Wine and Cheese

The Benefits and Costs of Collaboration

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WINE -- a.k.a.

Benefits
SWEET
Wine

&

Costs of collaboration
SOUR grapes
Whine of life
CHEESE -- a.k.a.

Benefits
COMFORT

Cheese

&

Costs of Collaboration
DISCOMFORT

Cheeselessness
Collaboration

Working together to accomplish intellectual goals by finding solutions that are mutually beneficial & satisfying

CHANGE to find cheese
Observation

• Project proposals are typically apparitions of wine & cheese
• In reality, they entail some whining & cheeselessness
Partners

- Computer scientists
- Archivists
- Academic librarians
- Museum librarians
- Exhibit designers
- For-profit organizations
- Not for-profit organizations
Partners like different cheese

- Vocabulary
- Level of detail
- Need for structure
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Decision-making processes
- Beliefs, assumptions, perceptions
Benefits of Collaboration

- Increased opportunities for funding
- Relationships with new colleagues
- Better decisions & deliverables
- Increased likelihood of technology transfer
- Enhanced appreciation of other cultures
Wine & cheese

Benefits of Collaboration 2

• Opportunities to
  – learn & develop new technologies
  – meet or exceed user needs & expectations
  – improve leadership, management & rhetorical skills
  – exercise virtue
  – change
Costs of Collaboration

- Momentary panic over who or how to spend the $$$
- Morale problems if team members aren’t team players
- Power struggles
- Personality clashes
- Culture clashes

Whining & cheeselessness
Whining & cheeselessness

Costs of Collaboration 2

• Tests of
  – whether user needs really drive the project
  – leadership, management & rhetorical skills
  – patience, humility & charity
  – ability to change
Trade-offs

- Some projects have
  - good benefits at low cost
  - great benefits at great cost
  - great cost for little benefit
- All have ambiguities
- Choose wisely
Signs of Cheeselessness

- Irritation
- Conflict
- Outbursts
- Low morale
- Apathy
- Compliance
- Absenteeism

- Poor communication
- Poor decision making
- Reduced trust
- Reduced risk taking
- Decreased effectiveness
- Overt blocking
- Covert undermining
Orchestrate Change

Offers of Cheese

- Treat partners as best customers
- Meet the need to control
- Eliminate surprises & ambiguities
- Establish realistic expectations
- Develop a complete picture
- Sidestep negativity
Managing Change

• Change inevitably means discomfort & resistance
  – Resistance is a deficiency of either ability or willingness
  – Lack of ability can be remedied with training
  – Lack of willingness can be remedied with consequences

• To change a situation, we need to change ourselves
Suggestions
to insure that benefits exceed costs

• Provide strong leadership & management
  • Management deals with efficiency in climbing the ladder of success
  • Leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall

• Efficient management without effective leadership is like “straightening deck chairs on the Titanic”
Suggestions

to insure that benefits exceed costs

- Communicate effectively
- Listen actively & empathize
- Generate trust & credibility
- Delay negative judgments
- Tolerate ambiguity
- Value diversity
Suggestions
to insure that benefits exceed costs 3

- Understand that *not* delivering everything proposed does *not* mean that the project failed
- Track projects so that others can learn from publications & presentations
- Celebrate milestones achieved.
- Be patient, humble & charitable
REVIEW

Cheese is comfort food

Eating cheese makes us happy.
Give cheese to get cheese

The more cheese we give, the more cheese we get.
Cheeselessness is the discomfort zone.
Smell the cheese often

Let go of old cheese to find new cheese. Old beliefs do not lead to new cheese.
Suggestions to insure that benefits exceed costs

When you hear yourself saying:

- Who moved my cheese?
- I’m entitled not to have my cheese moved.
- I’m afraid to look for new cheese.
- I’m going to wait here until they put the cheese back.

Stop whining.
Check Your Attitude

• Seek first to understand
• Value differences
• Accept that change happens

The cheese WILL move
Look for new cheese

It’s safer to move with the cheese than remain in a cheeseless situation.
CONCLUSIONS

Be prepared for the cheese to move.
Move with the cheese.
Give cheese.
SOURCES