

**Intention question: What do we need to do to survive(!) ... or at least to keep a job that gives us interesting, challenging work?**

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# What the Libraries of Tomorrow are Doing to Prepare - Today

## 1. About me

- Not a subject matter expert
- No MLIS
- Can't recite the RK Directive chapter and verse
- Would fail a Dewey Decimal quiz
- What I do:
  - Strategic Alignment
    - Your services
    - Your clients' greatest needs
  - Using collaborative methods to engage you, the subject matter experts, to determine the best solution

## 2. Background

- CFLSN engagement 12 months ago led to three concurrent library-related engagements:
  - Justice
    - NRCan
    - Agriculture
    - Courts Administrative Services
  - PSC
    - Canadian Intellectual Property Office
    - Bank of Canada
    - Supreme Court of Canada
    - Citizenship & Immigration Canada
  - Environment
- Client, senior management, library services management and team consultations led to many "really?" moments
- Here to provide some insights that are hopefully representative yet provocative; provocative yet insightful
- 25 minutes of snippets, but already hours of useful feedback

## 3. What's happening

- SOAR/DRAP - but not really
- The Internet/the computer
  - Instant information
  - Easy to create data
- Combination - there's less money, AND some of the things you once did are now almost automatic - and/or free
- Libraries are being slashed - and even cut.

## 4. Rebranding to overcome (mis) perceptions

- Being essential vs being ancillary
- Changing from "Library" to "Information Services" - Library/Records/RDIMS to "Information Services"
- Transitioning from Reactive to Proactive
- From Local/Regional to National
- From Walk-in to Virtual - a "Single Window"
- Consider "information" in the broadest possible way

## 5. What clients tell me they actually need

- Information Services
    - File management - case management - what to do with 8,000 files \* 15 departments after the case is closed? Compare to a librarian who wants to control for multiple copies of the same book - which has more value to the organization's key strategic goals?
    - File plans, classification structures
    - IM life cycle
  - Knowledge Services
    - Knowledge capture
    - Knowledge transfer
    - Succession planning
  - Research services
    - Engaged library that actually sifts through the ocean
    - Useful intranet - virtual access
    - Federated search
- Ongoing for current events  
Project by project - attend our meetings!!!

## 6. Success stories in terms of change

- Formal client needs assessments, scheduled client outreach
  - My staff are never at their desks - they shouldn't be. Their jobs are to be out with their clients
- Training - advanced search courses
  - Google class continuously oversold
  - Coffee and legal search - 15 minute "quick hit"
- Metadata consulting - cataloguers move upmarket
- No back office - outsource or stop
- Get engaged in the business of your department, and the government writ large
  - Volunteer your way in, if need be
  - Tie together information investments - data and people
- Make partnerships - internal and external
  - Make connections between researchers - hold information sessions, knowledge cafes, invite others together to talk
  - Make information linkages externally - figure out how to share in the search through the web of information
  - Cost sharing - eResources
- New services
  - Workflow and business processes
  - Managing information overload
  - Managing/negotiation information resource contracts
  - Professional development and learning support
  - Metadata solutions
  - Project-specific information research and decision-making support
  - Media scanning
  - Use of collaborative software - Enabling collaboration in general
  - Clients didn't actually believe that librarians could "do" these sorts of things!!

## 10. 3 + 1 things to do

- 1. Reach out broadly to your clients. Use the services of a consultant (though not necessarily me - a single voice isn't all that useful). Clients will tell disinterested third parties the truth that they won't tell you.
- 2. Prepare to proactively SELL INFORMATION services you have never considered "Library Services" - and consider STOPPING doing things you have held as core. "We have no time" will not be a sufficient defense.
- 3. Develop a 10-15 second elevator pitch that clearly and specifically ties each member of your team, and your service as a whole, to the essential activities of your department - without a single word of librarianspeak.
- 4. Find and or create a champion. Feed. Care. Repeat.

## 11. Prepare for the Culture Change that must inevitably follow

- Within your clients
- Within your team

## 9. The Librarian of the future

- Information specialists - published and non-published. Clients want access to information, not just published information
- Research/reference/trainer
- Flexible, agile, multi-discipline, multi-role
- Enabling better decisions through efficient information management
- "un-librarians"
- Lives with their clients - though not necessarily "embedded", at least "always on their minds"
- "Now is the time to take a leadership role in information - making it accessible and useful"

## 8. Competencies

- People people - able to present, to talk, to consult, outgoing
- Familiar with new technology - curious about it
- Broad information knowledge - including records, paper and electronic
- Interested in knowing the BUSINESS of your clients
  - I've talked with clients who expect this, and librarians who, despite 20+ years in a department, do not know what the department "does"
- Leadership
  - Professional Development - your learning plan should include activities outside of the realm of libraries: SharePoint, RDIMS, Business Analysis, Web 2.0...
  - Librarians are in the "business" of information - but how many of you have formal leadership/business training?
  - The libraries of the future may/will be run by people without MLIS...senior management wants the best person, and not constrained by an MLIS degree

## 7. And in addition to all that...

- What is a champion? Someone who can provide resources and who will back you up at the executive table - provide "air support"
- Find their critical interests and cater to them - blog, wiki, resource collection, whatever.
- Find, create and care for champions
- Who do you engage?
- When/how often?
- Be able to demonstrate alignment with clients
- What specifically do you do to support their work?
- Visibility is key - you must see what is coming, clients and executive must see you as a key part of the work