

# TELL Research Presentation

By Carol Thompson and  
Peter Wolstencroft

# Overview of Current Research

- Exploring the ‘lived experiences’ of academic staff working in Further Education.
- Developed into a ‘trilogy’ reviewing the experiences of:
  - New tutors (focus on ‘survival’)
  - Curriculum Managers (focus on professional-managerial paradigm)
  - Senior Managers (focus on managing change)

*“A Year on the Frontline –*

*Despatches from New FE Teachers”*



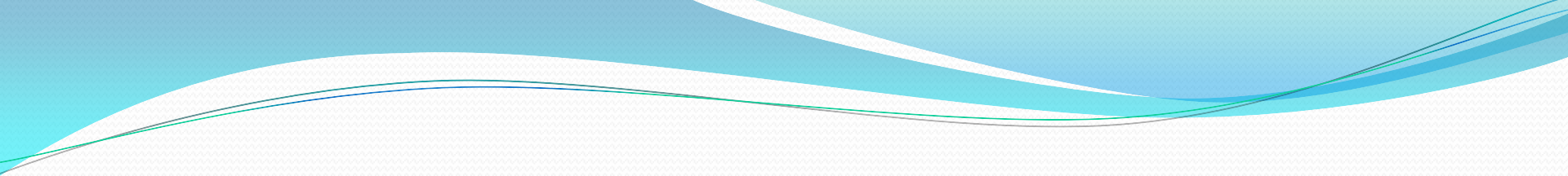
- Published November 2012
- Built on work from Avis and Bathmaker, Spenceley and others
- **Key findings:**
- FE environment operates on a ‘more for less model’
- Teachers expectations of the job clearly not matched with the job itself
- Communities of practice seem limited (and often unsupportive)
- New teachers unsympathetic to more experienced colleagues (who they view as ‘set in their ways)
- Disappointed with college, students and managers

# Despite this.....

- Several tutors said that if offered their old jobs back
- They wouldn't take them!

*“Promises and Lies – an exploration of Curriculum Managers’  
Experiences in FE”*

- Due to be published 2013
- Built on work from Ball and Shain and Gleeson
- **Key findings:**
- Training for the role is limited (too little, too late)
- Managers’ roles are often ambiguous
- Managers feel a sense of ambivalence towards some aspects of the role

- 
- There is a sense of being 'lied to' ... what was promised.... Did not match reality
  - Many managers lacked authority yet were accountable
  - Work-life balance was difficult (often limited)
  - Support was limited
  - Staffing difficulties were numerous and often unexpected
  - The job was considered unworkable

*“Trouble at t’top – senior managers experiences in a uncertain world”.*

- A work in progress.....
- The idea is to look for commonality between the groups and try to understand if each group were acting in isolation or whether there were shared concerns between the groups.

# And for good measure...

- *“I was just following orders – military precision in lesson planning and delivery in an FE context”*
- Investigation into the role that observations play within FE
- Interviews with tutors, ITE trainers and Directors of Quality
- Links to performativity, OFSTED, the role of ITE and also the view of teachers as professionals.