

ITU-T Workshop on Bridging the Standardization Gap and Interactive Training Session

(Nadi, Fiji, 4 – 6 July 2011)

Effective Participation in International Standards Meetings

Gary Fishman

Pearlfisher International

Former TSAG Chairman

Outline

➤ **Characteristics of international standards meetings**

- Preparation for standards meetings
- How to write a good contribution
- How to prepare external and internal reports
- Concrete measures for developing countries

Characteristics of international standards meetings

- What makes standards meetings different from other meetings?
- Why does “International” make a difference?
- What skills are important?
- Who has a role to play in management of a meeting?

Standards meetings (1)

- There are many types of meetings
 - The goal of a standards meeting is to create agreements
- Requires, at the end, written words
 - Definitions become critical
 - Language becomes critical
 - Clarity is demanded

Standards meetings (2)

- Usually involves:
 - Travel - leave sufficient time before and after the meeting!
 - Large preparatory time
 - Clear, written rules to ensure openness, transparency, due process
 - Intense meetings and long hours
 - Written reports
 - Multiple iterations between first efforts and final product

International (1)

- There might not be a natural commonality of interests or goals
 - National and regional differences
 - Marketplaces are different
 - Regulations are different
- Large-scale competition
- Cultural differences
- Everyone comes with their own language but all work in one language

International (2)

- Translation is inherently imprecise but precision is demanded
 - ▶ Sometimes lack of precision has been deliberate
- International standards can be used to help, or hinder, trade and national/regional influence

Participant vs. Chair (1)

Chair

- Look at the 'big picture'
- Goals for the meeting
- Know who will attend
- Set agenda and timing
- Anticipate what might happen; talk to people
- Have a backup plan
- Be neutral

Participant

- Look at your particular work items
- Goals for the meeting
- Do advance work to gain allies
- Anticipate what might happen
- Have a backup plan

Participant vs. Chair (2)

Chair

- When confronted with a challenge, listen; don't react; talk to those on the other side of the issue; don't react.
- Seek ways for others to resolve their differences
- Chair's job is to enable win-win

Participant

- When confronted with a challenge, listen and respond to explain and defend your position
- Seek ways to gain support from others to overcome differences
- Your job is to win what is most important to you

Outline

- Characteristics of international standards meetings
 - ➔ **Preparation for standards meetings**
- How to write a good contribution
- How to prepare external and internal reports
- Concrete measures for developing countries

Participant Perspective: Preparation (1)

- At least 2 to 3 times as much time for preparation as for the meeting itself
- Anticipate
- Talk with others, especially the ones you would rather not talk to
- Set reasonable expectations
 - Know your trade-offs between winning 100% and the time that might be needed
 - No one wins 100% of everything

Participant Perspective: Preparation (2)

- Write down your objectives
- **TAKE-AWAY:** Understand what are the MOST important things to you
- Allow sufficient travel time
- Plan to be at all the meetings

Participant Perspective: At the Meeting (1)

- LISTEN to others
- Present contributions clearly
 - **TAKE-AWAY:** Practice at home; practice the night before
 - DO NOT READ to the meeting
 - State the issue, the broad means to solve it, your proposal

Participant Perspective: At the Meeting (2)

- Talk off-line with others
- Do not eat only with your own colleagues
- **HARDEST TAKE-AWAY:** Introduce yourselves to those you don't know
- Continue to build relationships
- Winning does not mean making the other person lose

Participant Perspective: At the Meeting (3)

- Know the decision-makers
- Continuity and personal relationships are key
- **BIGGEST TAKE-AWAY:**
 - ➔ To be successful in standards,
BE THERE!

Leadership Perspective: Preparation (1)

- Review where the group is
- Anticipate who will do what
 - Constructive contributors
 - Troublemakers – the 'bad boys'
- Consult, to find out what is really the most important thing for each side
 - It is NOT always what they say in public

Leadership Perspective: Preparation (2)

- Organization of the meeting
 - Agenda
 - Time management (Work Plan)
- Consult
- Set reasonable, stretch objectives
- **TAKE-AWAY:** plan your meeting times for each agenda item and stick to it as much as possible

Leadership Perspective: Chairing the Meeting (1)

- Be neutral
- Be calm
- **TAKE-AWAY:** Do NOT respond to every intervention
- Actively keep the meeting on track
 - Scope
 - Time
 - In meeting sessions and off-line

Leadership Perspective: Chairing the Meeting (2)

- Don't panic
 - At least, don't panic too soon
- Let everyone have their say
 - They will do it eventually, so you should be in control of when it happens
- All interventions go thru the Chair:
 - Everyone says: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman" to start and to stop speaking

Leadership Perspective: Chairing the Meeting (3)

- Learn when to close a discussion
 - Repetition of viewpoints
 - Public debate get too hot
 - LISTEN and WATCH faces and body language
 - Participants will tell you when it's time, if you are listening to them
 - They will thank you later

Leadership Perspective: Chairing the Meeting (4)

- The ultimate management tools:
 - The Coffee Break
 - Shift the burden to those causing the problem:
 - Those who object must also propose a solution
 - Silence is agreement – use carefully

Leadership Perspective: Chairing the Meeting (5)

- **TAKE-AWAY:** Avoid humor – it does not translate well between cultures
- Consult
 - ➔ LISTEN and know when to BE QUIET
- Let the opposing parties work out their differences

Leadership Perspective: Chairing the Meeting (6)

- Speak clearly
- Avoid colloquial expressions
- Be a leader that facilitates agreement, not a leader that imposes agreements
- **TAKE-AWAY:** Everyone should be able to go home claiming victory!

Management Skills For International Standards Meetings

- Cannot force an international standards meeting to do what it does not want to do - i.e., the fictional “Power of the Chair”
- The real Power of the Chair is to help the meeting come to agreements by setting the right environment

Management Skills For International Standards Meetings

- ITU: An extra element is added – Many sovereign Governments!!
- **TAKE-AWAY:** Never require that a government take a public position or make a public statement of support or opposition until they are ready to do so
- Use the principle of “unopposed agreement”

Outline

- Characteristics of international standards meetings
- Preparation for standards meetings
 - ▶ **How to write a good contribution**
- How to prepare external and internal reports
- Concrete measures for developing countries

How to prepare a contribution (1)

- State the issue to be addressed
- State your proposal and provide sufficient support to be convincing
 - Include a brief statement of your proposal in the opening Section
 - This helps the reader understand what you will be saying
- Provide only the necessary background information: this is generally very short

How to prepare a contribution (2)

- End with a Section called Conclusion or Proposal
- Add an Abstract at the beginning
- One proposal per contribution is the best approach
 - ▶ Combining multiple proposals in one contribution could mean if one fails, all fail
- Guidelines are found in Rec ITU-T A.2 (<http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A.2-200810-I>)

Outline

- Characteristics of international standards meetings
- Preparation for standards meetings
- How to write a good contribution
 - **How to prepare external and internal reports**
- Concrete measures for developing countries

Internal Reporting (1)

- Short reports for your management
 - What was at stake
 - Who was there
 - What happened, and whether it was good for you or bad for you
- **TAKE-AWAY:** Tell management what they need to know, not what you need to know

Internal Reporting (2)

- Planning horizon for at least the next 2 meetings and preferably through approval of the new standard
- Consider where to put future efforts
 - Working level
 - Middle management
 - Higher management

Internal Reporting (3)

- Format and substance of internal reports will vary depending on the intended audience: e.g., colleagues, developers, middle management, upper management
 - Many ways in which to report
 - Each kind of report must fit into the Standards Management structure and processes of your organization
 - Should have a standard report format

External Reporting

- When reporting from a leadership position, such as a Chair, Rapporteur or Editor:
 - Do not abuse your position
 - Do not change substance under the name of editorial fixes
 - Fulfill your commitments

How to prepare a meeting report (1)

- A meeting report is NOT meeting minutes
- Include required information, e.g.:
 - Agenda
 - Participant list (if not found elsewhere)
 - Title and source of each document with a very short summary of what it says
 - Concise report on the highlights of any discussion
 - Clear statement of the resulting decision of the group.

How to prepare a meeting report (2)

- Be brief
 - State the issue fairly
 - Give the main points accurately
 - State conclusions
- Do not use judgmental language
- Include verbatim comments only when specifically requested
- Sensitive agreements should be recorded exactly as agreed – do not paraphrase!

Outline

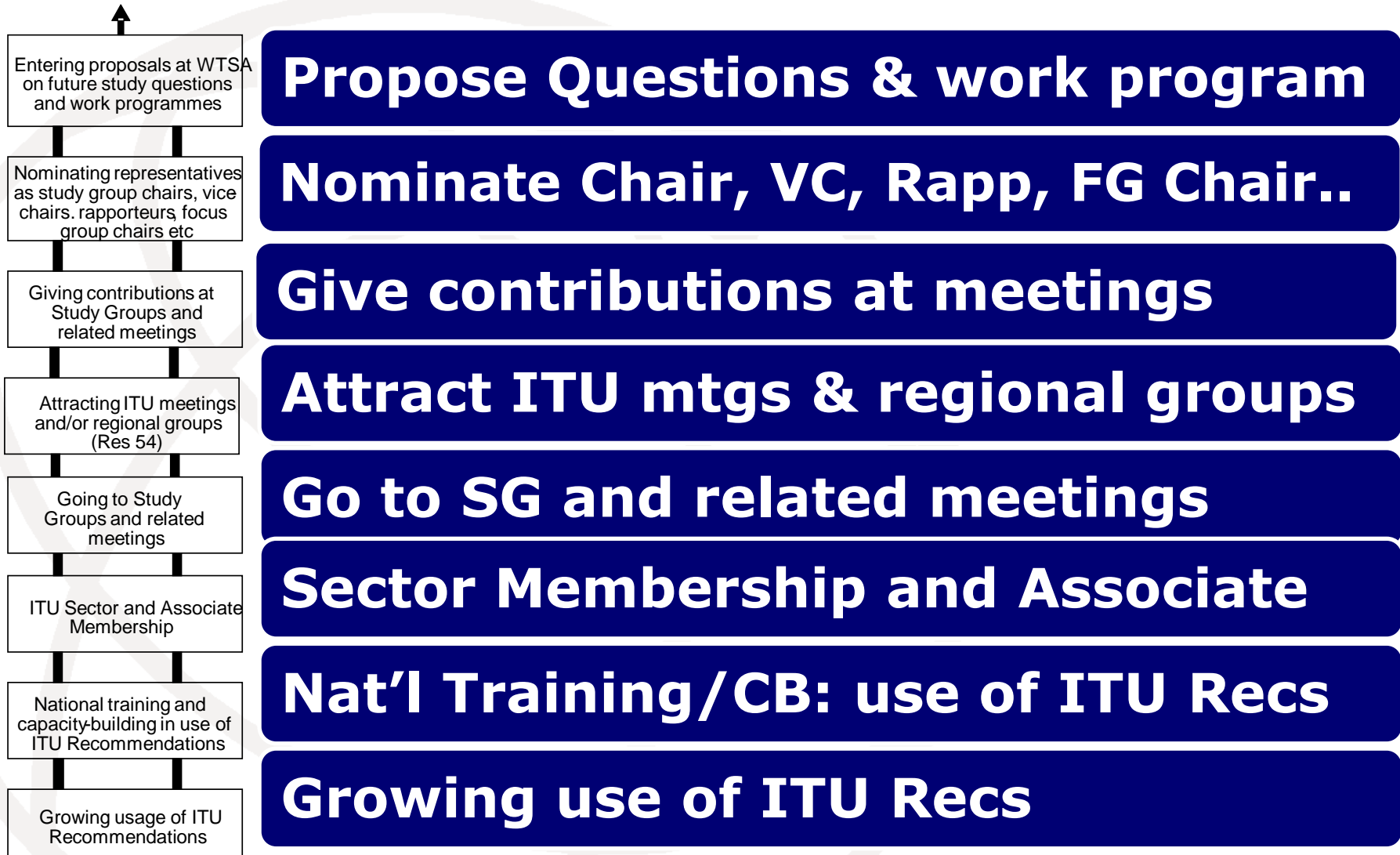
- Characteristics of international standards meetings
- Preparation for standards meetings
- How to write a good contribution
- How to prepare external and internal reports
 - **Concrete measures for developing countries**

What concrete steps can you take?

- Decide what you want – this is #1
- Technical training is necessary
- Technical training is not enough
 - ➔ Also need training on the standardization process and how to use it effectively
- Get TIES* accounts for your experts
(<http://www.itu.int/TIES/registration/index.html>)

*TIES: ITU's Telecom Information Exchange Services

Standardization Development Ladder



Where on the Ladder do you want to be in 5-10 years?

- Why are you not there now? E.G.,
 - Lack of technical know-how
 - Lack of standards know-how
 - Lack of a strategy
 - Language issues
 - Financial aspects
 - Lack of interest

What concrete steps can you take?

- Put someone in charge of your standards programme
 - With a budget
- Get familiar with ITU-T web site
(<http://www.itu.int>)
 - e.g., Delegate Resources
(<http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/info/dresources.html>)
 - Information on ITU, Geneva, member services, tutorials, guidelines
- Start attending selected meetings – attend consistently

What concrete steps can you take?

- Volunteer at the working level
 - Be in a Drafting Group, Lead a Drafting Group, be an Editor, Associate Rapporteur, Rapporteur
 - Don't need to be an expert
 - Your help will be appreciated
- Establish an internal reporting process **FOCUSED ON POLICY AND BUSINESS NEEDS**, not standards needs

Points to Consider

- Where are you on the Standardization Development Ladder?
- Where would you like to be?
- Why aren't you there?
- What can you do:
 - Now
 - Later

DO IT NOW!

- To Bridge the Standardization Gap, what are the 3 things you can do first?
 - e.g., appoint an internal coordinator today: no cost, no delay; get a TIES account
- What will you need in your toolkit to move up 2 rungs of the Standardization Development Ladder?



Thank you

Mr. Gary Fishman

PEARLFISHER INTERNATIONAL

Tel: +1 732 778-9572

Fax: +1 732 583-3051

gryfishman@aol.com

Skype: gryfishman