

Sheila Tobias' remarks, Plenary II, PSM Meeting, October 7, 2005

This gathering has had no hidden agenda, but there is a great truth lurking below the surface, which we were hoping you would discover on your own; and the agenda does have a strong forward motion.

The great truth is – as you may have noticed – except for the employers and PSM grads we heard from yesterday, all the speakers and almost all the discussion leaders at this conference, including the six ‘experts’ in the how-to sessions following this plenary, are PSM project directions and/or our partners- not, in other words, outside our community.

That’s because all the wisdom about the PSM is among *you*, right here in this room. You who have created PSM programs and are running them are the experts and the strength of the PSM, as I and as I believe the Sloan Foundation sees it, lie in your willingness to nurture one another.

The “forward motion” I speak about is to move us at the end of this day to some serious consideration as to whether and, if so, how this group will provide its own, more formal, leadership.

In our first group plenary, yesterday afternoon, we focused on our own stakeholders in the context of where we want to be in two years’ time and how we are going to get there.

The stakeholders include:

- 1) Our business-industry “Partners” as Lis and Dave called them, including *both* our local affiliates and the larger regional and national business community that we have so far failed to penetrate and Loida and Chuck MacCluer described how the “plus” courses serve this end.
- 2) Government at the Federal, state, and local officials. We heard about a pending Innovation Bill, which includes provision for expansion of PSM, and efforts to engage the National Governors’ Association (NGA) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). But we all still have work to do to engage local and regional agencies involved with workforce enhancement, whether public or public/private or even private.
- 3) Our students, above all our graduates: tracking them, learning from their employment experience, and organizing them for the long term into advocates and ambassadors for the PSM. (Eleanor’s and Elaine Turner’s segment)
- 4) Not least, our relations within the University where our programs reside. How do we make palpable the benefits of the PSM to the institutions that house us. The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) can help as a national organization of

university members. But we can also help each other. (Priscilla's and Linda's segment).

Which brings me to the purpose of our second Plenary this morning. This is a working session and we want to shift the focus from outside stakeholders to *what* you're doing as Program Directors and *how* you're doing; above all, *what we can do for each other*.

In envisioning this session, the Planning Committee called these "management issues". But they are more encompassing: how, we want you to talk about, are you handling the

Academic
Professional and
Student Service Components of your job.

Following this Plenary, we will offer you small group sessions, related to management and at the end of the day, in Plenary 3, when you are back in this room, Don Langenberg, Lis Hamer, and Dave Bieber, will lead you in a serious discussion of next organizational steps for this group.

Meanwhile, let's get to our discussion:

What is working well in the configuration that your institution has set up to manage the PSM?

What is not working? Where are the stresses?

And what, apart from additional funds and additional personnel, would help you serve all your stakeholders better?

Above all, what can you offer other programs? What can you do for each other?

Discussion Followed.