CIT Town Meeting Summary

March 24, 2011

Executive Summary

CIT town meetings are often presentation-oriented, but the March 24, 2011 meeting intentionally departed from this model; it was designed as an interactive experience for all members of the department to work on shared issues. We also wanted to explore how an interactive approach would work and get a sense for how it would be received by department members. Feedback has been positive.

Questions

Town meeting participants selected one of the following questions for discussion and joined a discussion group with others who wanted to discuss the same question. Members of CIT’s senior leadership team discussed a different question noted at the end of this list.

1. What would make you feel more confident as an individual contributor working in the Cornell environment? What do you believe would make CIT a more confident and effective organization?

2. What can the CIT leadership group do to be sure that we hear about and understand the opportunities and roadblocks you routinely encounter, so that you and your team members to be effective?

3. Is CIT a Learning Organization? What steps need to be taken toward making it one?

4. How can we better manage the interactions between CIT and our clients? Are there any simple steps we can take right now to improve our relationships with clients? Is ‘client’ even the right word, or is it ‘customer’, ‘stakeholder’ or …?

5. One of my metaphors for large organizations is that they sometimes seem to be driving to their destination with one foot on the gas and one on the brake. To the extent this applies to CIT, what can we do to take our foot off the brake? Are there some simple steps we can take right now that will take us in this direction?

SDL question: What can CIT leaders do to enhance the integration of CIT and IT in the Cornell community?

Major Themes

The following themes represent ideas that emerged from multiple groups regardless of the question under discussion.

- Communication – Create more open communication paths within and across IT organizations

  Within CIT, break down silos, communicate across divisions, support cross learning, and be able to tap into resources, skills and knowledge in other parts of the organization. Within the IT community, explore resource-sharing and leveraging knowledge between CIT and distributed IT.
• Staff development – Focus on career paths, advancement and opportunities for training and education.

• Staff empowerment – Staff want to be involved in decision processes and have support from management when making decisions. They also want the authority to identify and implement technical solutions.

• Focus on services – Learn what services CIT offers, establish best practices for services, institute service management, provide excellent service/customer support (also ties into improved client relationships), address obstacles such as funding/business models (cost recovery is a problem for both clients and CIT).

• Focus on relationships – Foster partnerships within CIT as well as with campus partners, look for synergies between CIT and campus partners, such as strategic objectives. SDL should proactively pursue relationship management with executives and leaders of IT partner organizations.

• Trust – Foster trust in each other as well as between CIT and its partners.

• Goals – CIT should have goals, understand its goals, work toward its goals and its goals should be in alignment with client goals. Establish line of site for organizational objectives and our IT strategic plan.

• Cross pollination – Within CIT, break down silos, support cross learning, be able to tap into resources, skills and knowledge in other parts of the organization. Within the IT community, explore resource-sharing and leveraging knowledge between CIT and distributed IT.