Confronting Pride and Prejudice with Sense and Sensibility: Lessons for Institutional Research Communities

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Image: Parkes, I. (2008) http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chatsworth_House_032.jpg
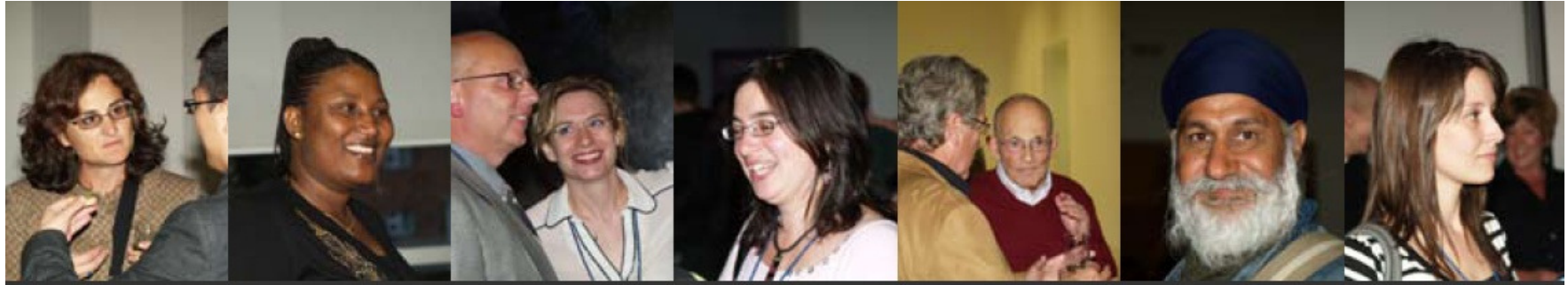
# The iPED (Inquiring Pedagogies) Research Network

- A capacity-building Community of Inquiry (CoI) established to influence academic practice and policy at Coventry University.
- Growth via the 'space of flows' (Castells et al., 2007) into a large international network.
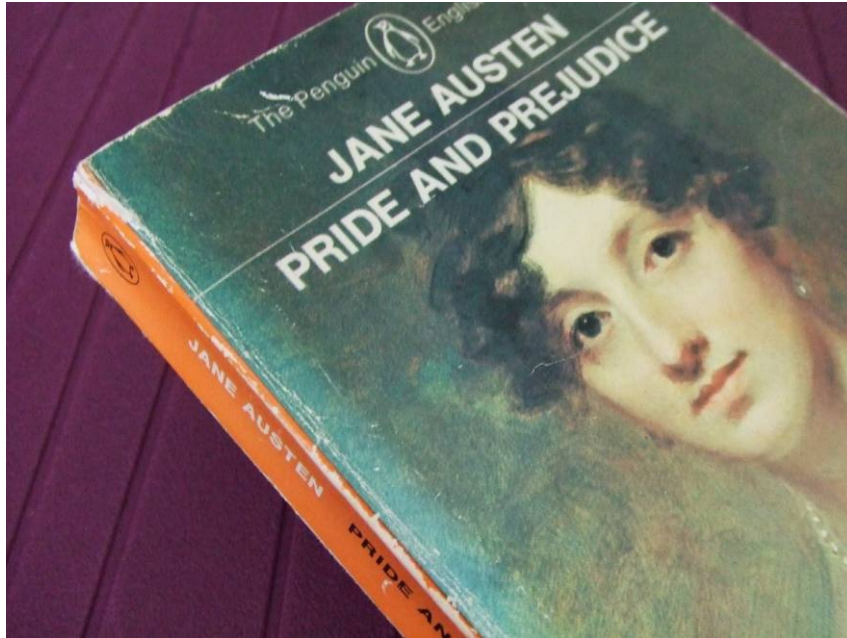
The iPED Research Network

- Aims:
  - to support and develop educational researchers,
  - to advance the field collaboratively and
  - to facilitate international interaction
- Aspiration: to overcome the barriers between education researchers of discipline, culture, geography, and economic and hierarchic status.

iPED Evolutionary Development
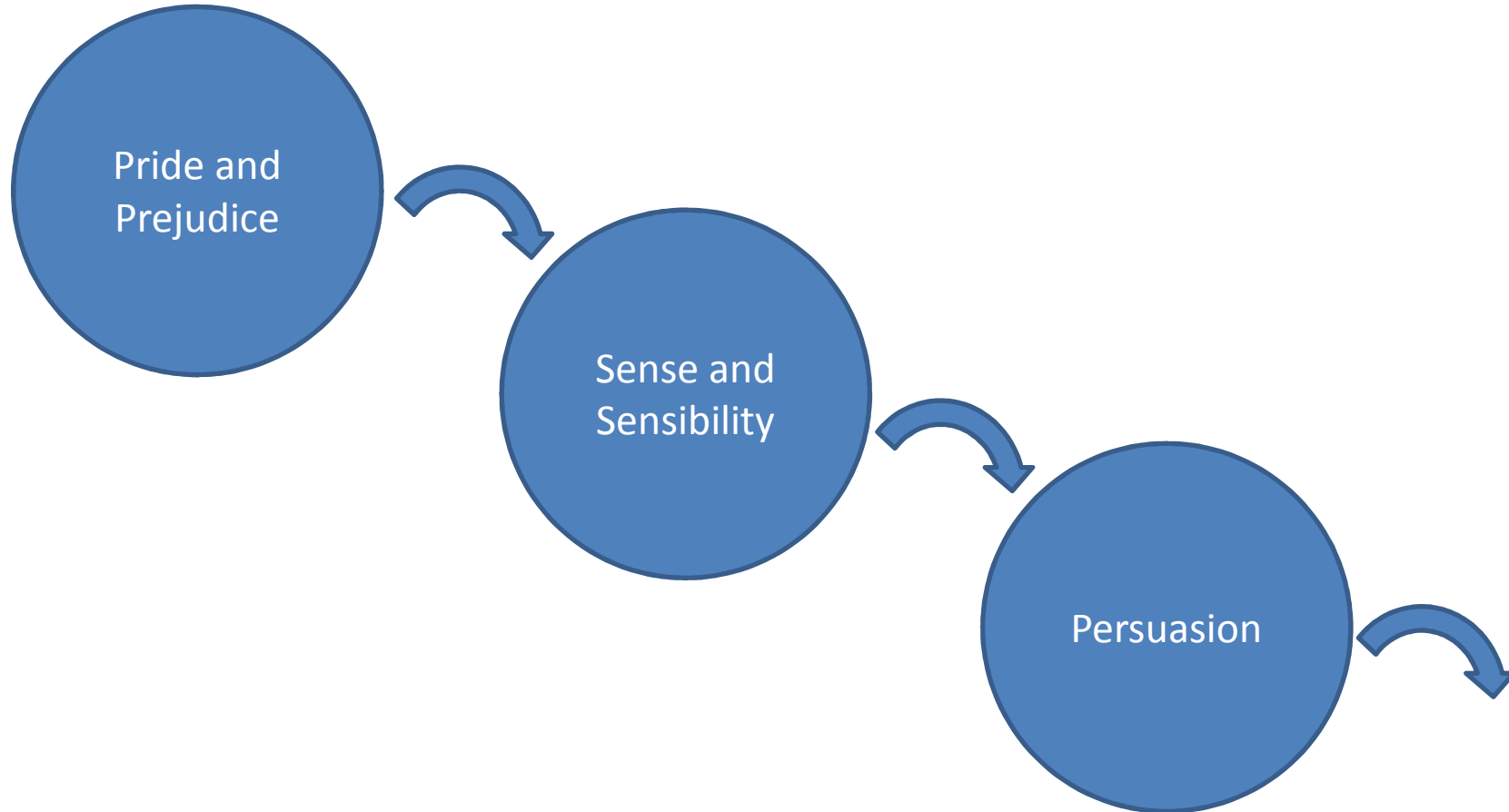
'Pride and Prejudice'

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."
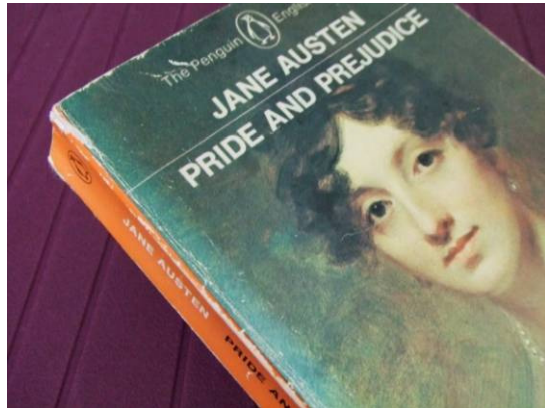
(Austen, 1813: 1)

'Pride and Prejudice'

Throwing off:

— Preconceptions,

— mis-readings and

— naïve expectations.
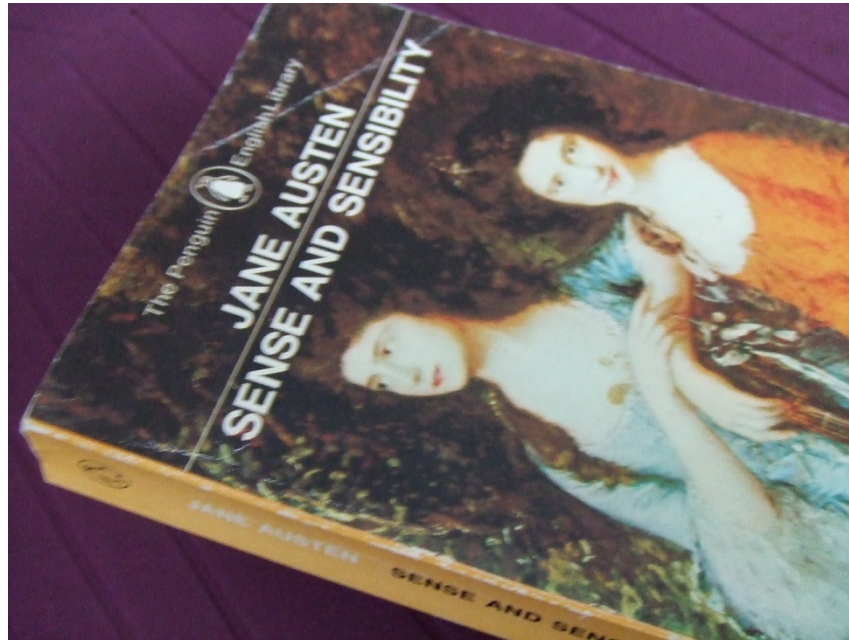
(Clouder, King, & Savin-Baden, 2005)

Accepting:

— the fragmented state of Higher Education research and

— the tribal culture of academic disciplines.

(Becher &Trowler, 2001)

'Sense and Sensibility'

"Reflection had given calmness to her judgement, and sobered her opinion ... she wished therefore to declare only the simple truth, and lay open facts as they were really ..."

(Austen, 1811: 340)

'Sense and Sensibility'

A period of tactful diplomacy and network building enabled the CoI to progress.
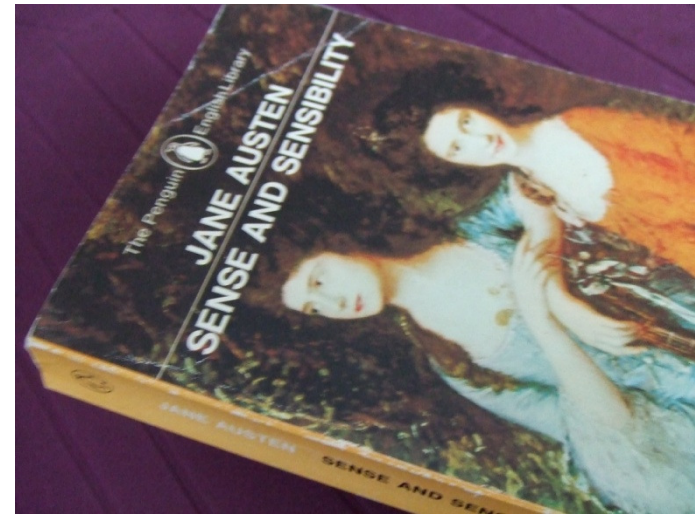
(Deepwell & King, 2009)

Pragmatism is complemented and contrasted by ethical and moral sensitivity.

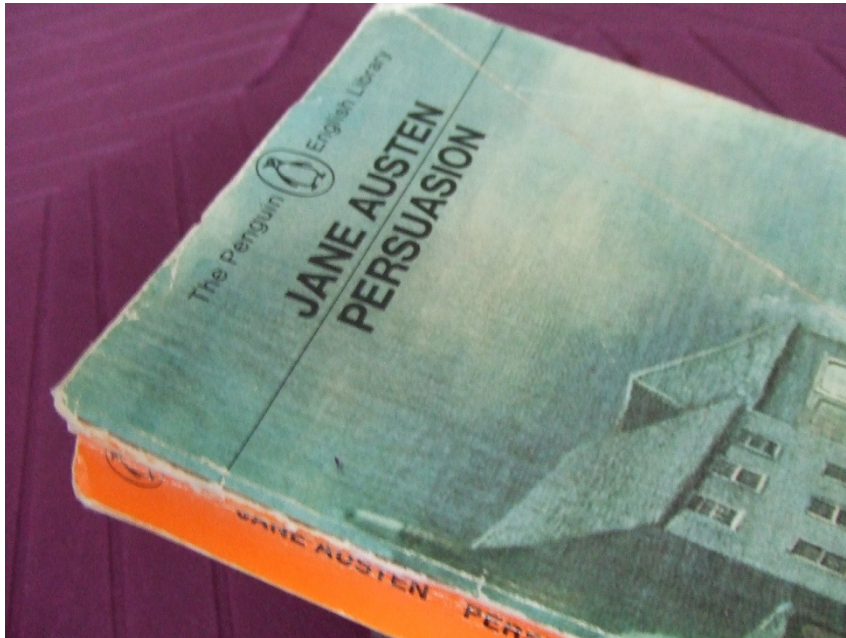(King, Clouder, Deane, Deepwell and Ganobcsik-Williams, 2007)

Academic learning and student learning are seen as complementary and mutually supportive.

(Blackmore, in press)

'Persuasion'

"At Lyme, he had received lessons of more than one sort. The passing admiration of Mr Elliott had at least roused him, and the scenes on the Cobb, and at Captain Harville's, had fixed her superiority."
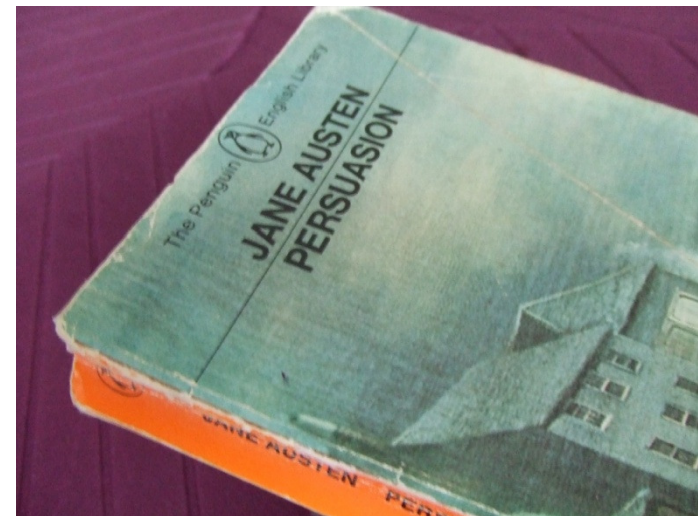
(Austen, 1818: 244)

'Persuasion'

- Achieving influence by focusing on institutionally mission-critical research activity.

  (Broughan & Bland, 2009)

- Capitalising on external recognition to gain value in the home institution

  (Clouder & King, 2008)

Parallels with a Theories of Change?

Figure 1: CETLs in relation to a national change strategy

Awareness

Initial stages of development involve wider emerging institutional awareness and interest in knowing more, thinking of implications for the institution or for other networks, such as subject or regional ones, and initial awareness of innovative practice embodied in the CETL and engagement strategies that begin to establish new bridgeheads

Exploring wider effects

Some CETLs are beginning to move forward by involving wider emerging awareness and interest in knowing more. They are thinking of implications for the institution or for other networks, such as subject or regional ones, more attention on the impact on students, staff, departments and whole institution of new practices and processes, relevance, evaluation and implied changes. At this stage, attention is on difficulties in the processes and tasks involved in developing new practices, processes and systems

Adaptation and extension

We might expect, toward the final period of funding for the CETLs, that they begin to experience activity at what we understand as adaptive extension where attention is now on adaptation, major changes, alternatives to original ideas and creativity. This opens up the possibility of increased coordinating and cooperating with other stakeholders in using new practices, systems and processes

Saunders et al. (2008: 7)
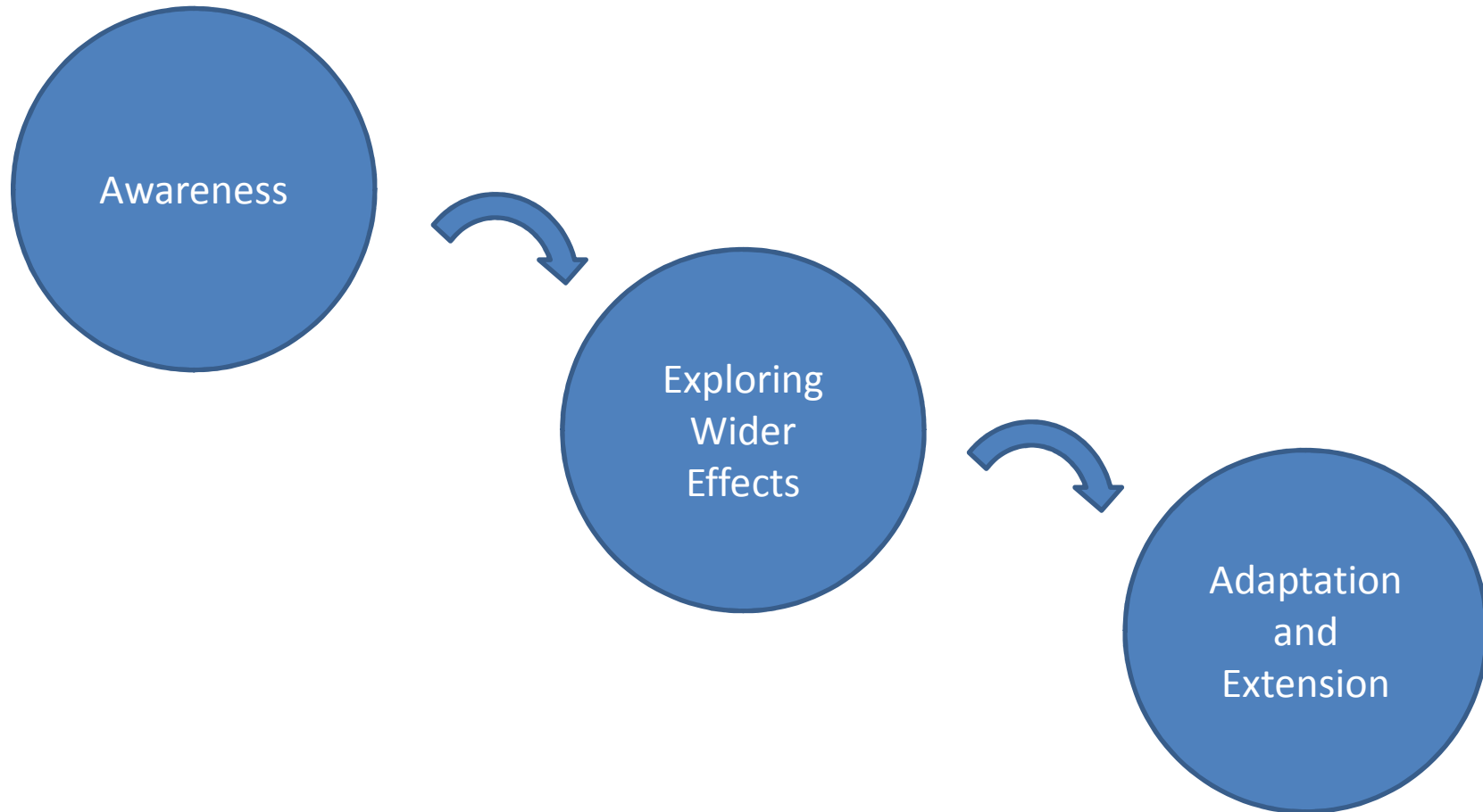
Parallels with Team Development?
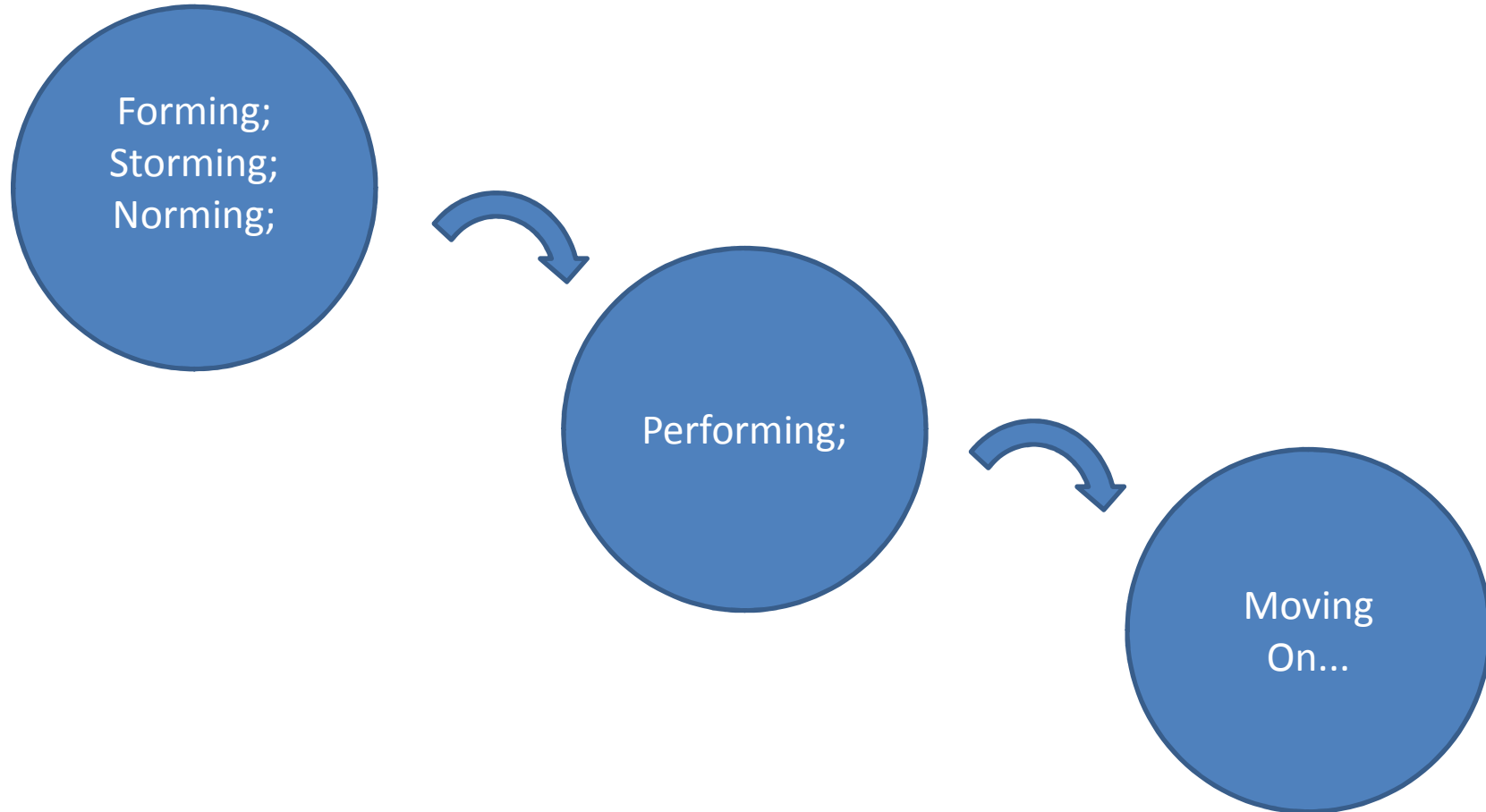
Lessons Learned

1. *"communication technologies themselves must support the development of a collaborative community; and [...] the social, technical and cultural facets of electronic collaboration evolve integrally over time"*

   (Deepwell and King, 2009: 1)

Lessons Learned

2. *"continue to be mindful of promoting the emergent pedagogical research community, whilst not neglecting our own aspirations and ambitions"*

(Clouder, Deepwell & King, in press)

Lessons Learned

3. The "*inclusion of the strategic and the scholarly ... bringing together the theoretical and the practical, and in advocating and exploring an integrated view of academic work, iPED has sought to move beyond some unhelpful oppositions and into a series of more creative tensions*"

    (Blackmore, in press)

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