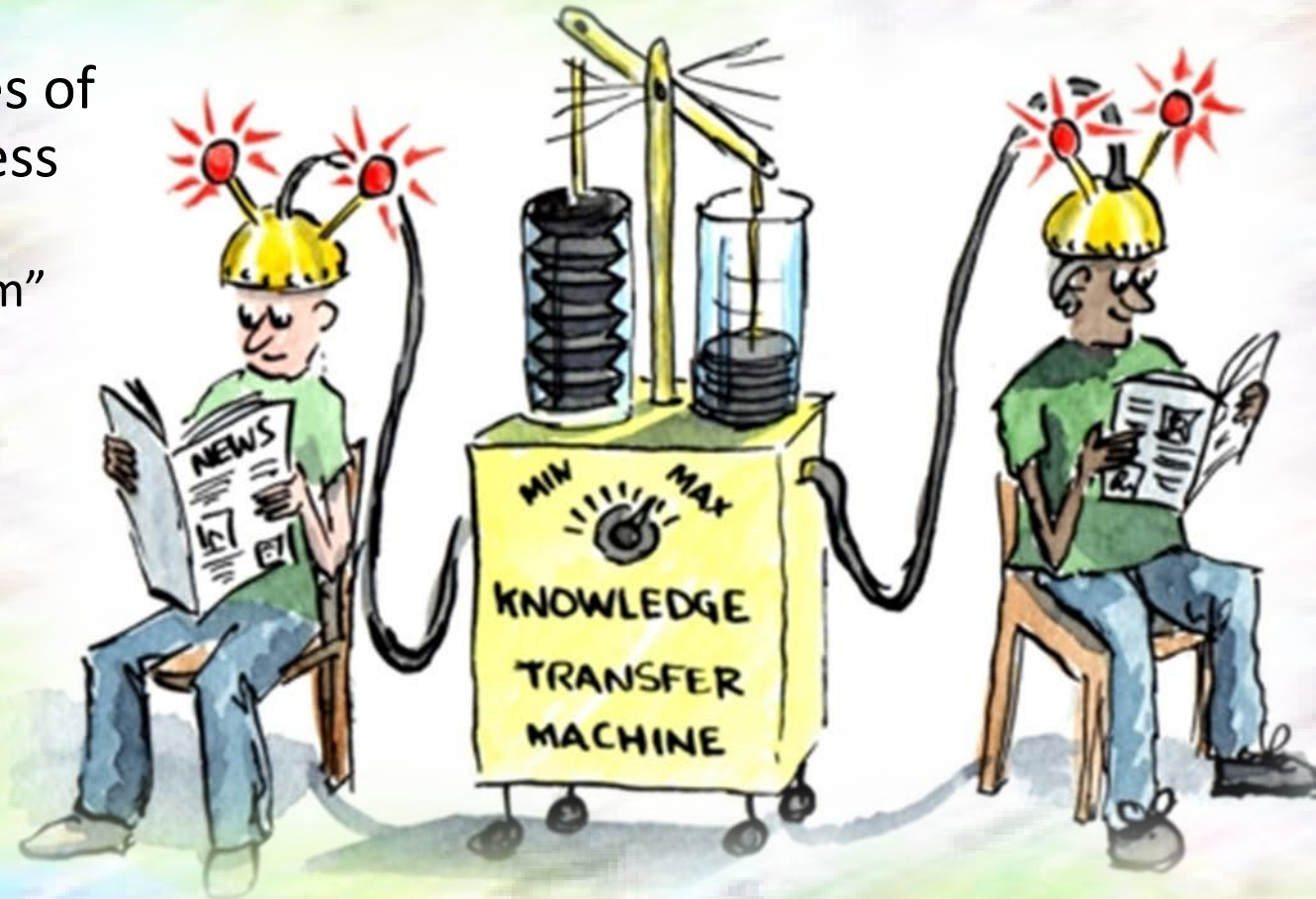
**PULL**



# The third route.....

## 3. Integrated or iKT

- Researchers and knowledge users working together through all stages of the research and application process
  - Begins with jointly defining research questions or “the knowledge problem”

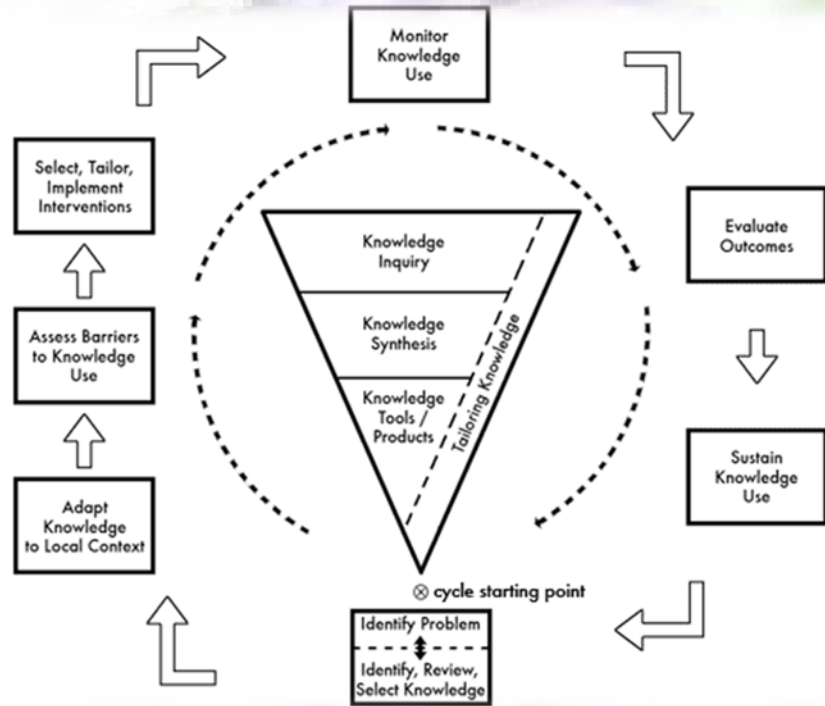


Tip #6 - Don't travel alone: take your knowledge users with you

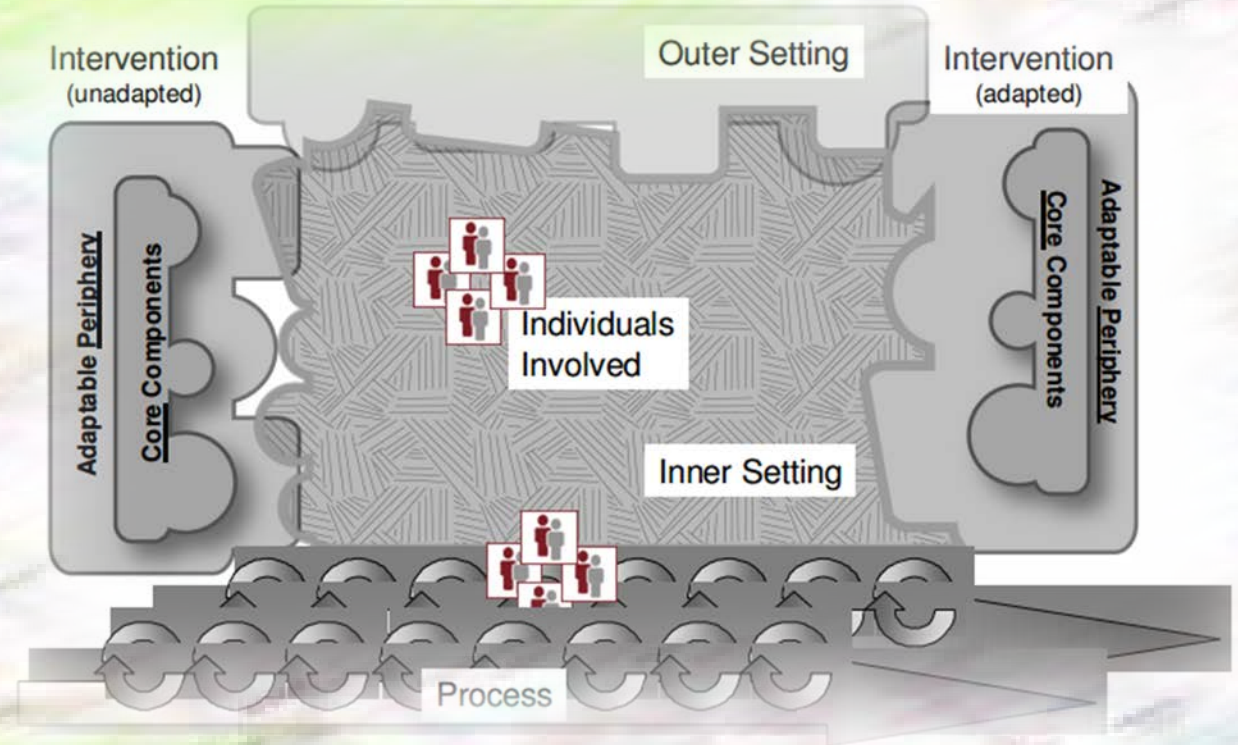




# Tip #7 - Use maps and guides: there are lots!



The Knowledge to Action Cycle  
**A Process Model**

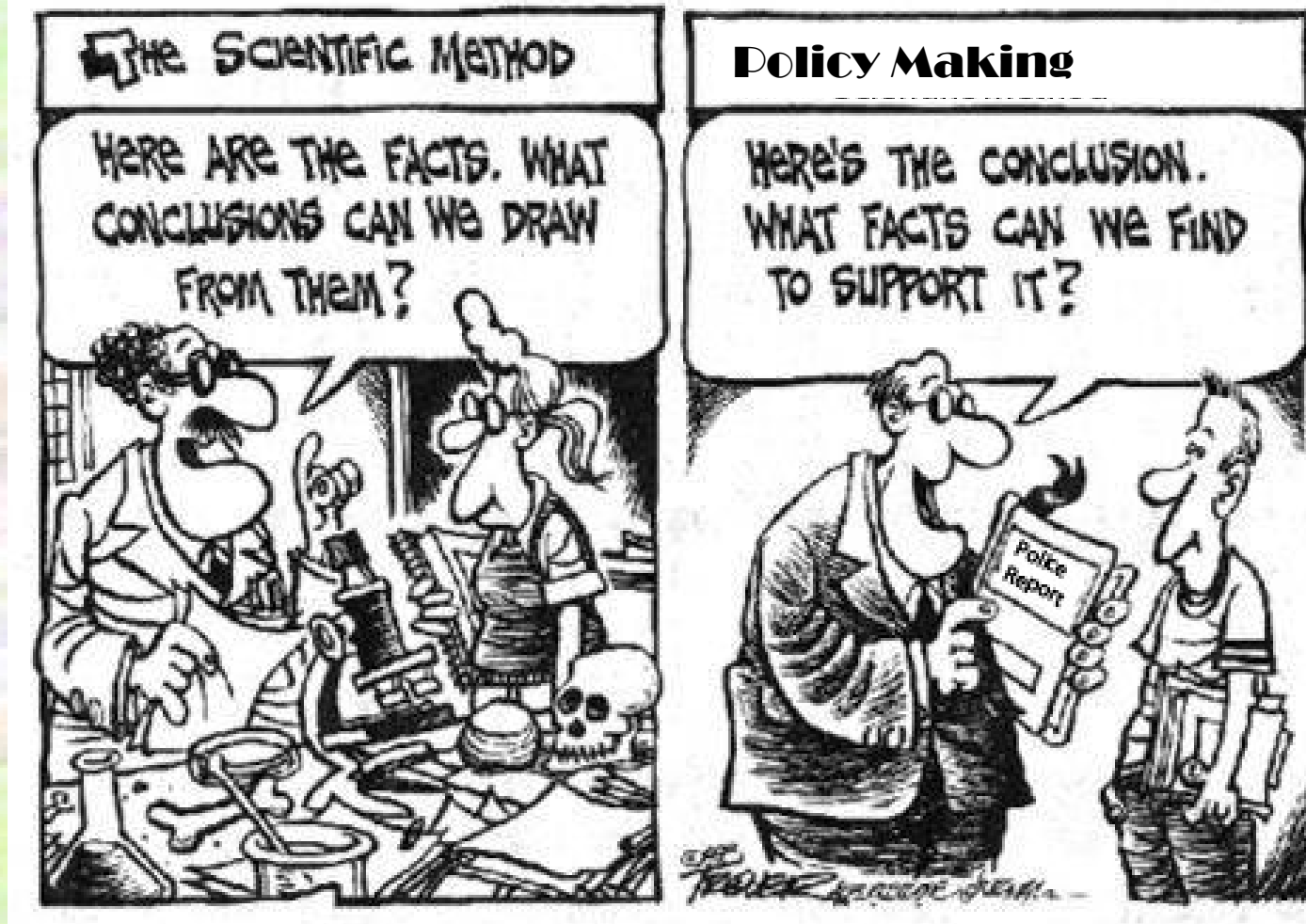


CFIR (Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research)  
**A Determinant Model**

Nilsen, P. (2015). Making sense of implementation theories, models and frameworks. *Implementation Science*, 10(1), 1.

# Tip # 8 - Researchers are from Mars, knowledge users are from Venus.....

- The research world rewards publications, not policy and practice changes
- The policy and practice world does not run only on research and typically has very short decision-making windows



Choi, B. C., et al. (2005). Can scientists and policy makers work together?. *Journal of Epidemiology and community health*, 59(8), 632-637.



# Tip # 9 - Learn the language of your target audiences (or pack your universal translator)



*“Are we in complete agreement, then?”*

# Tip #10 - Your suitcase will be heavy: knowledge users need the full range of evidence

When implementing evidence-informed practice, practitioners and decision-makers need to consider different types of evidence; scientific research findings are only one type of evidence.





# ...and they need different types of information

- Nature and significance of the problem
  - How big ? Who's affected? How has it changed over time /will it change?
- Nature of the proposed solutions/interventions and their differential impact
- External validity
  - Which settings? Which people? Under what conditions?
- Cost effectiveness
- Acceptability
  - To the target population, the public, other stakeholders, politicians
- Implementation knowledge
  - Barriers and facilitators, strategies, resources needed
- Implications of not acting



# Tip #11 – Translate bodies of knowledge (more weight for your suitcase)

- KT that focuses on the results of individual studies may be misleading
- Knowledge syntheses are ideally the basic unit of knowledge translation





Tip #12 - Consider using an established tour guide  
(KT seems to be everyone's business – and no  
one's responsibility)



Who is responsible for KT?

Who has the knowledge and skills?

- Researchers?
- Practitioners?
- Decision makers?
- KT brokers or specialists?

# Learning check

Which of the following will add weight to your KT journey:

- a. The many terms for KT
- b. The different types of evidence knowledge users need
- c. The universal translator that helps you speak different languages
- d. All of the above
- e. None of the above

En route...

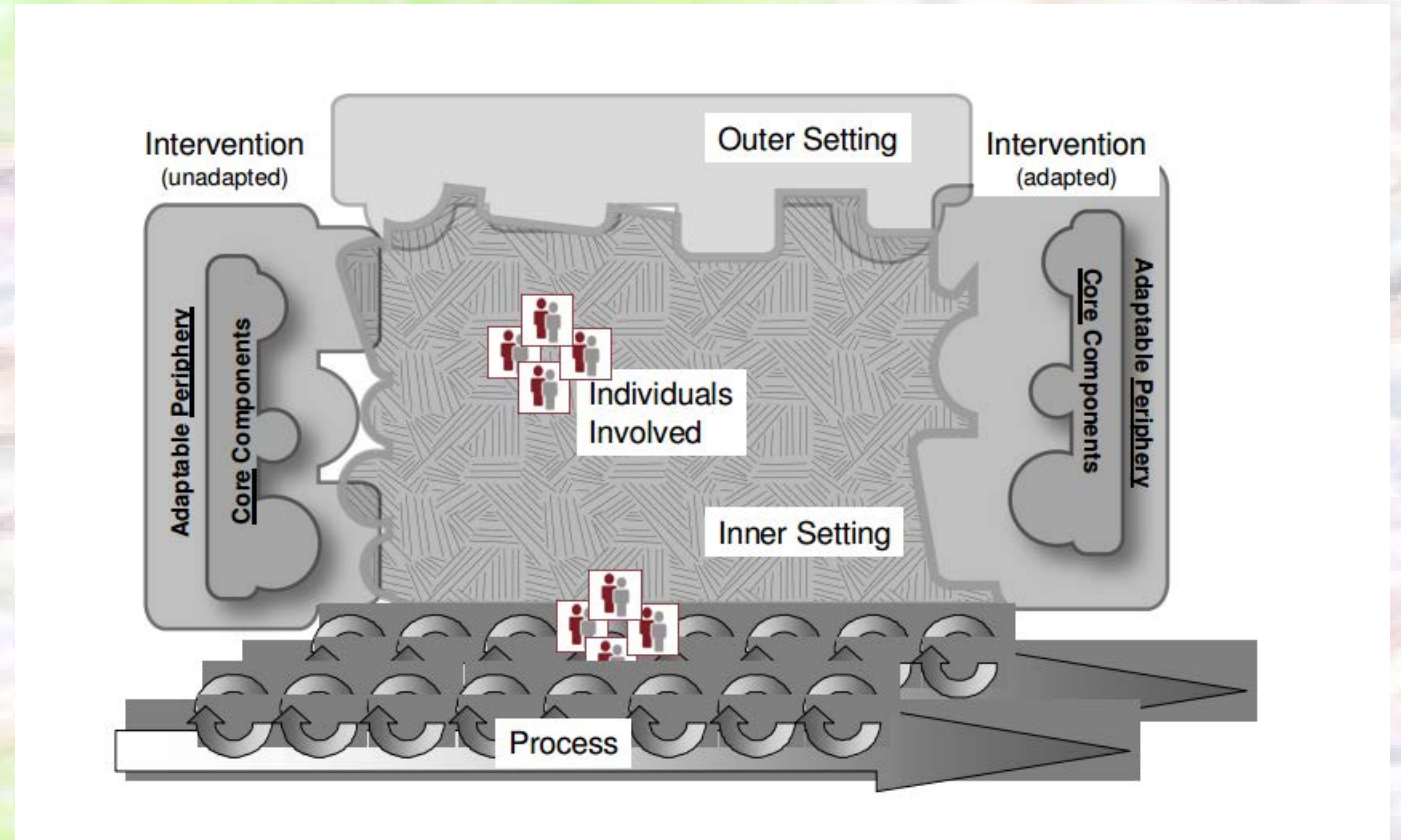




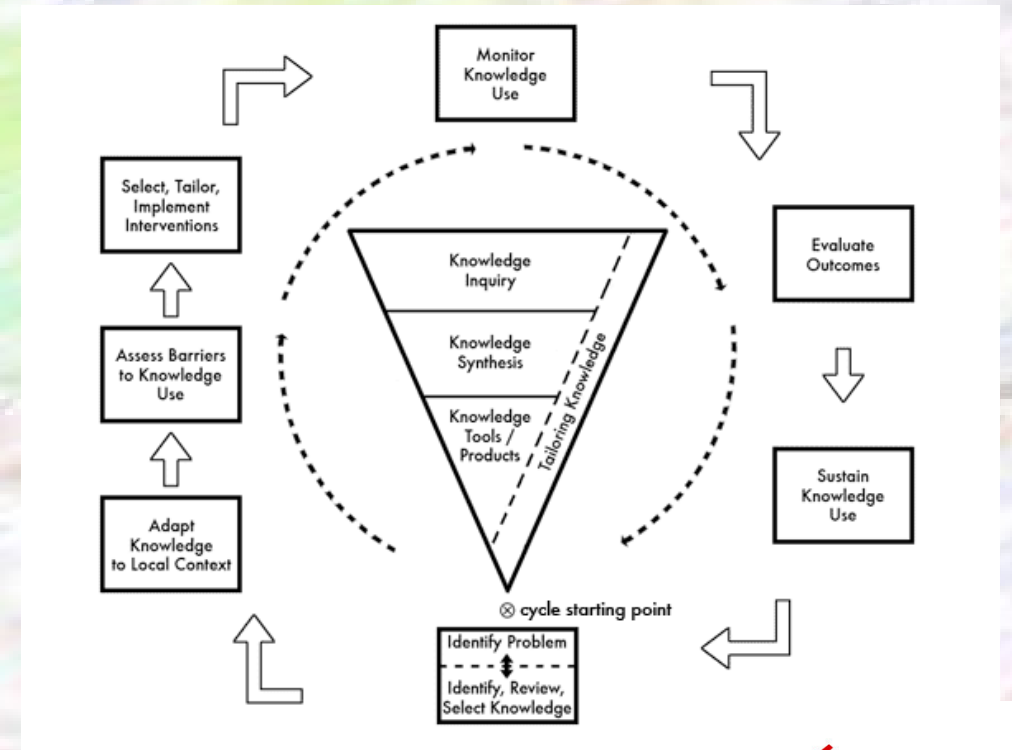
# Tip #13 – Pay attention to your surroundings when travelling.

“...the ongoing interaction between an intervention and its context determines the outcome...”

This mean you need to attend to context when supporting implementation

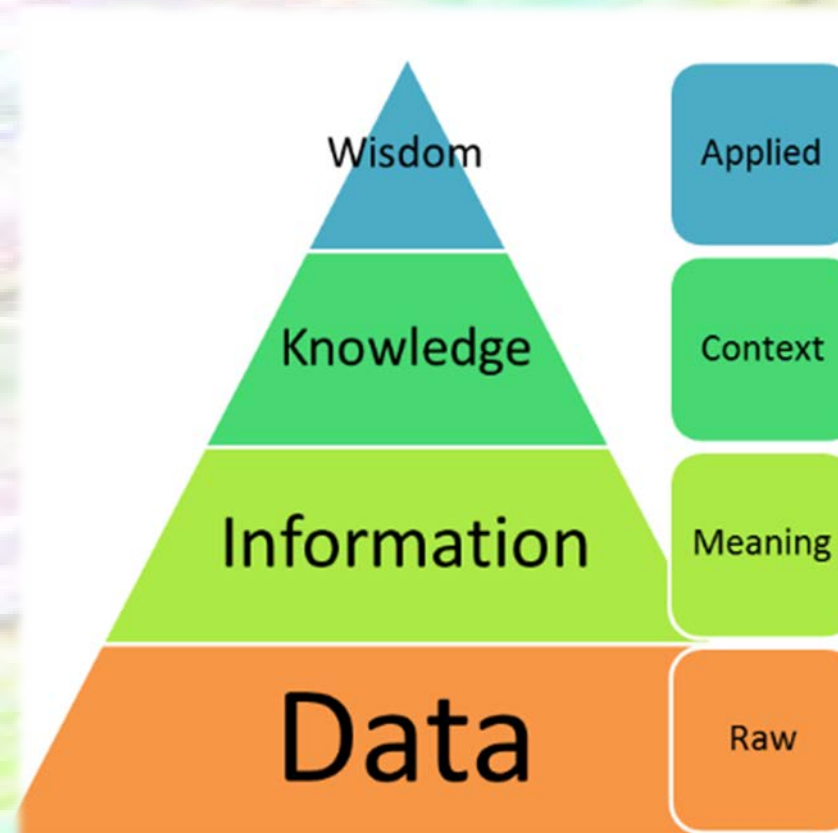


# Tip #14 - The KT journey is winding (not linear)



Best, A., & Holmes, B. (2010). Systems thinking, knowledge and action: towards better models and methods. *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*, 6(2), 145-159.

Tip #15 - You may need to translate different things on your KT journey



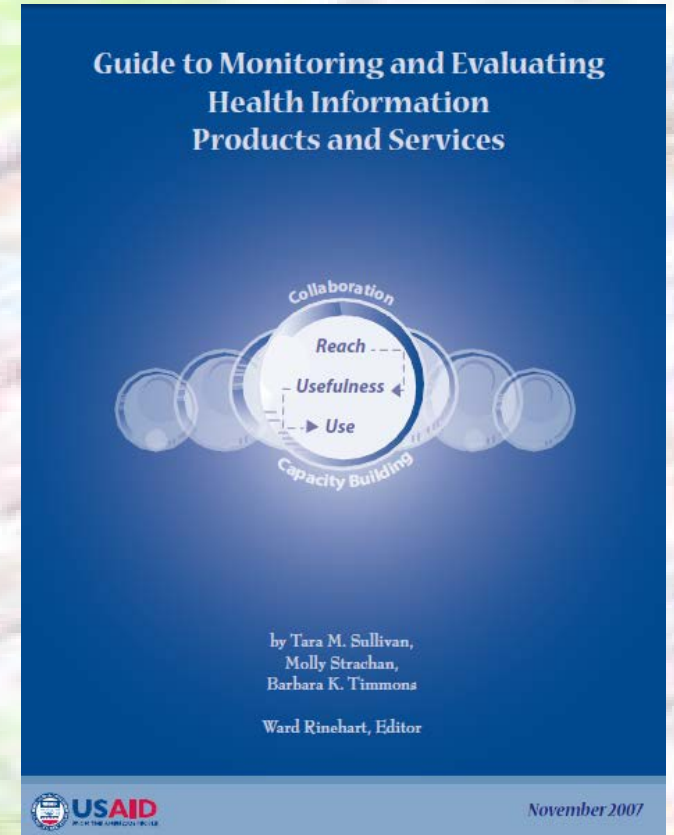


# Reflecting on the journey



# Reflection: Did it measure up?

- Evaluation is ideally planned at the beginning of the journey
  - Reach
  - Usefulness
  - Use



# Reflection: Were you comfortable on your journey?

- Is KT marketing and are you a salesperson?
- Is KT advocacy and are you a lobbyist?



[A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning](http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/publications-resources/a-user-s-guide-to-advocacy-evaluation-planning)  
<http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/publications-resources/a-user-s-guide-to-advocacy-evaluation-planning>



# Reflection: Were your expectations realistic ?

“It has been said that the two things one should never watch being made are sausages and public policy” (p. 2)

Lomas, J. (1997). *Improving research dissemination and uptake in the health sector: beyond the sound of one hand clapping* (pp. 1-45). Hamilton, Ontario: Centre for health economics and policy analysis.



Reflection: How could your travel experience benefit others?



# Smooth sailing with our KT travel tips

Tip #1 - KT encompasses a range of different processes

Tip #2 - KT is plagued by term turmoil

Tip #3: “It is déjà vu all over again” --- I say KT, you say.....

Tip #4 - KT is (usually) more than communications

Tip #5 – There are three main routes for evidence to inform policy and practice

Tip #6 - Don't travel alone: Take your knowledge users with you

Tip #7 - Use maps and guides

Tip # 8 - Researchers are from Mars, knowledge users are from Venus.....

Tip # 9 - Learn the language of your target audiences (or pack your universal translator)

Tip #10 - Your suitcase will be heavy – knowledge users need the full range of evidence and they need different types of information

Tip #11 – Translate bodies of knowledge

Tip #12 - Consider using an established tour guide

Tip #13 – Pay attention to your surroundings when travelling

Tip #14 - The KT journey is winding

Tip #15 - You may need to translate different things on your KT journey

Tip #16 – Reflect on your journey





# Customs Declaration Card

1. Do you want your research to be useful?
2. Do you want your research to be used?
3. After reading the travel tips, are you still keen to embark on a KT journey?

If you answered yes to these questions, KT is right for you!



# KT resources and training for researchers

MSFHR:

<http://www.msfhr.org/our-work/activities/knowledge-translation/kt-resources>

Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning at CIHR:

[http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/kt\\_lm\\_ktplan-en.pdf](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/kt_lm_ktplan-en.pdf)

KT Canada:

- <http://ktcanada.org>

Certificate in Knowledge Mobilization (University of Guelph- online):

<https://www.knowledgemobilization.ca/>

KT Planning Guides:

Scientist Knowledge Translation Plan Template: <http://www.melaniebarwick.com/training.php>

Public Health Agency of Canada KT Planning Primer: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/434858/publication.html>

# Recap: articles for new travellers

- Best, A., & Holmes, B. (2010). Systems thinking, knowledge and action: towards better models and methods. *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*, 6(2), 145-159.
- Choi, B.C., et al. (2005). Can scientists and policy makers work together? *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 59(8), 632-637.
- Coffman, J. (2009). A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning. Harvard Family Research Project. Retrieved from <http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/publications-resources/a-user-s-guide-to-advocacy-evaluation-planning>.
- Estabrooks, C. A., et al. (2008). The intellectual structure and substance of the knowledge utilization field: A longitudinal author co-citation analysis, 1945 to 2004. *Implementation Science*, 3(1), 1.
- Graham, I.D., et al. (2006). Lost in knowledge translation: time for a map? *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 26(1), 13-24.
- Holmes, B.J., et al. (2016). Mobilising knowledge in complex health systems: a call to action. *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1332/174426416X14712553750311>
- Lomas, J. (1997). *Improving research dissemination and uptake in the health sector: beyond the sound of one hand clapping* (pp. 1-45). Hamilton, Ontario: Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis.
- McKibbin, K.A., et al. (2010). A cross-sectional study of the number and frequency of terms used to refer to knowledge translation in a body of health literature in 2006: a Tower of Babel?. *Implementation Science*, 5(1), 1.
- Nilsen, P. (2015). Making sense of implementation theories, models and frameworks. *Implementation Science*, 10(1), 1.
- Sullivan, T.M., Strachan, M. & Timmons, B.K. (2007). Guide to monitoring and evaluating health information products and services. US AID. Retrieved from <https://www.k4health.org/sites/default/files/guide-to-monitoring-and-evaluating-health-information.pdf>
- Weiss, C.H. (1979). The many meanings of research utilization. *Public Administration Review*, 39(5), 426-431.



# Questions/Comments?

- Which travel tips resonated with you?
- Do you have any travel tips of your own to add?

Bev Holmes  
bholmes@msfhr.org

Marla Steinberg  
marlasteinberg@telus.net

# Next KT Connects Sessions.....

1. KT related to patients and the public
2. KT in health-related policy decision-making
3. KT in clinical practice