

“FLC Café Conversations”

Dr. Cris Johnsrud organized and led an FLC Café Conversations event on Friday morning. The question posed to the participants was,

“What is the value added by the technology transfer function to laboratory management, to the laboratory scientists and engineers, and to commercial enterprises with an interest in the technology?”

Small groups of four were seated at bistro tables and given ½ hour to discuss the implications of the question. After 30 minutes, the individuals moved to different groupings at different tables to continue discussion. After a short break, the entire group assembled to share insights and other key concepts gained from the discussions. Evaluations of the experience were generally positive, although it was noted that more individuals should participate and there was an overwhelming presence from one laboratory (AFRL)—more diversity of laboratories/agencies would have generated additional insights. Suggestions for improvement included better and wider advertising of the event to encourage greater participation.

Insights revealed through the table conversations included at least one "ah ha!" moment as a participant saw why the diverse demands on his office's technology transfer activities seemed contradictory at times. Another participant shared her approach to adding value to her laboratory by identifying needs and offering assistance, thereby heightening awareness and appreciation of the role and importance of the technology transfer function.