Information: Transforming the World through Better Communications

Introduction: A central tenet of the *i*Schools is that "the right information delivered at the right time to the right people in the right form," will "provide society with the key to success." (www.ischools.org/oc/study.html) For this goal to be realized, information scholars and professionals must effectively communicate their knowledge to those people who will do something useful with it. The purpose of this roundtable is to increase the communication skills of session attendees in support of both *i*School and *i*Conference 2008 goals. More specifically, this communications roundtable will provide time-tested communications tips to improve participant's ability to focus their information message, identify key audiences, and improve their presentation, writing, and media skills. The session will also draw on the diverse positive and negative experiences from attendees, sharing their personal experiences in communicating effectively with different audiences and through different formats.

Audience: We expect that the audience for this communications roundtable will be multi-cultural and represent multi-disciplinary information sectors, thus contributing to the value of the session and the Call for Participation. We believe that this roundtable will serve an important mentoring function as stated in the Call and simultaneously support the Doctoral Colloquium program.

Content: This communications roundtable will begin with a solicitation from participants of both good and bad personal experiences they have experienced, which might range from a conference paper being read to them, to a misquote in a newspaper. Such communications mishaps are far too common, but the roundtable leader will share with attendees a method that traditionally helps improve communications skills. These include: 1) belief in the value of improved communications, 2) clarifying the purpose of the communication, 3) audience identification, 4) selection of appropriate media, 5) message development, 6) message delivery, and 7) evaluation of results. The session will also describe the goals of the *i*Schools communicators, including the development of the *i*Schools logo and web site.

A majority of time will be spent on message development, with session leaders providing a list of top ten suggestions for 1) improving writing skills, 2) making presentations, and 3) working with the media. Attendees will be provided with a written list of tips in each major topic, plus a reference list of resources for communications improvement. We recommend a minimum of 90 minutes to cover the proposed content and to ensure useful participant involvement.

Evaluation: Attendees will be asked to complete an evaluation form for the session, with a goal of improving similar sessions at future *i*Conferences.

About the Presenter/s: Supporting the proposed objectives, a group of three veteran university communicators will share more than 30 years of experience helping researchers and other information specialists formulate and communicate their work to diverse audiences.

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