



| Be the Change!
| MLA 2024





Outcomes

- Improve communication skills
 - Clarify and communicate own needs and needs of library
 - Improve listening
 - Articulate library's mission
- Strengthen relationship-building
- Actionable strategies for improvement
 - Self and library services

Battles for Control

- Funding
- Collections
- Facilities
- Policies
- Staff



Strategies

- Educate – if we can just get them to understand why _____ is important, they will give us what we want/leave us alone
 - Training
 - Support from MSL staff
 - Meetings

Education isn't bad but if you're using it to change minds, it probably isn't going to work for you
- Political – remove opponents from power

Certainly a short term solution. Does it create enemies and will new office holders be more favorable to our interests?

Libraries are about connections

Connections to resources

- Print
- Audio/Video
- Digital
- Training
- Technology

Connections to community

- Programming
- Book groups
- Crafting
- After school clubs



Dysfunctional Relationships

Al-Anon Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as *we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as *we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Step One

We admitted we were powerless over ~~alcohol~~
persons, places and things —that our lives had
become unmanageable.

Acknowledge that librarians may not have control over
the decisions and actions of funding bodies, boards and
community members,
but we can control our responses and adapt our
strategies to changing conditions.



Dealing with Change

Respond Don't React

Step Two

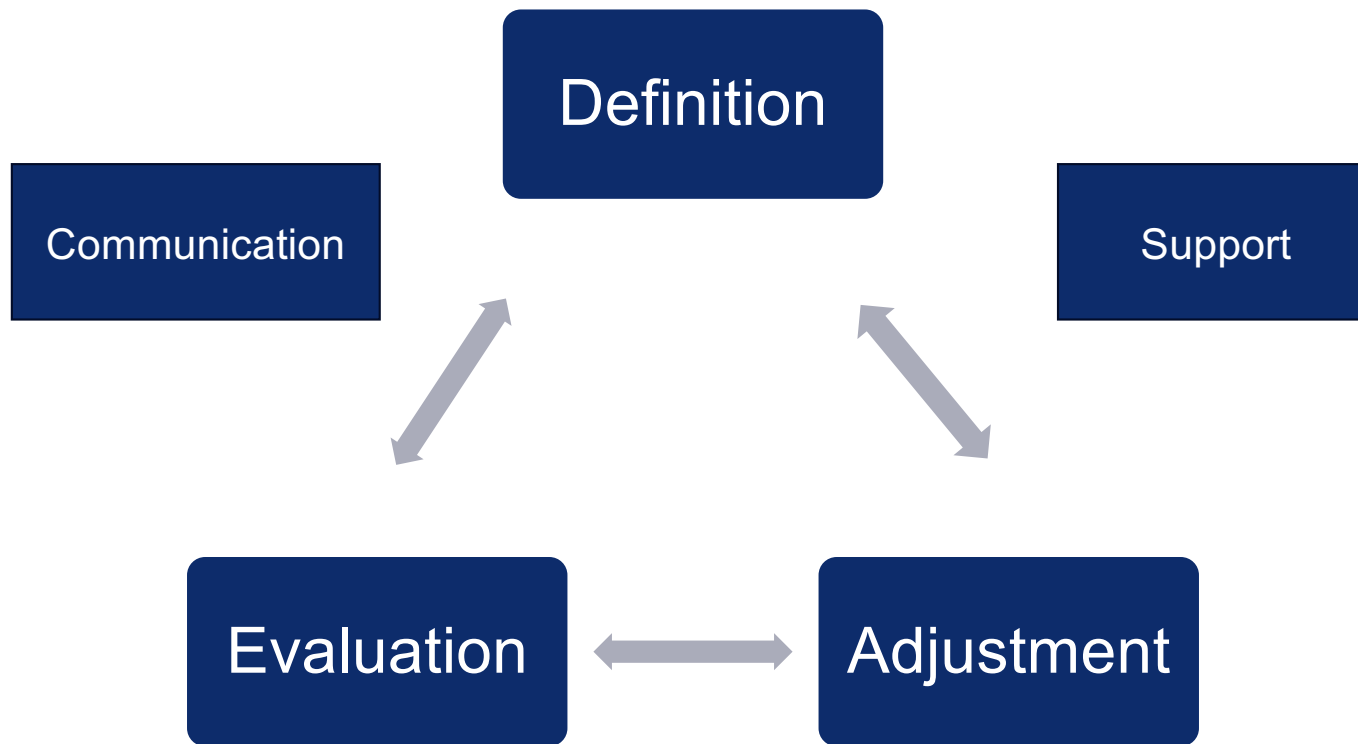
Greater Power –

- The library's mission
- Your personal mission in working with the library

What motivates you in your job?

What keeps you going when you feel frustrated?

Process



What's your library's mission?

- Can you share it in an elevator speech?
- Is it actionable?
- Does it assist you in creating and revising policies?
- Does it help you set boundaries?
- Do staff and board members understand and share mission?



Butte Silver Bow Library Mission

Learning, investing, connecting, creating-the library is a community hub that guarantees access, welcomes all, and offers a foundation for building future readers, leaders, artists and professionals.

The Butte-Silver Bow Public Library is committed to free and unfettered access to resources, technology, and services that support the community's investment in literacy, artistry, commerce, and entertainment. The library operates for the betterment of the community, inviting residents, old and new, connecting citizens and institutions, and building knowledge and skill in every generation. Great libraries demonstrate a commitment to learning and investing in future generations. Great libraries are a source of pride and a magnet for newcomers. The presence of a branch library benefits surrounding neighborhoods and provides access to culture, art, and education. Libraries are places for community conversations, connections to local government and nonprofit organizations. Great libraries kickstart local entrepreneurs and small business and develop 21st century workforce skills.

In terms of communication

- How effective do you think BSB's mission statement is at defining the library and its role in the community?
- Can you share it in an elevator speech?
- Is it actionable?
- Does it assist you in creating and revising policies?
- Does it help you set boundaries?
- Do staff and board members understand and share mission?

BSB Goals via ChatGPT

- 1. Access to Resources and Technology:** Ensuring free and unfettered access to a wide range of materials, including books, digital resources, and modern technology, to support literacy, artistry, commerce, and entertainment.
- 2. Community Engagement and Support:** The library positions itself as a community hub that welcomes all residents, facilitating connections between citizens, local government, and nonprofit organizations. This involves hosting community conversations and events that foster a sense of belonging and collaboration.
- 3. Educational Programs and Workshops:** Focusing on building knowledge and skills across all generations, with special emphasis on nurturing future readers, leaders, artists, and professionals through various learning opportunities.
- 4. Cultural and Artistic Enrichment:** Providing access to culture and art, thereby enriching the community's cultural landscape and offering opportunities for creative expression.
- 5. Economic Development and Workforce Skills:** Supporting local entrepreneurs and small businesses by providing resources and programs that develop 21st-century workforce skills, contributing to the economic vitality of the community.
- 6. Literacy and Learning:** Committing to the community's investment in literacy by offering programs and services that promote reading and learning as foundational elements for personal and community growth.

Focus



Abbreviated version

- 1. Access to Resources and Technology**
- 2. Community Engagement and Support**
- 3. Educational Programs and Workshops**
- 4. Cultural and Artistic Enrichment**
- 5. Economic Development and Workforce Skills**
- 6. Literacy and Learning**

Access to Resources and Technology

- How would you evaluate whether or not your library was fulfilling this part of your mission?
- Who would you need to hear from?
- How would you go about soliciting input?
- What does success look like? This is probably getting more into vision but if you can paint a picture of success...

Overall Evaluation of Library's Services

1. Collection Development
2. Accessibility and Inclusivity
3. Digital Resources and Technology
4. Reference and Information Services
5. Programs and Events
6. Facilities and Comfort
7. Community Engagement
8. Interlibrary Loan and Resource Sharing
9. Library Website and Online Services
10. Children's and Youth Services
11. Adult Education and Lifelong Learning
12. Reader Services and Recommendations
13. Technology Training and Assistance
14. Community Space and Meeting Rooms
15. Hours of Operation

Support

Peer Support



Mentoring



Peer Support Options

MLA

- Divisions – weekly Public Library Directors Zoom
- Interest Groups – Trustee Zoom
- Wired-MT

Federations

Neighboring libraries

- Public
- School
- Academic

Mentoring

Formal

- Some organization sets up the program
- Designated mentors & mentees
- Plan to follow
- No one wants to organize
- Does it fit the individuals?

Informal

- You contact someone in the field you look up to and ask them to be your mentor
- It's hard to ask for help
- Without formal program or plan – what are expectations?
- Set by participants – weekly check-ins

Experience
Strength
Hope

Communication



Boundaries



- In support situations, clarify whether you're looking for advice or venting
- Policies
- Ground rules for discussion
- Robert's Rules for conducting meetings
- Time limits
- Set aside time and space for self care

Detachment

- Don't take it personally
- Remember you have choices:
 - You can focus on the problem or
 - You can look to your library's mission and try to reframe
- Let go of expectations about outcomes
- Slogans
 - How Important Is It?
 - First Things First
 - This Too Shall Pass





Finding Room for Improvement

- Have you lost sight of any of your goals?
- Are the goals still relevant?
- Are you letting others' priorities govern your work?
- Are there relationships between the library and segments of the community that need to be tended to or mended?

Stronger Together - Coalitions



Reframe



- 1. Access to Resources and Technology**
- 2. Community Engagement and Support**
- 3. Educational Programs and Workshops**
- 4. Cultural and Artistic Enrichment**
- 5. Economic Development and Workforce Skills**
- 6. Literacy and Learning**

Transforming the Narrative



Questions?
Comments?

Evaluation



- <https://forms.office.com/g/ffUuzbA8gn>



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