

## **Formulating a Vision for Library Leadership and Service**

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Abstract: In formulating a vision for library leadership and service, it is important to recognize the distinctions between vision statements and mission statements. Collins and Portas distinguish the differences as follows:

- Vision Statements are a guiding philosophy of fundamental motivating assumptions, they are broad, inspirational and enduring.
- Mission statements define clear and compelling goals that serve to unify efforts and have a specific timeline in which to be accomplished.

Libraries must articulate their ability to support institutional goals and mission. As the leader of the library you must demonstrate the library's value.

You must articulate your beliefs about libraries – as you interview for library leadership positions, you will be asked about them. Particularly, you will be asked about the role technology plays in libraries. You must demonstrate your beliefs on the role of libraries and their importance to the organization.

# Formulating a Vision for Library Leadership and Service

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# VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS: ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

- Collins & Porras distinguish between the two –
  - ❖ Vision Statements are a guiding philosophy of fundamental motivating assumptions, defining the core beliefs that drive the organization.
  - ❖ Such statements are broad, fundamental, inspirational, and enduring.
  - ❖ Vision statements will continue to be relevant.

# Mission Statement

- Mission Statements are tangible statements that focus upon something currently worthwhile.
- Such Statements define clear and compelling goals that serve to unify employee efforts.
- A mission has a finish line and a specific timeline in which it will be accomplished.
- Mission statements have evaluative functions, while vision statements do not.

# Library Statements & Institutional Statement:

## AUM Library Mission Statement:

The Auburn University Montgomery Library provides access to information resources to support the curriculum and research needs of AUM's students, faculty and staff. We facilitate lifelong learning within the AUM community by teaching the information literacy skills necessary to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information. The Library assists in providing for the informational needs of the greater Montgomery community and the TriCounty area.

## Auburn University Montgomery Mission Statement: . . . to

foster and exemplify excellence in education through instruction, research, and service.

Auburn University at Montgomery blends the traditional views of the university as a community of scholars with the contemporary view of the university as an integral part of the surrounding community, state, and region. AUM provides academic programs that are characteristic of the finest traditions of scholarship and consistent with the responsibility of the university to provide support for the functions of government, regional economic growth, and cultural enrichment through the arts.

# Librarianship in the Information Context

- Similarities amongst information repositories.
  - Libraries, archives, museums, and historical societies all share a dedication to the preservation and dissemination of information.
  - Like information brokerages and market research companies, we provide portals for the discovery and use of information.
  - Unlike the latter, however, libraries freely share.

# Social and Cultural Contexts

- Libraries also share a great deal with social centers such as community centers in providing for meeting space and places for group work.
- Public libraries, particularly in small towns, remain a vital part of community life.

# My Vision of Librarianship

- Service - The action of serving, helping, or benefiting; conduct tending to the welfare or advantage of another. Chiefly in *to do, render service*. (OED)
- To Build (Collections) - *to build up. intr.:* to accumulate, collect; to grow. (OED)
- To Teach - *to teach a person a thing, a thing to a person (or agent): a. To communicate something to a person, by way of instruction; to inform* (OED)



# My Vision of Librarianship

- My vision has been consistent – as a librarian, I feel it is my job to teach, to serve our patrons, and to build collections for their benefit.
- As an academic librarian, I believe my first priority is to serve the students, faculty, and staff of my institution.

# My Vision of Librarianship

- However, because no library can collect everything, I believe we must commit to sharing resources with all users, including K-12 students, alumni, and the general public.
- My philosophy for this is that eventually, one of these individuals will be elected to public office. Using Machiavelli as an inspiration, it never hurts to have friends in office.

# Mentoring

- Help individuals to see the bigger picture – how does the library integrate with the total operations of (the campus, the city, the historical society, etc.).
- How can the library contribute to the institutional mission?
- As a director, what do you **believe** the library's purpose is to the organization and to society as a whole?

# Mentoring

- Questions about your vision:
- When interviewing, you will inevitably be asked “what your vision is for the library?”
- Recently, individuals are being asked about the role they see technology playing in the library, and how to keep the library abreast of technology changes.

# Mentoring

- In addressing questions, you should focus upon your beliefs in libraries as resources, as service points that provide materials to educate, to inform, and, hopefully, lead us to a more intelligent and active population.
- To me, libraries are an element of faith – I believe that mankind can learn and improve upon itself. We have resources to help us develop.

# Mentoring

- As a believer in the improvement of man, I believe in libraries as the change point for our continuing evolution.

# Leadership Resources

- ACRL / Harvard Leadership Seminar.  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlevents/leadershipinstitute.cfm>
- Contemporary Academic Librarianship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Course.  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlevents/acrlwise.cfm>
- LAMA Regional Institutes on Management & Administration.  
<http://www.ala.org/LAMATemplate.cfm?Section=lamaagainstlist&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=111640#administration>

# Above All – Maintain a Sense of Humor

