

Foundations of Library Services, Competency 1

Library Support Staff will know:

1. The mission and roles of a library in its community, and the mission of libraries in general.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

1.1 Research what should be in a mission statement. Review a mission statement from two different types of libraries. Compare and contrast and evaluate these statements. Select a library and identify its roles. How were these roles determined and how do library services reflect these roles?

Evidence

Mission Statement Content

A mission statement defines an organization's purpose and reason for existence. It should not only be a clear statement of critical processes or services offered, but define its customer base and future performance level. An enduring mission statement will include population served, what product offered, and results measure. Over the past few years mission statements in libraries has changed or evolved from an extensive paragraph with a long listing of services offered toward a simple and direct statement. A library mission statement has also eliminated the detail of information labels and library processes. Today it has transformed into a "to-the-point", no more than three sentences or a few words. Specifically library mission statement should communicate its unique role and value, and contribution it has to offer.

From my research for documents, books, and websites each article defines a basic standard for mission statement development.

Mission statement components:

- ❑ Define library clientele or customer base
- ❑ Unique service(s) offered patrons
- ❑ Geographical service area
- ❑ Specific values about the library
- ❑ Other important distinctiveness from other libraries
- ❑ Desired public image outcomes

Bibliography

Swayne, Linda E. (2006) Strategic Management of Health Care Organizations. Malden, MA : Blackwell Publishing

Wallace, Linda K. (2004) Libraries, Mission, & Marketing: writing mission statements that work. Chicago, IL : American Library Association

[Growth Connection. \(Access 3/10/2010\) Creating a Mission Statement Example.](#)

[Management Help. \(Access 3/9/2010\) Basics of Developing a Mission, Vision and Values Statements](#)

[Wikipedia. \(Access 3/9/2010\) Strategic planning](#)

Comparison, Contrast and Evaluation of Mission Statements

Objective: To evaluate two library mission statements I selected a public library and academic library systems. Both library's mission statements were accessible via the Internet. The [Alachua County Library District](#) (ACLD) and [University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries](#) (UF) will be used for this PDS activity. These are what I've found that's strikingly similar or dissimilar by evaluating the visual appearance, communication aspect, simplicity or memorable, and language and content.

Visual appearance:

ACLD's mission statement is rather long in length with a second section that includes bulleted items explaining how this mission will be achieved.

UF's mission statement consist of one in-depth sentence of about 30-35 words.

Communication aspect:

Both mission's statements communicate their most important aspects. Although ACLD's mission opens with three words (*Education, Information and Entertainment*) is easy to remember among the staff and patron. It conveys their unique benefits; and it's inspirational to the imagination. They bulleted section appears they've included the "kitchen sink". UF's mission doesn't really share any of their real benefits. It appears to be a fill-in the blank style statement and it's limited in making their library stand-out to be different.

Simplicity or Memorable:

To measure if either ACLD or UF missions is simple and memorable, I'd asked Linda Wallace's question: Would it pass the T-shirt test? ACLD's mission could be easily fit a T-shirt and would be quickly remembered. On the other hand, UF's mission which is over 30 words would be a bit overdone.

Language or Content:

Both mission statements language are simple, direct and current. UF's is a little wordy and used a phrase I'm still wondering why, "*forms of recorded knowledge*".

Finally Analysis:

My final take is I've never seen a mission statement as ACLD's that contains a two part section. One part is to explain in detail about the library's service level. It also includes an achievement list. I don't quite understand if these are considered one statement or two different mission statements.

UF's mission statement does take the approach as a "me too" document. It doesn't allow the library to be distinctively different from other academic libraries, but having a one sentence statement gives it a modern day appeal.

Overall, both communicate to a defined group that they will serve. Both are short, realistic, sincere, and easy to read. Their statements have determined the library's role to serve a public or academic community. All of these qualities are what counts for both libraries to meet their goals.

