

Suggestions by Dharma Dailey 23 December 2008

I am sorry that I won't be able to attend the phone meeting today. I have been keeping up with whatever is posted on the mailing list or socialtext. I appreciate when phone meeting content is posted by email or on social text.

Two things:

A) My take-away from recent email posts and a look at the conference schedule is that there is an emphasis on only one outcome at the Summit - the drafting of statements - Studying the outcomes listed in the survey - there were two entire regions where not a single person mentioned this as an outcome-- Africa and Asia. This is problematic. Especially if you are using language such as people are "required" to participate. They may resent participating in something that they didn't prioritize. Perhaps not the best way to get people's best work out of them.

Two recommendations:

1) Additional outcomes should be added to the Summit, even if they are considered secondary- to align with the outcomes listed by regions which come directly from the outcomes people listed in the survey. This does not necessarily mean that the that the program or agenda needs to change- but messaging around the summit outcomes should be changed to incorporate.
2) Create transparency by documenting why you chose to focus on the outcomes that you did when it wasn't the first choice in the surveys overall and not listed as a choice by any in two regions.

B) The success of the Summit is in large part going to hinge not only on design but on execution. The weak link in each working group, workshop, and panel is going to be how it is facilitated. Chairing is a different skill than facilitating a working group – both are SKILLS. It is a complete waste of time and money for us to show up if our time will be wasted because this key aspect has not been thought through.

Four recommendations

1) Identify any topics, workshops, sessions that are likely to be contentious or require care to get people working smoothly.
2) Ensure that each of those sessions which may be challenging to move forward are facilitated by someone who has a PROVEN track-record of successfully shepherding people through such sessions to positive outcomes. – even if this means person or persons are hired out to do so.
3) Identify all facilitators of sessions in advance - create groundrules for facilitation, chairing - "Here is what we are expecting you to do" when people are asked to chair/ lead session.
4) Ensure that facilitation groundrules/ expectations are covered right off the bat at the conference – -- (This would probably be good to go over with everyone in the first plenary.)

BTW, as I do social science research on the social impact of networks-- I'm very keen on the poster session!

-Dharma Dailey