

Beyond Institutional Culture Shock



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Overview

- ▣ Conceptualizing culture
- ▣ Survey methods
- ▣ Survey results
- ▣ Suggestions for institutions
- ▣ Questions

Culture and faculty

- ▣ Culture is shaped by social interaction.
- ▣ Forces that shape faculty life include:
 - ▣ national culture
 - ▣ professional culture
 - ▣ disciplinary culture
 - ▣ institutional culture
 - ▣ individual cultural differences.

(Gertz, 1973 in Tierney, William G., and Robert Rhoads 1994)

Institutional Culture and Ecology

Language programs are a “delicate and intricate system” of interacting resources and components. (Pennington and Hoekje, 2010, p. 213)

What makes your institution unique?

- ▣ Take a minute to think about this question.
- ▣ Share your ideas.

Identifying the Unknowns

Physical demands

Teacher evaluation protocols

Support for conference travel

Classroom technology

Course objectives

Chain of command

What's so intricate?

Grading norms

Facilities

Access to decision makers

Teaching methodology

Likelihood of advancement

Record-keeping protocol

Protocol for student discipline

Institutional Culture Shock Survey

Driving Questions

- ▣ What is the effect of institutional culture shock on instructors?
- ▣ What are the reasons instructors experience culture shock?
- ▣ How can the negative effects of culture shock be lessened?

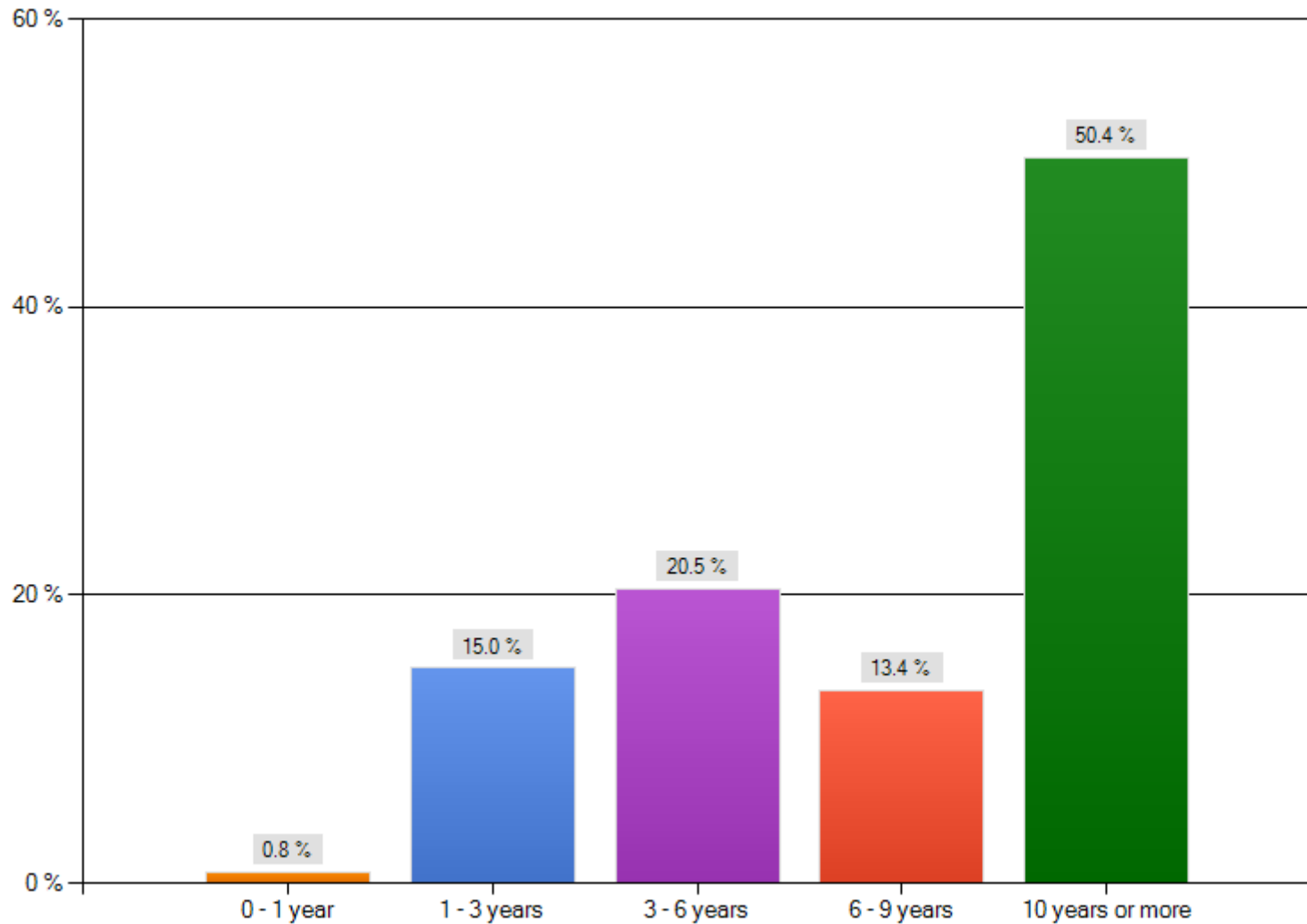
Hypotheses

- Many new hires experience some degree of culture shock in their new workplace.
- A new hire's degree of culture shock is related to the presence or absence of institutional support.
- Sustained orientation can ameliorate institutional culture shock in new hires.

Survey

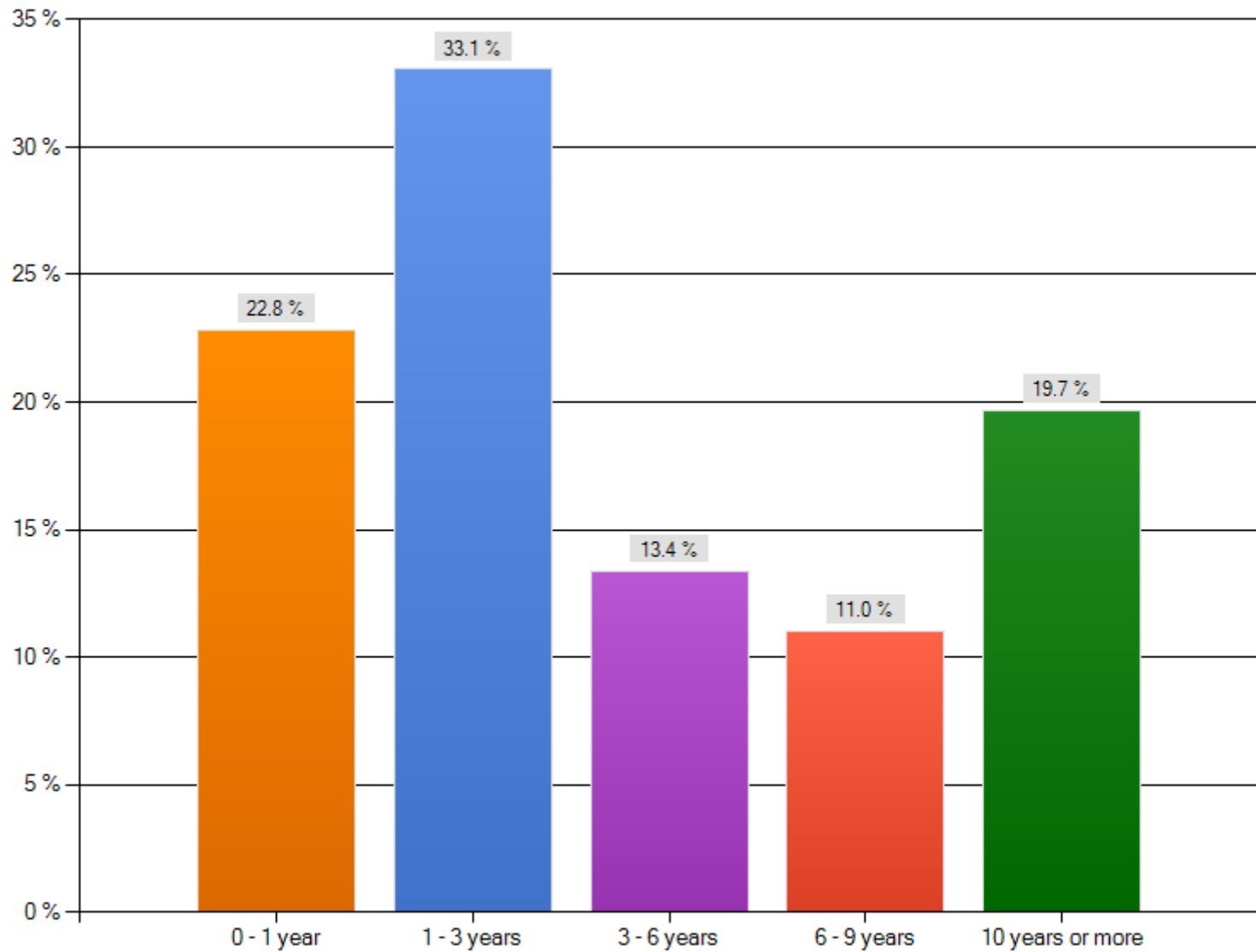
- TESOL listservs
- 156 respondents
- 119 participants (teachers and administrators)
- removed administrators (N=22)

Years of ESL Teaching Experience



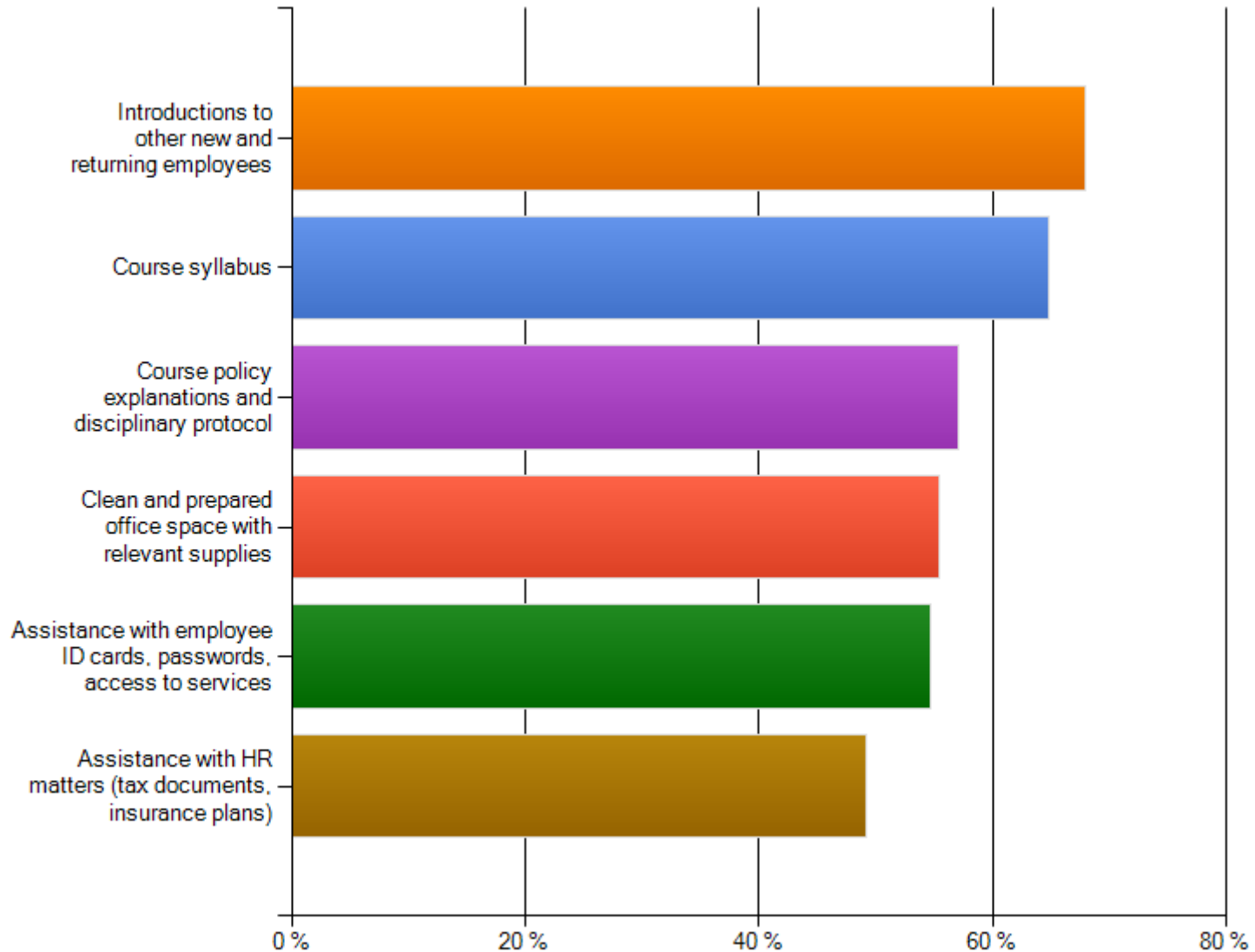
The majority of participants have been teaching for at least 10 years.

Time in current job



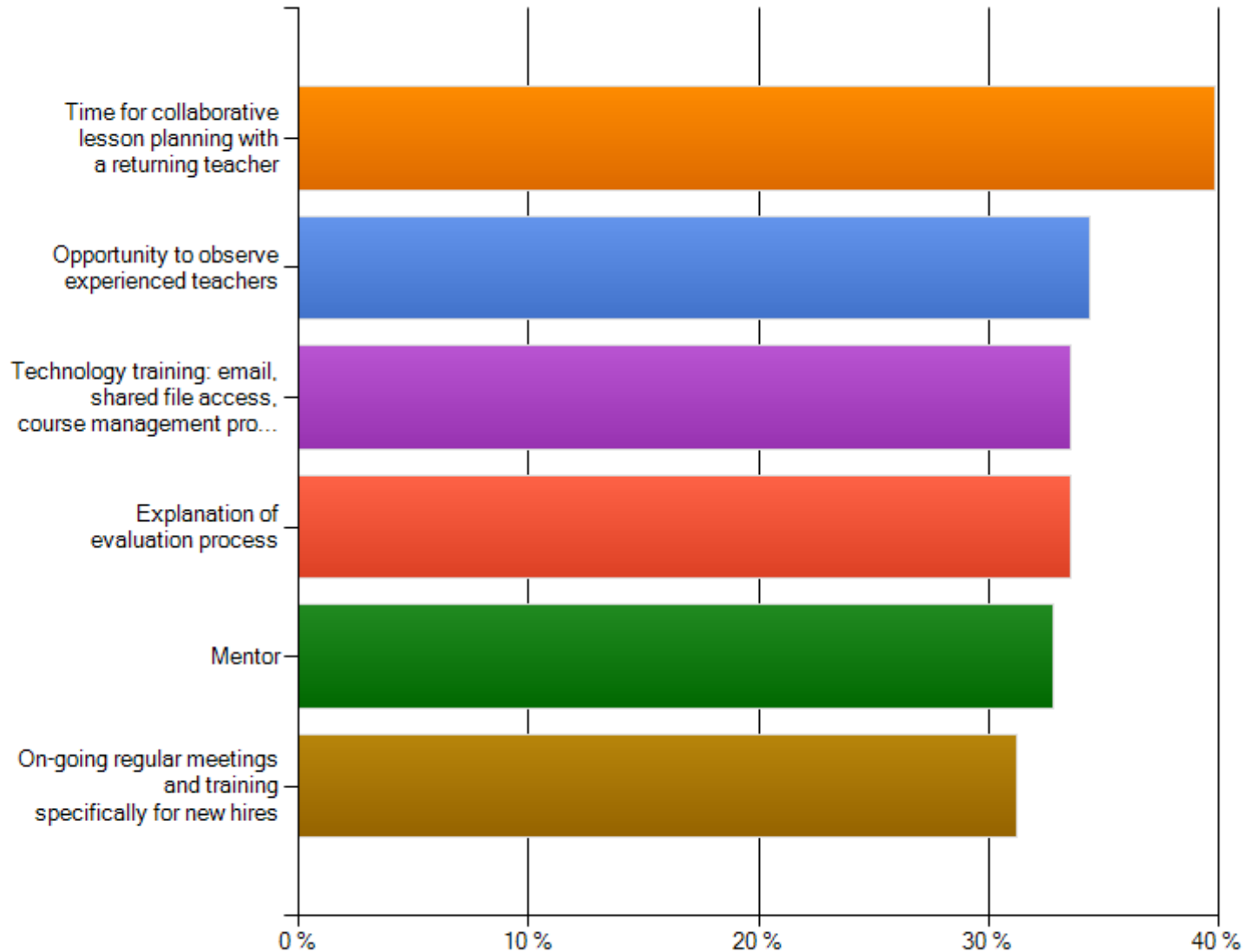
The majority of participants have been in their jobs for 1-3 years.

Services or information most often provided to new hires.



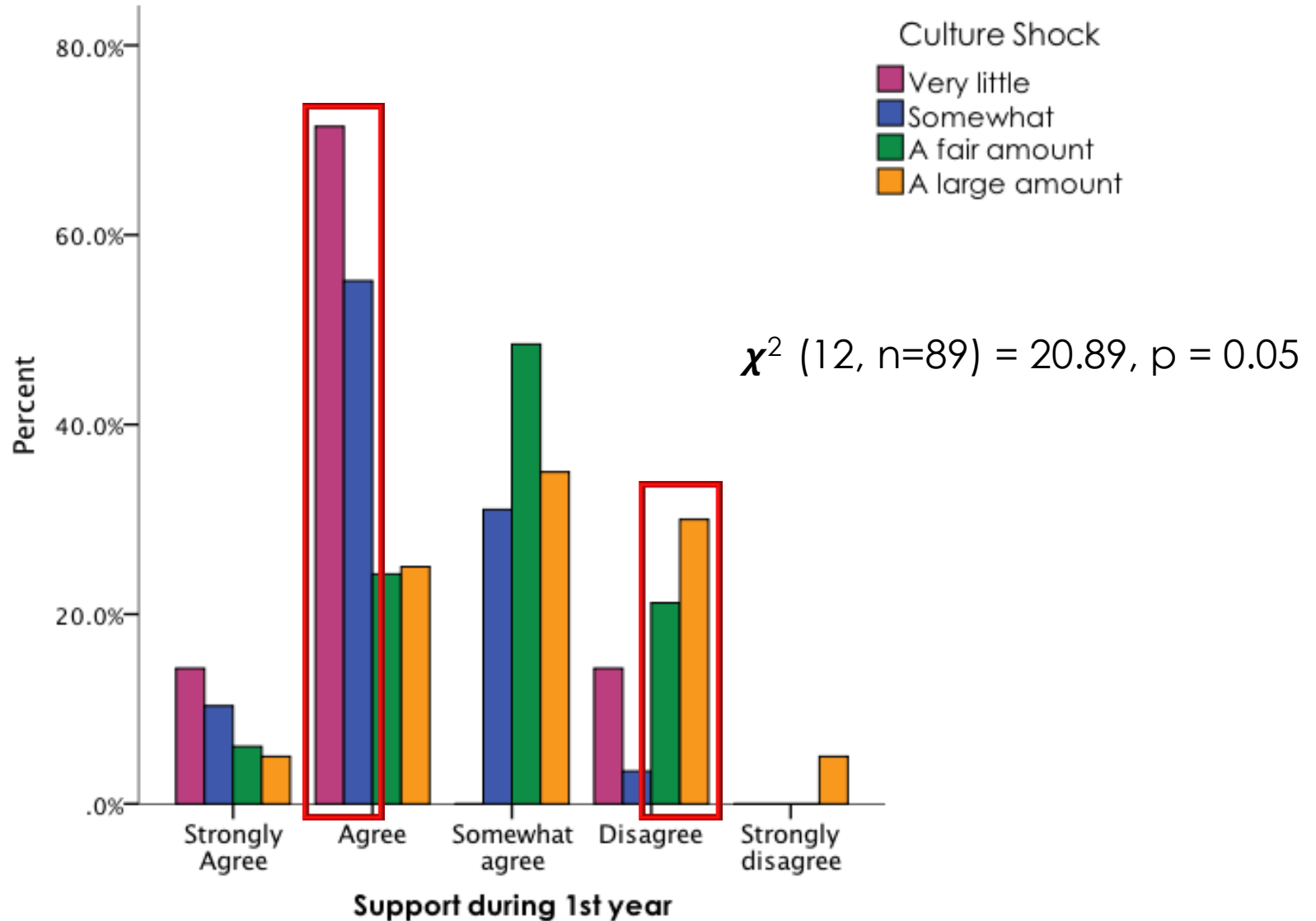
Of 22 items, the top 3 provided services are introductions to faculty, course syllabus, and explanations and protocol.

Services or information most desired



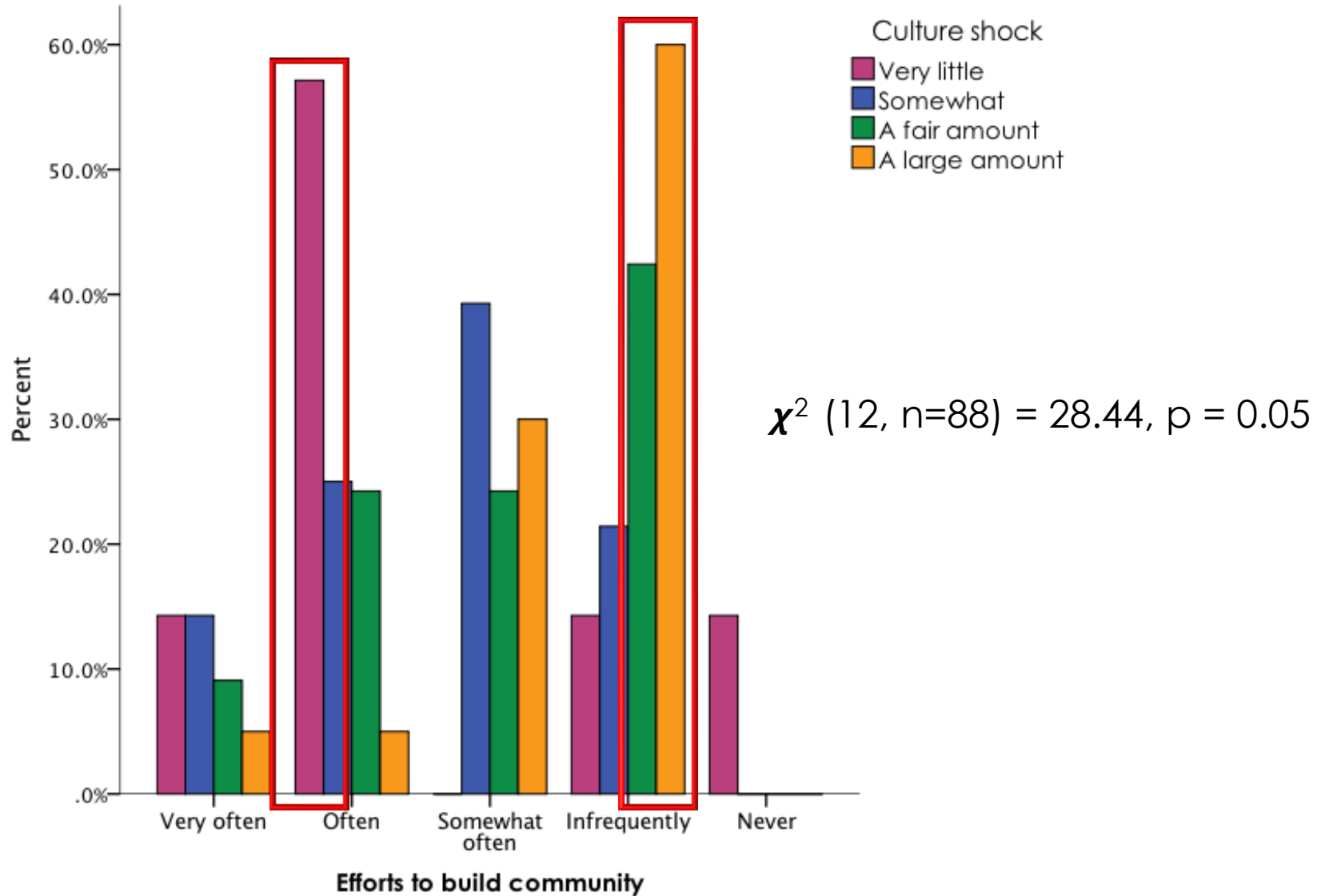
Of the 22 items, the most desired services include collaborative planning time, observations of experienced teachers, and technology training.

Amount of support given during first year in relation to extent of culture shock

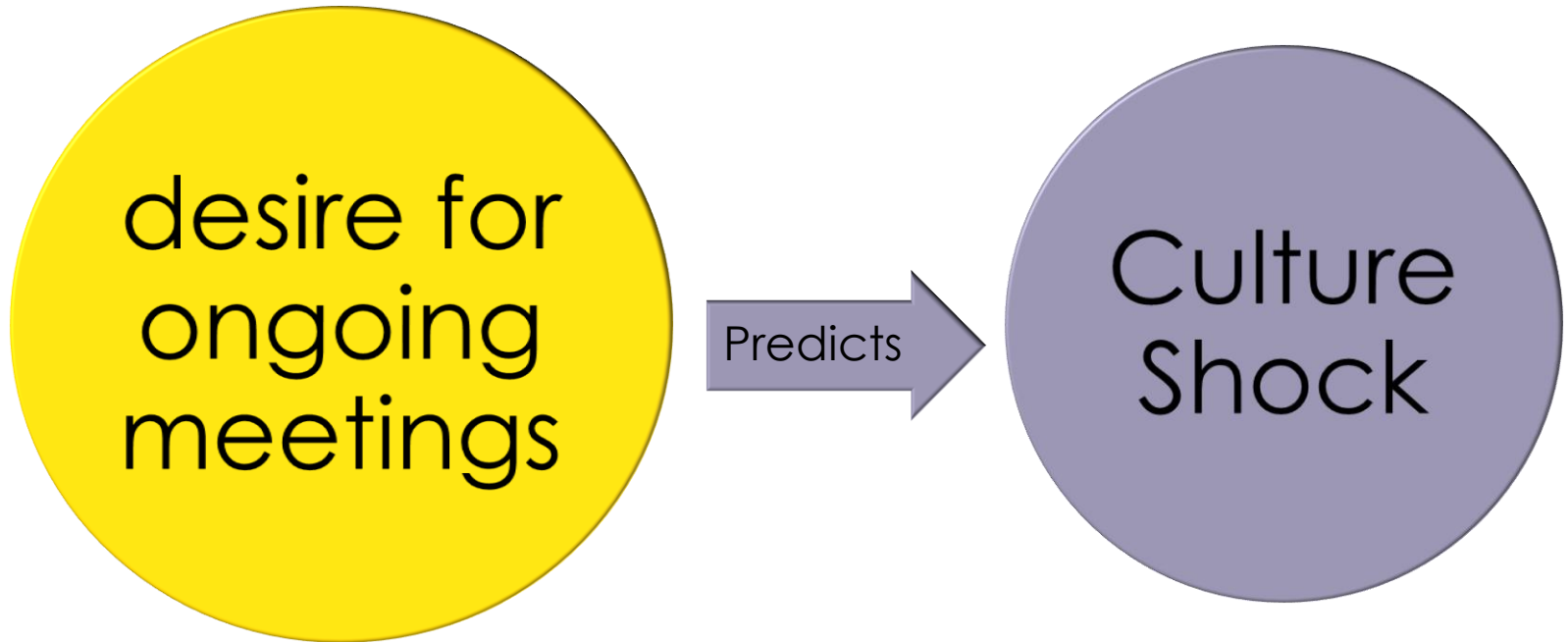


Individuals who strongly agreed that new hires are given enough support also reported less culture shock.

Efforts institutions take to build community in relation to culture shock

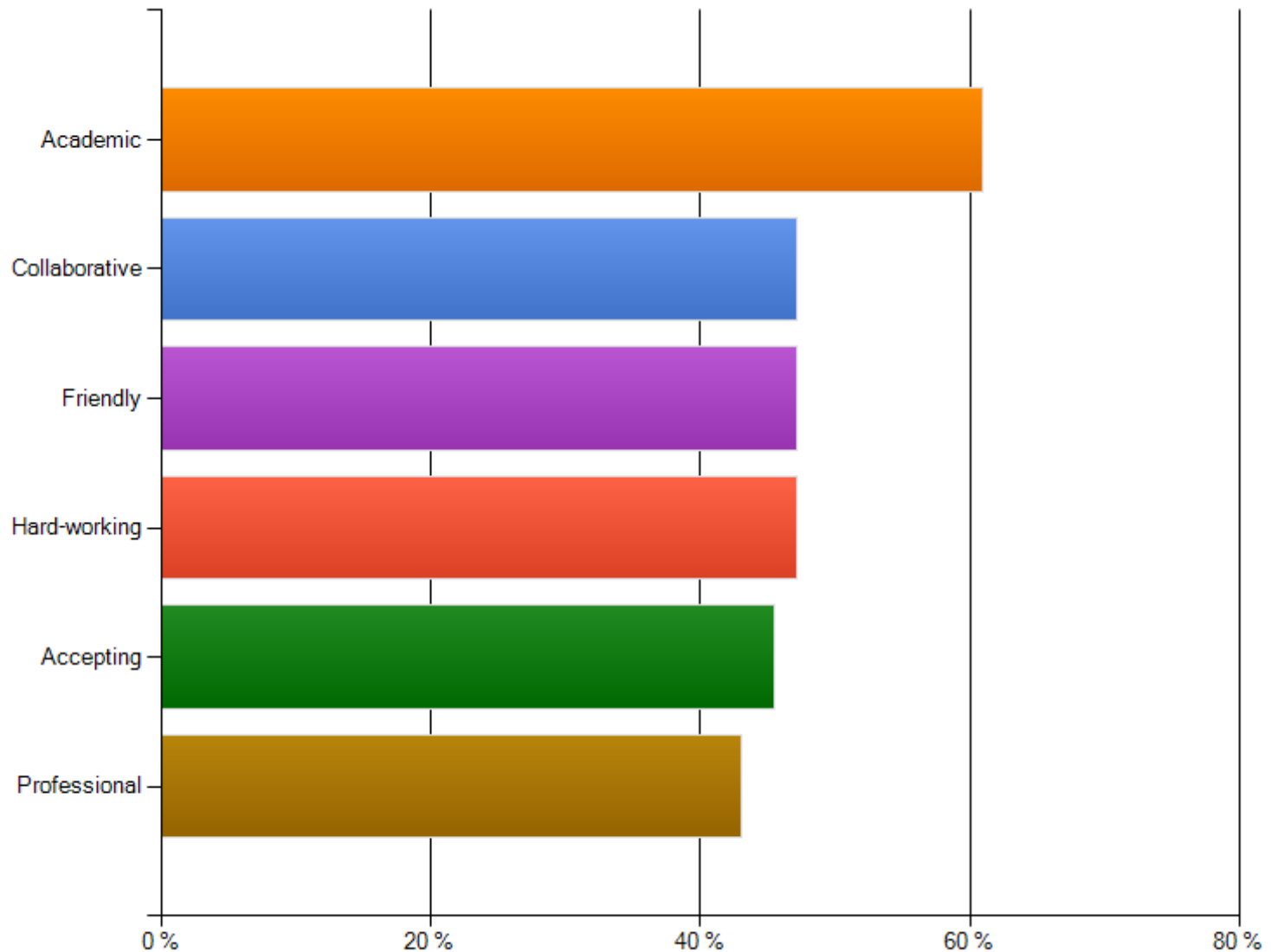


Those who experience a fair-large amount of culture shock indicate there are few efforts to build community.

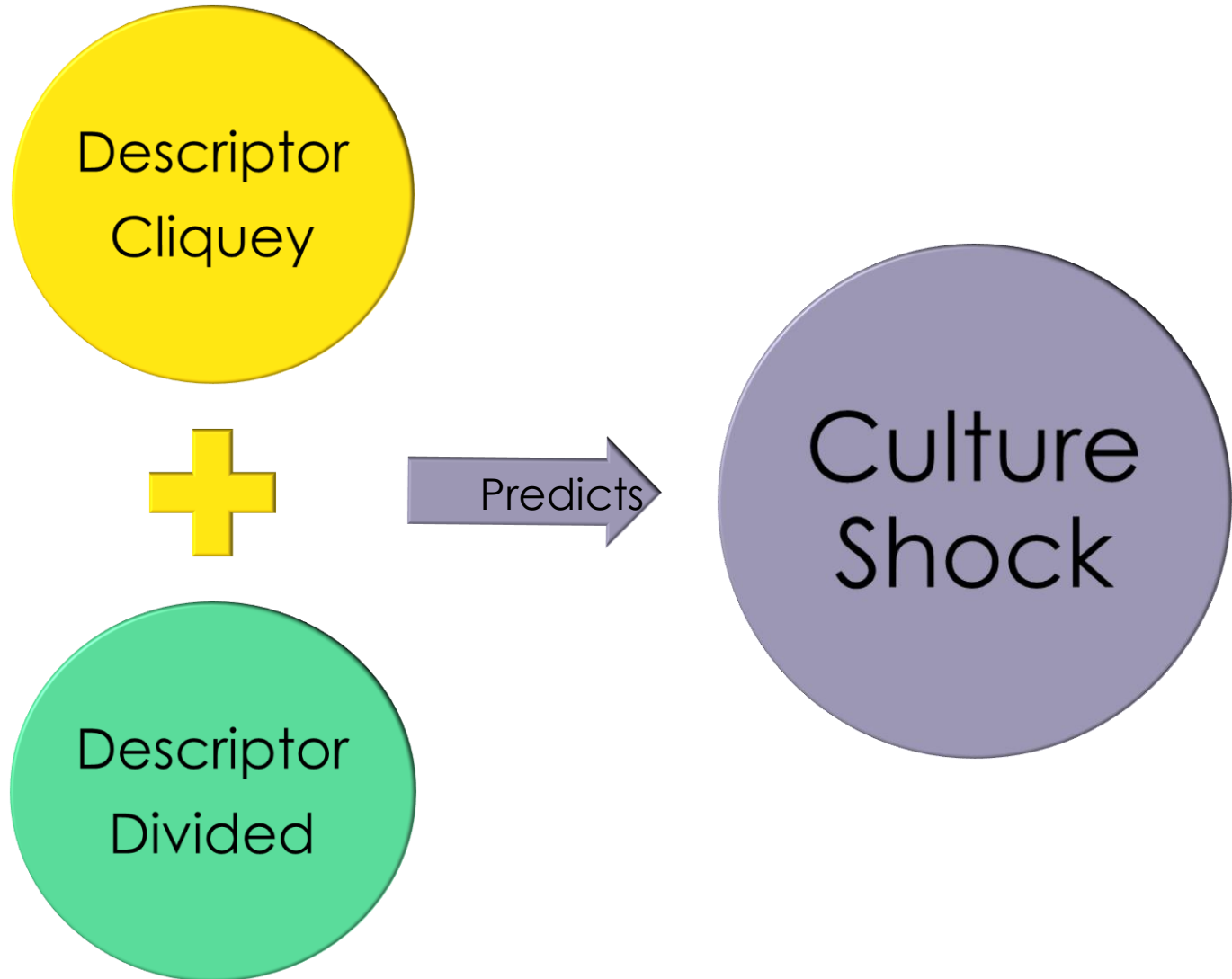


$(r^2 = .10, F_{(1,90)} = 10.03, p = .002)$ $(\beta = .31, p = .002)$

Adjectives most often used to describe institutions.



Of the 29 adjectives participants could choose from to describe their institution, the top 6 were all positive.



($r^2 = .17$, $F_{(2,89)}=8.78$, $p<.001$) ($\beta = .29$, $p<.001$) (cliquey) ($\beta = .23$, $p<.05$) (divided)

Conclusion

Approaches to new faculty induction are too frequently...

- ▣ short-term, not sustained
- ▣ superficial, not intensive
- ▣ logistics-focused, not culturally/socially-focused

Suggestion for Practice



Sustained Approach: A Community of Practice

- ▣ What is a *Community of Practice*?
 - ▣ Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. (Wenger, <http://www.ewenger.com/theory/> accessed 2/27/13)

Sustained Approach: A Community of Practice

- *Legitimate peripheral participation* (Lave and Wenger, 1991)
- Why is it a good conceptual strategy for addressing institutional culture shock?
 - validates and values the role of newcomers,
 - places them in their new institution as learners, but also as necessary contributors, and
 - allows for practice and learning to happen simultaneously.

The Teaching Cohort

- Our Community of Practice: The Teaching Cohort
 - weekly meetings by level and course
 - lead teacher to help monitor and ensure that level objectives are being met
 - opportunity to share information (talk about) and stories (talk within)

Long-term Plan

- needs analysis (survey of recent hires)
- development of cohort workshops
- end goal: making cohort meetings more effective communities of practice

Objectives: Cohort Community Development

...**for cohort members (non-leads)**: to enter into a cohort with a clear understanding of what is expected of me and what I can expect of a lead teacher

...**for cohort leads**: to enter into a lead position in a cohort prepared with leadership communication tools needed to be clear and relationally supportive, and the material/structural tools to be comprehensive and technically supportive

...**for all**: to enter into a cohort with the expectation that I will feel informed, supported & energized by the cohort

Tasks: Cohort Community Development

- highlight the benefits of a cohort as a community of practice
- detail roles and responsibilities, i.e., expectations, of both lead and non-lead cohort members ['TALK ABOUT']
- utilize case studies and role-plays ['TALK WITHIN'] to prepare teachers for the challenges inherent in cohort communication and relationships

Summary / Recommendations / Materials

Questions?

please see handout for references

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