

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON INFORMATION LITERACY

PRELIMINARY PLANNING MEETING REPORT

Meeting facilitated and report completed by Jill Cody, Cody Associates

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the preliminary planning meeting was to bring together a broad array of key professionals to capitalize on their experience and expertise in order to plan a "Meeting of Experts" to be held early 2002. The Meeting of Experts would itself be charged with the detailed planning for undertaking a larger and more ambitious worldwide "International Leadership Conference on Information Literacy" which is currently planned for 2003. Those who attended the preliminary planning meeting were from a variety of organizations and institutions from around the world (Attachment I).

The preliminary planning meeting had three desired outcomes:

1. To develop a clear, overall vision, and list of expected outcomes that the Meeting of Experts is expected to achieve, and to take the first step to discuss a vision of the larger international conference to be held later.
2. To reach agreement on a list of goals, objectives, themes, a draft agenda, and other particulars for the Meeting of Experts, and a list of relevant, recommended background materials for use by invited participants, interested observers, and other parties.
3. To identify key participating sectors (fields, disciplines) which should be invited to the Meeting of Experts, as well as the names of suggested experts in each field who might be invited.

ANALYSIS

Throughout the day and a half meeting, several givens or promises were established regarding the implementation of the larger conference. They were:

1. Utilize the triangle of Information Literate Citizenry/Universal Access/Quality Information
2. Be international in scope
3. Focus on the have-nots
4. Maintain a sensitivity to political implications
5. The definition of information will consider all formats
6. The event should feed into existing efforts of UNESCO and others, such as: World Summit on Information Society
7. Information for All Programme
8. Regional UNESCO meetings
9. Possible catalyst for other events

OUTCOME #1 RESULTS: Meeting of Experts

Upon the completion of a large group brainstorming exercise, vision guidelines, conceptual outcomes, and logistical outcomes were framed for the Meeting of Experts. They were as follows:

Vision Guidelines

Need a Life-long Learning Workforce

Education for the 21st Century

Civil Society

(Civil Society is a concept of people, businesses, and non-profit groups coming together to bring about positive change)

Create definitions of Information Literacy Suitable for Various Sectors

Information Literacy is a Journey

Partnership between Information Literacy and Knowledge Management - know what the needs, wants, and desires are

Conceptual Outcomes

Have-nots do not have wealth, health, and access to learning

(From survey of 300 teenagers)

Gender, Language, Geography

Critical Thinking Skills-What is good and bad information?

Practical Results

Inspire sign-ons

We're all in this together

Resources/Political will

What happens when needed information doesn't exist or isn't available?

Logistical Outcomes

Principles and Context

Shared Vision/Local Strategies

Operationalize the Definition of Information Literacy

Develop Outline for Larger Conference in late 2002

What would attract countries to attend?

Decide how participants will be identified

Develop outcomes for Larger Conference

Clearinghouse for best practices (Framework)

It was determined that the Meeting of Experts would have approximately 30-35 participants and would reach out to major regions of the world. It could be held in Prague (April,2002), or with the AHA conference in Chicago (March 2002) or maybe with a UNESCO regional meeting in Germany. (It was concluded that the larger conference would be comprised of a more geographical representation of the world than the Meeting of Experts would need to be.) It was felt that the Meeting of Experts should be no less than 2 days and no more than 5 days long. The UNESCO representative stated that the conference would need to be presented in two languages (French and English).

A considered presentation model was to have the papers presented and then have discussions following with a summary of the papers on the web. Another model discussed was the panel/moderator structure. Inksheding was also reviewed. Inksheding was explained as after a paper was presented, previously selected individuals would write up what they thought about it. It was also discussed that everyone attending would have an assignment (no passengers) such as presenting a paper, moderating, or having a particular expertise or interest.

A member of the group proposed four objectives for the Meeting of Experts. Through a process and large group discussion the five objectives were modified slightly and were adopted by consensus. They were:

1. Reach a working consensus regarding core principles implicit in a tentative universal definition of Information Literacy.
2. Recommend Information Literacy baseline indicators: How should they be defined and established?
 - How do they vary for people around the world?
 - How to define: aspirations, minimum competencies, or ...?
3. Recommend how can Information Literacy should be observed and
4. Develop a wide range of Information Literacy characteristics/abilities so that various sectors can develop selection criteria from their particular perspectives.
5. Develop plans for a larger conference to which countries will be invited to send teams.

An urgency regarding the announcement of the Meeting of Experts was felt. An announcement of the event needs to be drafted quickly. A discussion ensued regarding the targeted audiences of the meeting. It was believed the following needed to be contacted:

- AAHA bulletin
- Forum members
- Academic librarians
- Chamber of Commerce
- ASAE

The group called attention to the fact that the Meeting of Experts has a dual charge. On one hand, the Meeting of Experts should preliminarily address many of the key intellectual challenges implicit in extending the information literacy concept worldwide. On the other hand, the Meeting of Experts must also address very practical questions regarding the larger International Leadership Conference on Information Literacy such as:

- How should the larger conference be organized and structured?
- Who would be the appropriate participating audiences?
- What are the logistical concerns?
- Where might be some possible venues for the conference?
- What would be all the budgetary concerns for the larger conference?
- Who would be appropriate to approach for financial support?

It will not be the purpose of the Meeting of Experts to try and address, much less resolve, all of the myriad, and complex issues involved in trying to arrive at a consensus definition of information literacy. The Meeting of Experts will not need to pinpoint specific strategies for advancing and extending the concept to all nations nor to all political, economic and social contexts.

OUTCOME #1 RESULTS: Large Conference

The discussion around the logistics and goals of the larger conference considered venue, timing, and its potential relationship with UNESCO. Several ideas as to venue were discussed and a primary and desirable location was identified. Montreal, Canada was thought to be a likely venue due to being bilingual and having a strong Information Literacy history. Montreal is also known as a good conference city. Montreal is a desirable location because the head of the Bank of Montreal seems to be aware of Information Literacy and Canada has a long social justice history.

It was decided that late 2002 or early 2003 would be an appropriate timing for the larger conference. The goal would be to have approximately 300 people attending with an estimated ratio of 55 countries, with teams of five individuals, and 25 other participating organizations involved. It was believed the larger conference should be four days in length which would include time for the teams to meet as well.

The primary relationship of the larger conference with UNESCO was identified as potentially providing input to the World Summit. It was felt that aligning the larger Information Literacy conference with UNESCO would lend more credibility to the conference and would increase the resulting benefits to the world. It would also assist in receiving endorsements and funding from other groups. It could also involve the Department of State because they have wanted to partner on a project with UNESCO for some time.

A discussion around funding sources for the larger conference (and Meeting of Experts if appropriate) identified several options. They were:

- Encourage organizations and employers sending representatives to pay for their attendance.
- Approach the European Community
- Apply for Information Development Grants (10-25K/apply before June 2002)
- Research the Packard Foundation
- Check with the Chamber of Commerce
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- The USAID funds conference through grants
- DANIDA
- Ford Foundation (Developing countries must request)

OUTCOME #2 RESULTS

A primary objective of the meeting was to identify what background papers would need to be written to further develop and clarify the Information Literacy subject. Based on the UNESCOs working program proposal for Information for All, a member of the group presented a three-pronged approach which would take under consideration: Economic Competitiveness, Personal Fulfillment, and Social Inclusivity. In addition, others in the group added Cultural to the Social category and they also added a new Political category.

The entire group then broke into pairs and brainstormed general topics or concepts utilizing the above categories cross referenced with five key focus areas for the future writing of background best practices papers. Some of the background paper topics were further delineated by two (denoted by asterisks) additional thoughts. The results are as follows:

- * Information literacy for educational change
- ** Creating and sharing local content

Key Focus Area #1

Development of international, regional, and national information learning policies.

Suggested Best Practices Background Papers:

Economic: Business and Individual Policy Related to Information Lit.

Personal: Universal and Equitable Access and Ability to Use Access as Basic Right/
Expand 26.1 of HR

Social/Cult.: Understanding Ethical and Legal Principles/ How Information Literacy Will
Role Out in Non-Profit and Non-Governmental Organizations

Political: National Policies on Information Literacy (Mitchell Menou-
France)/Dissemination of Evolving Policies and Practices

Key Focus Area #2

Development of human resources and capabilities for the information age.

Suggested Best Practices Background Papers:

Economic: Role of Information Literacy in Training and Retaining the Workforce *

Personal: Support for Understanding of Needing to Know *

Social/Cult.: Understanding of Cultural Differences, Gender Differences,
Differences of Thinking Critically *

Political: Information Literacy as a Public Good

Key Focus Area #3

Strengthening institutions as gateways for information access.

Suggested Best Practices Background Papers:

Economic: None.

Personal: None.

Social/Cult.: None.

Political: How Are People Prepared to Use National and Public Gateways to Information?

Key Focus Area #4

Development of information processing and management tools and systems.

Suggested Best Practices Background Papers:

Economic: Role of Information Literacy in e-Commerce/Why Information Literacy is Critical to Business and Individual Competitiveness (Imports & Exports)/ Importance of Information Literacy to Small and Mid-Sized Enterprises.

Personal: None.

Social/Cult.: None.

Political: User Training for Information Management Tools and Systems

Key Focus Area #5

Information technology for education, science, culture, and communication.

Suggested Best Practices Background Papers:

Economic: Relationship of Information Literacy to Research and Development **

Personal: Life-long Learning **

Social/Cult.: Barriers or Factors To Information Technology for Education, Science, Cultural, and Communication **

Political: Framework for Multi-Lingualism and Multi-Culturalism

OUTCOME #3 RESULTS

To gather information on key sectors, fields, and disciplines as well as individual names, a brainstorming exercise was implemented utilizing post-it notes. Everyone, at the same time, filled out as many post-it notes with as many ideas as they desired. They were subsequently placed in seven affinity categories. The results were as follows:

Specific Names

Cliff Allen - Head of Subject Centers in England

Rodrigo Baggio - Head of the Brazilian Committee for Democracy in Information Technology - World Eco Forum global leader

Dr. Michael Best - MIT Media Lab

Christine Brace - Academic Author of 7 Faces of Information Literacy - Coeditor of Information Literacy Around the World

Dr. Patricia Breivik

Ian Brain - Head of Ballarat Online

Laurel Bush - School Librarian

Anthony Cooper - President, Bank of Montreal

Peter Ewell - National Center for Higher Education Systems

Woody Horton

Jesus Lau - Mexico

Barry Jones - Australian Member of Parliament - Author of The Knowledge Nation

Prue Mercer - State Library of Victoria - Organizer of Australia's National Information Literacy Forum

Yaizo Nishimuro - President, Toshiba Corp.

Lawrence Prusak - IBM/Lotus - Knowledge Management Institute

Kay Rosenoka - Botswana

David Shenk - Journalist - Author of Data Smog: Surviving the Information Glut

Dr. Sylvia Simmons

Dr. Johan Uvin - Mass Employment and Training - Adult Literacy

Margaret Wheatley, President of Berkana Institute - Global foundation knowledge management expert

Associations

American Psychological Association
American Association for Higher Education
American Library Association
American Association of Retired Persons (Re: Life-long Learning)
American Society of Association Executives (Very valuable in disseminating information quickly)
American Society for Training and Development
Association of College and Research Libraries
Association of Small Business Development Centers (Dissemination and education of small businesses regarding Information Literacy)
International Federation of Library Association
National Association of Human Service Management
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of Broadcasters
National Association of University Women
Newspaper Publishers Association
UN Association

Corporations

Hewlett Packard/Compaq
IBM
Microsoft

Non-Profit Organizations

Aspen Institute
National Organization of Disabilities
National Small Business United (Re: Dissemination of Information Literacy to small businesses)
Peace Corp
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
United States Telecommunications Training Institute
Womens Small Business Membership Organizations

Governmental Organizations

Federal Reserve Board - (Re: Banking/Economic Education)
Michigan Counselor on Economic Education (MCEE) - MCEE can identify other state or national economic organizations
UNESCO - NGO Networks (Collective Consultation etc.)
U.S. Agency for International Development
U.S. Dept. of Education (and/or comparable officials from other countries)
U.S. Small Business Administration

Fields/Disciplines

Adult Education

Archivists and Curators
Agriculture/Rural Representative
Banker making Micro Loans to Women (Indian Sub-Continent)
Consumer Health Representative
Curriculum design and Development
Disability Needs Specialists (Special Education)
Education Administrators
Economic Development
European Community
Global Knowledge partnership (GKP)
Health care Community provider Representative
Human Resources
Information/Library
Information and Communication Technology
Information for All Programme (Policies/Human capabilities)
Librarians
K-12
Marketing Input
Media Specialists
Medical Profession
Public Policy Makers
Public Relations
Publishers
National Library Representative
Researcher on Demographics - Info important to understanding world-wide digital divide
Religion Representative - Head of world-wide religious organization that works with all religions
Software Developers - Blackboard, WebCT
School Librarian
Vocational Education Specialists

Misc.

AFL-CIO
Chronicle of Higher Education
Digital Opportunity Force
Gates Foundation
President of Mississippi State University - Knowledge Management Expert
Representative from SHEEDS (the higher education commissions that advise state policy)
Representative of regional accreditors in the united Sates (example - Ralph Wolff, Washington
Association of Schools and Colleges
Sun Ping etc, - China

CONCLUSION

To wrap up the workshop, which was responsible for the preliminary planning of the Meeting of Experts and to some extent the larger conference on Information Literacy, an evaluation process was implemented. The organization development evaluation tool used was a Plus/Delta. It is meant

to quickly gather what participants liked and what they would improve upon or change for a future meeting. The results were as follows:

PLUS

Different opinions - different groups - learned a lot
Took us out of our niche
Everyone had a chance to talk and get their ideas on the table
Liked the detailed agenda
Appreciated attempt to stick to time frame
New ideas emerged and we used them
Great facilitator
Accomplished goals - got done what needed to be done
Laughed a lot
UNESCOs attendance
Quality and good mix of attendees
Liked everyones emails listed on roster

DELTA

Better coffee