
APPLYING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE TO LIBRARY PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

You have successfully gathered public knowledge. You have summarized what you learned and even shared it with others. But now what? How should you think about public knowledge in relation to current library programs? This discussion can help you get started with identifying possibilities for this.

STEPS

- 1 Review the following discussion guide below and consider the likely discussion.
- 2 Plan for a two-hour meeting with a relevant staff (and/or volunteer) team. Be sure to include key staff needed based on the discussion guide and likely topics for discussion. If you prefer you can divide the discussion into two meetings – one section at each meeting. But we recommend not separating them by more than a few weeks.
- 3 Identify who will play the role of facilitator so they can review and prepare for the discussion.
- 4 Follow the discussion guide.
- 5 Be sure to have copies of your Public Knowledge Summary and organizational program summaries available for everyone.
- 6 Plan follow-up discussions. Keep coming back to track your effort.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Section One: Reflecting on Who We Are as a Library

1. Spend a few minutes thinking about your assets and strengths as a library. What is the library up to? What is it known for?

Create a quick list of library assets/programs – things that you spend time and effort on.

Our Work	
<i>Ex. Reading Programs for Families</i>	

2. Looking at this list, how well does the work you do align with aspirations the community holds?

Identify aspirations that you clearly connect with, and list ones you don't seem to address as well.

Community Aspirations	
<i>Ones We Clearly Help Address</i>	<i>Ones We Don't Address as Well</i>

3. Now look again at the work you do and your Public Knowledge Summary. How often and in what ways are you addressing the concerns of the community?

Identify overlaps and gaps.

Community Concerns	
<i>Ones We Address</i>	<i>Ones We Don't</i>
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Section Two: What Could We Do?

4. Given these lists, what do we make of the work of the library and how well we are connected to community?

5. What current programs could we adjust or adapt to better match up with community?

6. What new things might we want to try?

7. Given this, where do we want to start? Are there one or two things we could try?

- Agree on steps, timelines, and your next conversation to review progress.
- Be sure to have a plan to capture your lists so you can return to them over time and check your progress.