

## Heidi Nobantu Saul Facilitating unConference's



### Are presentations with agenda's and breakout sessions set months in advance no longer working...?

If what you need is:

- innovation
- new & different outcomes
- plenty of time for networking
- to build community
- creativity & action
- a space that invites emergent & divergent thinking
- less time planning
- more fun...

**Try an Open Space Conference,  
an unconference ~**

### Not all unConference's are Created Equal

The Open Space Technology Conference format, also called an '**unConference**', has actually been around for over 30 years and been used in over 135 countries 1000's of times by 10's of thousands of people.

Through inviting all the stakeholders or interested parties, asking key questions, and facilitating the creation of a final agenda on-site and in real time, you create the space for something new to happen. No predetermined agenda of talking heads on stage or preplanned sessions can do it justice.

Including the space, time and energy of self-organizing in your existing conference, will bring in breath, and can completely change it up! It's easy to incorporate. All you need is a circle of chairs (the circle is the fundamental geometry of open human communication) a place to hang the agenda (the community bulletin board) places for people to meet (the marketplace), a Facilitator (me) and you're ready to roll.

### Imagine

Imagine a conference that didn't start with a loaded agenda, but instead an empty one...

Imagine all the people there were the right people because they had chosen to be there and wanted to really explore something, or solve something together.

Imagine a conference where we were relaxed but conscious about time, and were nobody ever stayed where they didn't feel they wanted to, where it was okay to get up in the middle of a session and follow your two feet to a place you'd rather be.

And imagine a conference where nothing dragged on longer than it needed to.

Imagine that conference was this one, and that empty agenda wall over there with time slots and meeting spaces was your agenda waiting to be filled by you, right here, right now.

And all you had to do was step up and announce your session, and whatever happens is what happens, whoever comes are there because it is right for them to be there, and however long it lasts is the right length for it to be.

Imagine we are starting right now....

### What is an unConference?

Take a listen to long time attendees of the Internet Identity Workshop (a 3 Day unConference that has been going on for twice a year since 2005 and is still going strong) try to describe ["What is IIW...?"](#)



## The 4 Principles & 1 Law That Guide unConference Time



### As Your Facilitator

- I work with you to think through if you want to make your entire event an unconference or simply include a day or ¼ day. It works well to make the final day of a regular multi-day conference an unConference or begin with a keynote and information disbursement before moving into the unConference format.
- I will help you determine what kind of a venue to hold the event in, or how to make it work in the one you already have and arrange logistical details and work with venue on the set-up.
- Work closely with your conference staff to help think strategically about all aspects of the unConference from setting up registration to documenting the sessions.
- I set-up for and Facilitate the agenda creation, notes collection and closing circle. And then compile the data generated into the Book of Proceedings after the event is through.

*“Nobody knows as much as everybody”*

Dieter Frey



The Internet Identity Workshop (IIW) has been run as an unConference since its inception in 2005. This is a short documentary produced in 2016 that shows what has been accomplished over time using the self-organizing principles of Open Space as an unConference.

[Not Just Who They Say We Are](#)  
[Claiming Our Identity on the Internet](#)

If this sounds interesting to you and you'd like to have a conversation and get more information to determine if an Open Space unConference is a good approach for your upcoming meeting/event please contact me!

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