New Directions Retreat Notes
April 15 and 16, 2008

Cultural, Organizational, Values Changes

- 2 different kinds of vetting: 1. For “sanity check” – R&D. 2. For more elaborate models, pilots
- May be time to re-think Council structure
- Add a step – be careful to inform someone that you’re trying something, so people aren’t blindsided
- Subject councils have other functions besides vetting innovative ideas. They actually don’t do this much. Be sure to address other values of Councils
- Private companies have resources to devote to R&D. Don’t do this in a vacuum – it involves other people
- There are lots of things we can start doing without approval – it just needs coordination and communication. Need to just take the initiative
- Systems not integrated into our regular communication structure
- Could integrate tech. person into other services. Need to have dept. integration, not just communication
- Cost and management support can be barriers to innovate. Need teams to evaluate and implement to speed up ideas.
- Create a few innovation teams – part of our website to try stuff
- Need flexibility – need to lighten up about vetting and criticism
- Need looser structure – be able to draw together people from all over Library for innovation
- Concern: an R&D team. Feels like the rest are left out. How to create a culture of innovation
- Communication: put something up on a wiki
- Councils help communicate across silos. If closed down, need to create other ways to cross silos
- Problems: 1. central support for IT and innovation. 2. Innovation across the board at different service points, innovation can be quick. Have 2 teams. Team 1: centralized support. Team 2: diverse structure, sustainable long term. Team 2 could include permanent and rotational members. How to break down barriers to 2 kinds? Distribute innovations.
- Need more ownership of staff – new software, not dependent on Tech support. Make sure there’s multiple points of innovation. Group or series of groups with people cycling in and out
- Way more happening than I can keep up with. I’d like to have interesting new things assigned to someone – helps with adoption and communication. Mini-group forming organically. What happens if a staff member pursuing what manager thinks is a dead-end and spending lots of time on it?
- Important not to designate a group of people on innovation. I’d be willing to work with staff on developing an idea if shorter concentrated time
- Needs vetting to include asking what’s the benefit? How to measure benefits?
Communication – how to do this? Need in-person. Need to make sure not duplicating effort. Need to know the connections
• Perhaps don’t vet – we as Librarians get to do things “unvetted”. Professional development, write papers, etc. Included in my evaluation
• Corporate: submit proposal, short-term review, given financial support, implement and assessed.
• **Agreement**: Need some amount of vetting for all projects – how to make this as streamlined as possible to allow innovation?