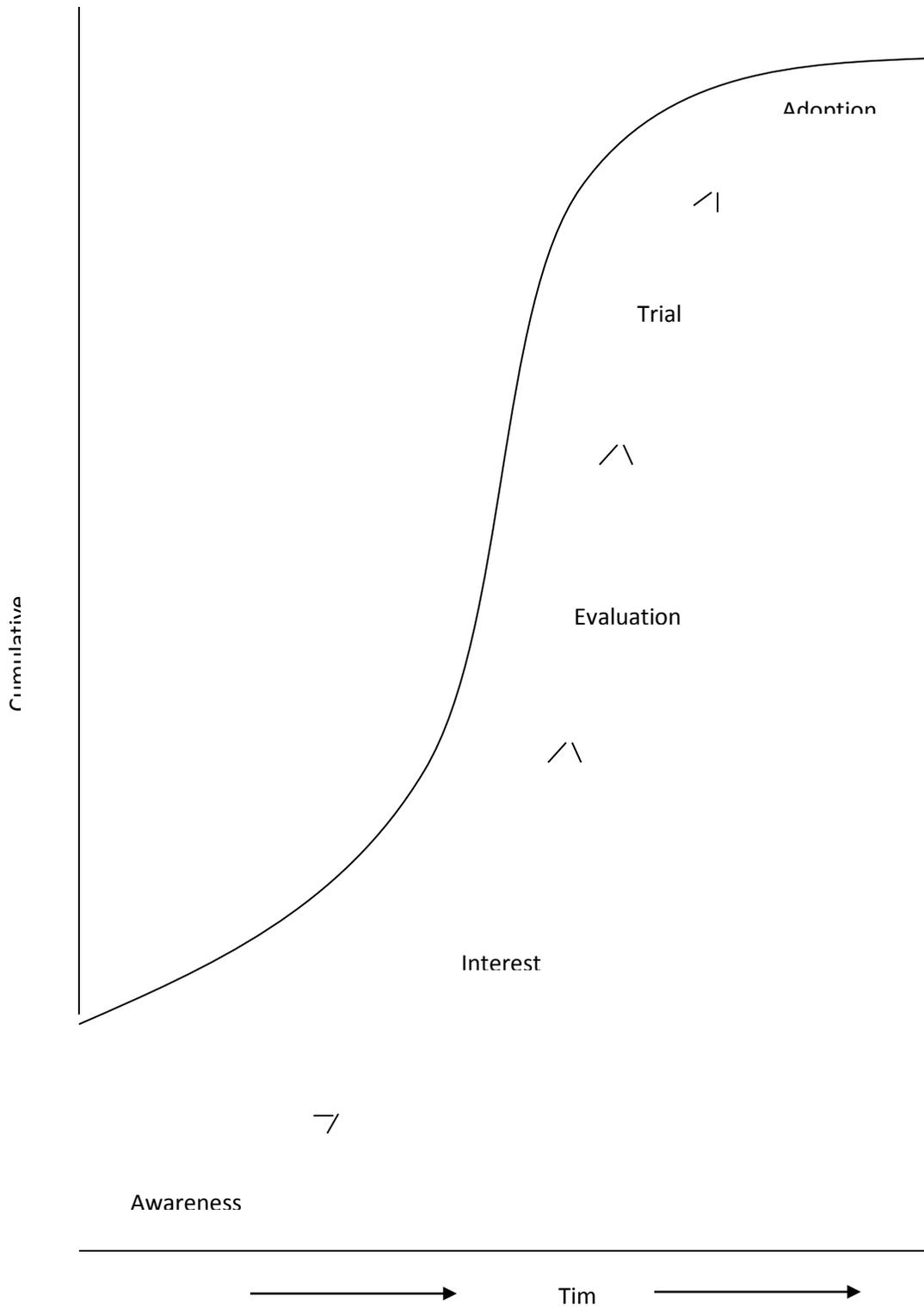
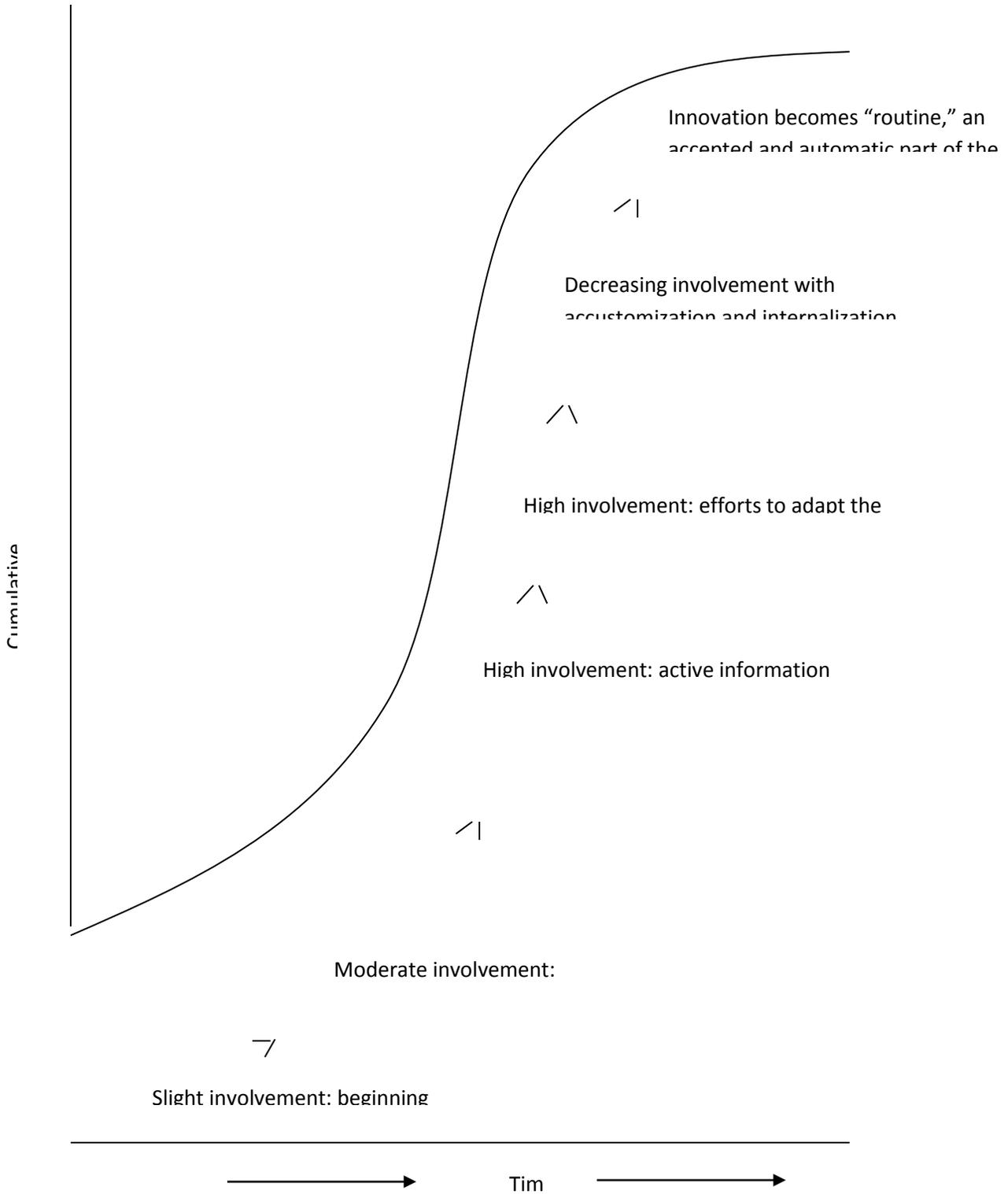


Involvement of an Individual at Stages of the Adoption Process



From *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th Ed.) by Everett M. Rogers (Free Press, 2003).

Involvement of an Individual During the Adoption Process



From *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th Ed.) by Everett M. Rogers (Free Press, 2003).

The Social Interaction Perspective

“This school includes models in which the unit of analysis is the individual receiver, and in which the focus is on the receiver’s perception of and response to knowledge coming from outside himself. This knowledge is usually in the form of an identifiable product or practice which has been made available to a potential adopting population. Authors who consider the process of adoption for this point of view are concerned with the stages through which individuals pass as they reach a decision to adopt an innovation. They are concerned in addition with the related issue of the mechanisms by which the innovation diffuses through the adopting group. Studies in this area have shown that the most effective means of spreading information about an innovation is through personal contact. Thus, the key to adoption is viewed by authors of this school to be the “social interaction” among members of the adopting group.”

“Since it is assumed that the innovation which is to be adopted is already in a developed form, suitable for use readily available to the potential adopter, the initial stage is generally described as one of awareness of the innovation. If an adoption is to be initiated, the awareness will usually be followed by stages of interest and information seeking, evaluation (in terms of decision making), trial, and adoption. The sequence may be truncated by rejection at any stage; for example awareness may be followed by rejection, in which case interest and information seeking do not take place. Similarly, interest and information seeking may result in the decision that the innovation is not useful or appropriate; evaluation may provide negative results, and trial on a limited basis may lead to rejection.”

Five-stage Process

A. Awareness

In this initial stage “the individual is exposed to the innovation but lacks complete information about it. The individual is aware of the innovation, but is not yet motivated to seek further information. The primary function of the awareness stage is to initiate the sequence of later stages that lead to eventual adoption or rejection of the innovation.’ This stage is described “as a relatively passive one on the part of the receiver; he feels that awareness of an innovation does not generally come about as a result of a need, but rather that awareness of a new idea creates a need for that innovation.”

B. Interest

“The behavior of the individual during the second, or Interest, stage is characterized by active information-seeking about the innovation. ‘The individual favors the innovation in a general way, but he has not yet judged its utility in terms of his own situation. The function of the interest stage is mainly to increase the individual’s information about the innovation.’ We might speculate that the less information-seeking required, the more readily will the innovation be accepted. However...as the individual’s behavior becomes more purposive in seeking information, his psychological involvement increases. We may conclude, therefore, that the

active seeking of information implies some degree of personal commitment, and may presage later phases more likely to result in adoption.”

C. Evaluation

The third stage, Evaluation, is a “period of ‘mental trial’ which is a necessary preliminary to the decision to make a ‘behavioral trial.’ ‘At the evaluation stage the individual mentally applies the innovation to his present and anticipated future situation, and then decides whether or not to try it.’” This stage is considered to be the least defined of the five stages, which, therein creates the most difficulty in information gathering. “Different types of evaluation occur at each stage in the adoption process...but the decision to try the new idea occurs, by definition, only at the evaluation stage.”

D. Trial

“If the results of the individual’s ‘mental trial’ are favorable, he is ready to move on to the Trial stage. ‘At the trial stage the individual uses the innovation on a small scale in order to determine its utility in his own situation. The main function of the trial stage is to demonstrate the new idea in the individual’s own situation and determine its usefulness for possible complete adoption.’ It is not possible, of course, to try out all innovations on a small scale. An alternative in some cases is to make a trial on a temporary or probationary basis before going on to true adoption.”

E. Adoption

The final stage is that of Adoption. “It is at this stage that the results of the trial are considered, and on the basis of this the decision is made to adopt (or reject) the innovation.” Adoption is considered “continued use of the innovation in the future.”