

InterAction Collaboration Peer Review at TRIUMF Laboratory

Subcommittee on Internal Communication

Neil Calder, ITER
Judy Jackson, Fermilab

February 4, 2009

Findings

- TRIUMF has a relatively small work force with an approximately equal number of users.
- TRIUMF's top management is committed to transparency and improved internal communication.
- Internal communication has not hitherto received much attention. The committee heard about relatively few internal communication efforts.
- The laboratory director holds occasional all-hands meetings and is “accessible,” though busy.

Findings

- The laboratory's culture is undergoing a change, from a collection of scientists under one roof to a more unified model.
- There appears to be no “one lab” culture among staff, users, students.
- TRIUMF is considering developing a weekly electronic newsletter for staff, users and other subscribers.
- Safety communication appears to receive little emphasis.

Comments

- The recognition of the importance of internal communication by senior management and the commitment to improve it are commendable.
- For TRIUMF to succeed, the whole lab will need to understand and commit to the Five-Year Plan.
- Staff and users need a clear understanding of the vision for TRIUMF.
- Current internal communication efforts did not appear well coordinated.

Comments

- There appeared to be relatively little attempt to bring users into the laboratory community. TRIUMF has no users' office, for example.
- Communication did not appear to be uniformly integrated into line-management responsibilities. Some managers are perceived as good communicators within their organizations; others are not.

Recommendations

- TRIUMF should give higher priority and devote more resources to internal communication.
- The committee encourages the rapid development and distribution of a weekly electronic newsletter and recommends incorporating other laboratory publications (HR publication, BeamTime) aimed at the laboratory and user community into this newsletter.
- The electronic newsletter should include a Director's Corner addressing current issues of interest and concern to the laboratory community.

Recommendations

- TRIUMF should explore methods of bringing users more strongly into the laboratory community. The laboratory might ask users to present talks to laboratory staff on the science they do at TRIUMF. Consider establishing a users' office.
- Integrate communication into line management responsibility and include communication in managers' performance reviews.
- TRIUMF should give higher priority to safety communication.