

**Alberta Community Development
Strategic Information and Libraries Branch**

ROAD MAP FOR A PLAN OF SERVICE

Introduction

This guide was written to provide help for smaller public library boards. An attempt has been made to relate it directly to the problems facing smaller public libraries and to outline as clear and uncomplicated a process for writing a plan as possible. The guide is presented in the form of a road map so that by following each step you can easily reach your destination.

So here it is...your road map for a **PLAN**.

1. Where are you?

You have made a lot of preparations for this trip already. Indeed for most libraries this is not the first time they have been on this trip. Each time though is a bit different. The scenery changes.

The Plan of Service is a trip plan or road map for your library. What you need to record are some of the background information you know, the specifics of where you are going, and how you are going to get there. By following the guide you can easily reach your destination of a completed Plan of Service.

2. What do you need to know?

Before you start to put together a plan there are some pieces of information which you need. When preparing for a trip you know certain things, so to write a plan **YOU NEED TO KNOW: WHO YOU ARE.**

Understanding your role in the community will help you define who you are. Here are some choices you might make:

- Community activities centre
- Preschool door to learning
- Reference library
- Research library
- Popular materials library
- Education support centre
- Community information centre
- Internet centre

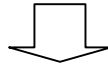
Usually a library will choose one important role and then one other that they see as important. This describes who you are and what you believe is important for your library to be doing. This is your **Mission Statement**.

Here is a sample mission statement for a library that has chosen the roles of preschool door to learning, and a popular materials library. They worded it to say that they serve "all ages" and that they are focusing their energy on "stimulating young children's interest":

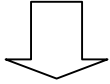
The Wherever Public Library provides current high interest material in a wide variety of formats for persons of all ages. Special emphasis is placed on stimulating young children's interest and on developing an appreciation for reading and learning.

Library Name

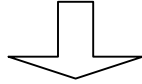
Mission Statement



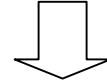
Goal 1



Goal 2



Goal 3

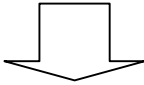


Objectives

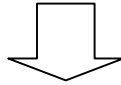
Objectives

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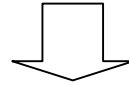
1.1
1.2



2.1
2.2



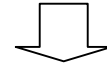
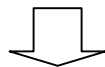
3.1
3.2



Action Plan

Action Plan

Action Plan



Activity

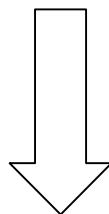
What
Who
When
Cost
Measurement

Activity

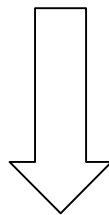
What
Who
When
Cost
Measurement

Activity

What
Who
When
Cost
Measurement



Results



Evaluation

Choose the two roles that best represent what your library does in the community. Write a statement, which describes how you fulfill these roles for your community. This is your **Mission Statement**. Write it on a separate sheet of paper and file it as page 1 of your plan.

YOU NEED TO KNOW: WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

You probably wrote your goals and objectives when you did your needs assessment. If you didn't, or need to review them, then keep going in this section.

Goals and objectives are very important. Writing a plan without thoroughly having thought your goals out is like going on a long trip in an unserviced car. You will break down!

Goals follow naturally from your mission statement. Take a look at the diagram, on the previous page, to see how mission statements, goals and objectives are related. Now let's look at how we write a goal. A goal is a broad general statement that describes a condition that you would like to see.

GOAL:

All members of the community recognize the Wherever Public Library as an important community service.

Note the goal doesn't say what you will do, the objectives do that. You may have two or three objectives for each goal. They usually start with "to" and action verb and they are specific and achievable. An objective for the goal listed above might be:

- *To increase the awareness of the library in the community"*

When developing goals and/or reviewing them, it sometimes helps to group them into areas like facilities, services, collections or programs. By doing this you can often see something, which you thought was a goal, was really an objective and you can reduce the number of goals. Aim for four or five goals with one or two objective for each. You can always put additional objectives into plans for the next year. Don't bite off more than the board can manage.

List the goals and objectives on a separate sheet of paper. File them with the other pages of your plan.

YOU NEED TO KNOW: WHAT YOUR NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOLD YOU

Whether you did a survey, talked to library users, held focused small group discussions, or conducted touch-base interviews, you found out something about your community and the library. Perhaps you had very little response, *WHY?* Perhaps everything seemed to be running smoothly, good! What are you doing that is so well liked?

To summarize the information from your needs assessment tries to identify two things:

1. Things you already knew. Make a list. Write them down at least in point form.
2. Thing your needs assessment told you. For example, people like your services, no one knows about the library; people are too busy to use the library.

Each one of those statements should start you thinking about why you had this response and what can be done to change it.

Write a brief paragraph using the statements from 1& 2. File this with page 1 of your plan. Make a copy for all board members. It's what you need for the third piece of information.

3. HOW WILL YOU GET IT DONE?

Actually if you have come this far, you have a good piece of your plan done. However all of it takes time and so this section have a few tips on getting organized, planning to do your plan, and plotting the action. You do this so that you can see how long it will take to finish the plan. With an end in sight and your time planned, the task of putting together a plan of service becomes more manageable.

Suggested step:

1. Set aside time for planning, either a special meeting or the first time on the agenda of a regular meeting.
2. Identify the tasks.
3. Se a date for when you would like to have each of the tasks done
4. Decide who will do each task because you may not need all the board for each one.
5. Plan the meetings.

You might want to draw up a timeline just to keep on track:

Jan-2003	Feb-2003	Mar-2003	Apr-2003
<i>Write goals & objectives</i>	<i>Write mission statement</i>	<i>Identify tasks</i>	<i>Write plan</i>

4. WHO'S DOING WHAT AND WHEN?

Now that you have your goals and objectives you know where you'd like to go, but you still aren't sure which road is the best one to take to get there. In this section you need to identify what activities you can do to reach your objectives. You also need to decide who will be responsible and what is involved in these activities.

There are four main steps:

1. Generate some ideas on how to reach your objectives.
2. Choose the ones to do
3. Decide who will do it, when it will be done and what resources are needed
4. Identify the different items that have to be done in each chosen activity. For example, if you're planning a fundraiser, list what has to be done to make the event happen.

Generating ideas

One of the easiest ways generate ideas is to "*brainstorm.*" Take each objective and encourage everyone to give ideas on how it might be accomplished. Assign one person to write down the ideas. No one is allowed to criticize or evaluate the ideas until they are all listed. The wilder, the better. You're not judging now.

Another way of doing this is to give each person a piece of paper with the objective at the top. Allow 10 minutes and have everyone write down two ideas. When time is up, someone lists all the ideas on a flipchart for the group. Now you are ready to choose activities.

Choosing

At this point what you should have are a number of possible activities for each objective. This is the time to start discussing the pros and cons for each activity. But how do you decide? One way is to rate each idea against the cost, time and effort available. So you might like to host a barbecue for the town to let them know about the library and its activities, but it's probably not realistic. You know it will cost too much money and involve more time than your volunteers are willing to commit. On the other hand choosing to invite 3 different community groups for a special day at the library may be possible,

Remember:

- Some ideas can be saved for the future
- Be reasonable with the number of tasks you choose
- Build on things you know will succeed

Risk a little. Try something new just to find out more about what you can do.

Identifying Who, When and How

The easiest way of doing this is to take a form and fill it in for each activity, which you have chosen to do. You can make your own form listing who will do it, when you expect it done and the cost involved. Make a pile of the sheets that show the activities, number them to correspond to your goals and objectives and file them with the other plan of service items.

You know you are almost finished but there is one more item to look at...

How are you coming along?

Somehow you need to keep track of where you are in the path you've set. You can do this by setting dates for the completion of your objectives and checking to see if things are done. In addition, you need to ask if what you did made a difference. Did you accomplish what you wanted? This will allow you to evaluate your plans.

Another way is to set aside a specific time for evaluation. Perhaps you schedule this activity at your annual meeting where you review all your goals and objective and determine how well you've done this year in meeting them. Either way, write down how you plan to evaluate your accomplishments and include it in your plan.

Listing your planned activities in a yearly calendar is often helpful. In this way you can see at a glance what you will be doing and when. This is a useful way for the board to check on progress and maintain the momentum toward achieving the goals and objectives.

You have now completed your plan of service! CONGRATULATIONS! Use your plan to monitor your service to the community.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF A PLAN OF SERVICE

1. Cover
2. Message from the Chair
3. Summary of Needs Assessment
4. Mission Statement
5. Goals and objectives
6. Activities/task lists with statements
7. Evaluation

SUMMARY OF STEPS IN DEVELOPING A PLAN

1. Decide what you are
2. Write your mission statement
3. Develop your goals
4. Develop your objectives
5. Brainstorm
6. Organize
7. Prepare document – including tasks – responsibility, resource, evaluation or measurement and timeline statements.
8. Implementation
9. Evaluation

SAMPLE LAYOUT

GOAL: 1 _____

OBJECTIVE 1.1

STRATEGY:

TASK(S):

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLETION:

BUDGET & OTHER RESOURCES REQUIRED:

TIMELINE/COMPLETION DATE(S)

EVALUATION or MEASUREMENT:

Date reviewed: _____