

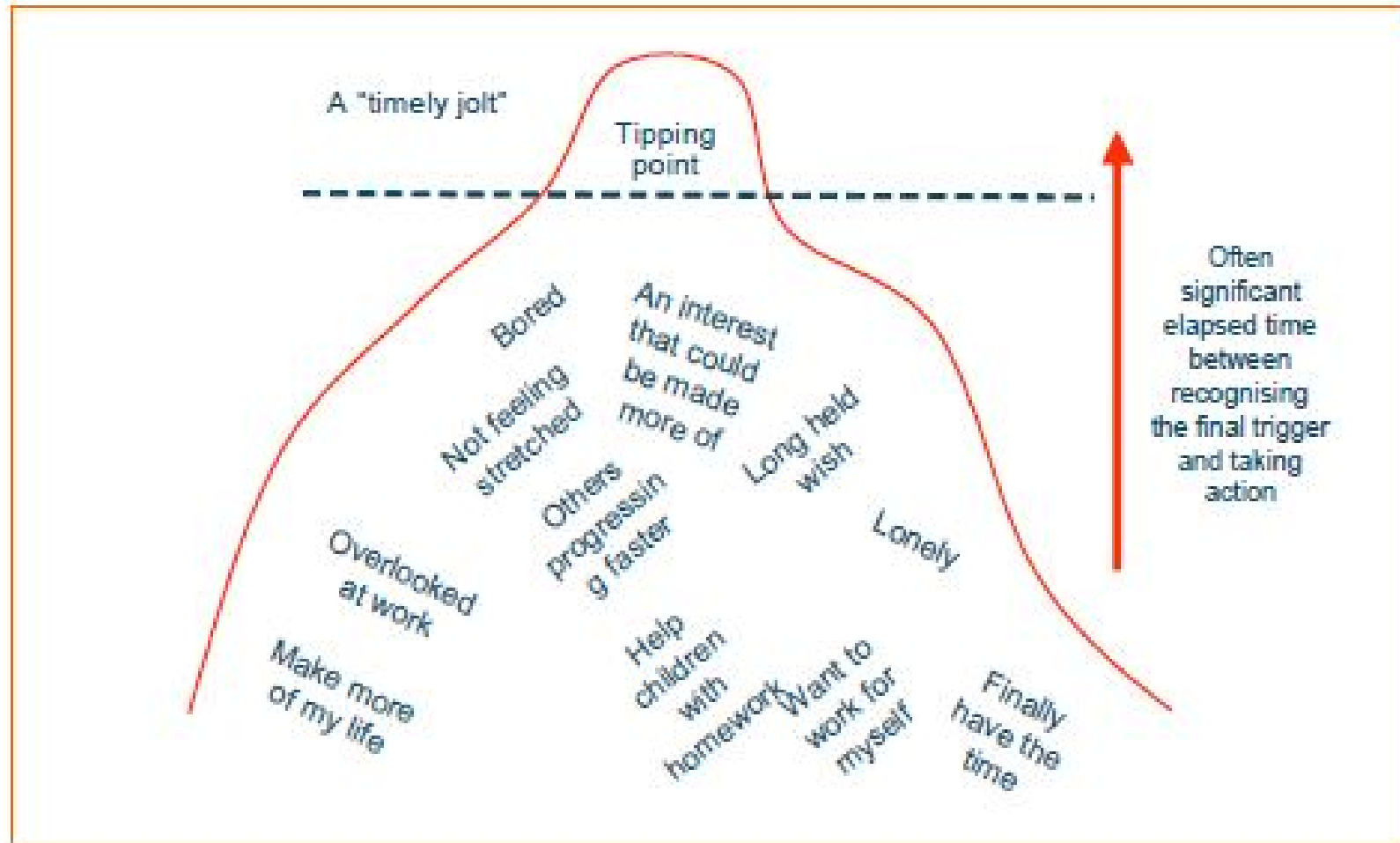
| G | H | K |

Learner Support Funding:  
Its not what you do its the way,  
how and why you do it

Peter Dickinson

- Previous GHK research and evaluations:
  - Learner Support Funds
  - Career Development Loans
  - Framework for Excellence
- Current GHK and other research:
  - Study to scope automated access to information on adult learner support funding
  - Literature Review of Individuals' Choices, Motivations and Barriers to Skills Learning

# Passive triggers...

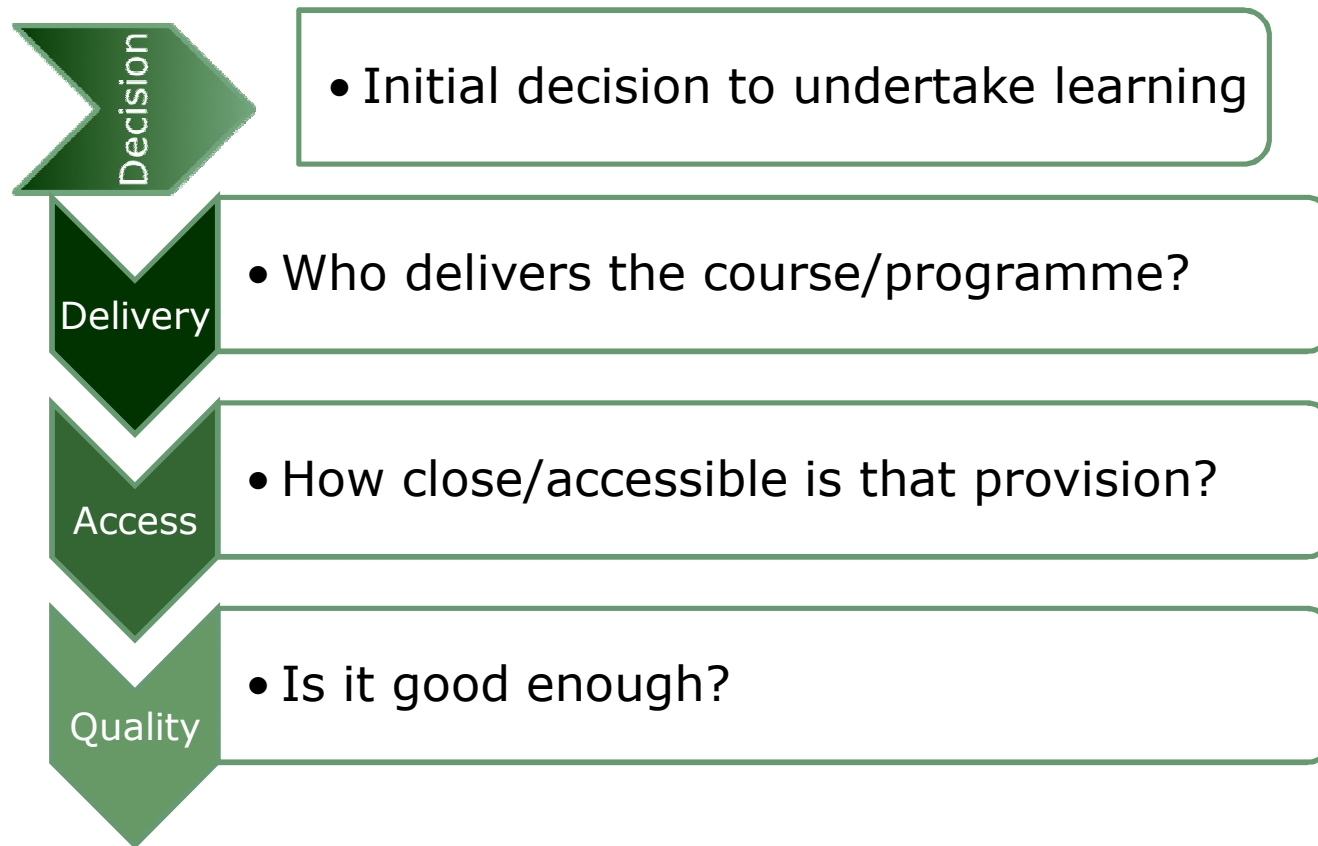


- Directed by an external source:
  - Employer
  - Jobcentre Plus
  - Respected source – friend, colleague
  - Advertising

- Intended to address finance and other barriers
- Incentives for Government priorities
- Take up by priority groups
- Little data or reflection on take up
- Little targeting of support funds

- Little ongoing analysis
- Participation – varying levels of deadweight
- Retention – greatest impact
- Achievement – zero sum?
- Progression – into work not learning

# Learner decision making model - stark but sufficient



- Delivery location (unprompted)
- Entry qualifications (u)
- Financial support (prompted)
- Destinations – jobs (p)
- Course facilities (p)
- Course times (p)
- Provider facilities (p)
- Provider reputation (p)



- Variety of formats
- Course level
- Option to discuss information
- Sources:
  - Nextsteps
  - Learndirect
  - Current tutor/provider
  - Provider – prospectus, website

A quarter of adults spoke to their friends and one in five called a learning provider for IAG

Sources of IAG - past



M5/M5a/M5b: And still thinking about this time what sources of information, advice or guidance helped you make your decision?  
Base: all adult learners and considerers (322)

# Sources by learner level...

Significant at 95%:  
○ = higher ○ = lower

Sources of IAG by learner type				
	Pre Level 2 (77) %	Level 2 (69) %	Level 3 (85) %	Non-learner (83) %
Spoke with friends	35	25	24	17
Called a college or course provider directly	18	29	22	16
Looked up information on the Internet	17	19	11	20
Spoke with colleagues	17	20	22	10
Read a college prospectus	16	13	18	12
Spoke with a careers advisor	12	14	20	7
Spoke with husband/ wife/ partner	17	9	6	4
Spoke with manager/ HR/ someone else more senior at work	5	7	9	11
Saw an advert on TV/ paper/ magazine	6	1	2	5
Spoke with/ called LearnDirect	5	1	4	2
Looked up information in the local library	1	3	1	5
NET: FAMILY/ FRIENDS	45	33	27	23
None of these/ no information sought	5	10	12	27

M5/M5a/M5b: And still thinking about this time what sources of information, advice or guidance helped you make your decision?  
 Base: all adults (405)

\*Figures are not shown for Leisure learners and Considerers due to small base sizes (less than 50).

- Changing context
- Help learners overcome barriers
- AACCS, Skills Accounts, IES, UK VQRP, FfE
- Increasing and different use of ICTs
- Demand led funding
- Informed choice

- Main barriers:
    - Complexity of learner support
    - Lots of information but lack of knowledge
    - Local discretion on some funding
    - Informal and ad hoc packages of support
    - Gaps in support – childcare
    - Eligibility restrictions
    - Benefit restrictions
    - Joining up support
    - Unequal access to information
    - Web based information – early days
-

- Satisfied but only due to investment of time
- Information important to effective learner support
- Allocating support funding varies
- Links with other organisations
- Local area demographics
- Feedback from students
- Targeting vs. Generic approaches
- Flexibility
- Uncertainty

- Limited internet usage – access and preference
- Support information provided at enrolment
- ‘Information overload’
- Ongoing information 1-2-1 with staff
- Financial barriers:
  - Course/exam fees and course materials
  - Loss of earnings/benefits
  - Childcare and transport
- Most financial support required for – fees, transport and childcare

- Online eligibility checkers seem clear and easy to use
- Some providers provide online information
- Preference for 1-2-1 information and portable formats
- Need to promote learner support, not other agendas
- National and local information
- Links to provider websites/facebook



- **Messenger** - who communicates information
- **Incentives** – responses shaped by mental shortcuts
- **Norms** - influenced by what others do
- **Defaults** – ‘go with the flow’
- **Salience** – novelty and relevance
- **Priming** – sub-conscious cues
- **Affect** - emotional associations
- **Commitments**
- **Ego** - make us feel better about ourselves

- Understanding the role of support funds
- More effective targeting
- Earlier intervention
- Emphasis on progression and aftercare
- Providing straightforward information
- Reducing complexity
- Collective approaches

- Are these findings news to you?
- Strengths and weaknesses of current information provision?
- Role of ICTs?
- Role of non-support staff?
- Your experiences, especially good practice
- Your current use of ICTs
- What would an ideal information resource look like?