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Not My Circus, Not My Elephant!

Tammie Adams
Kimberly McMunn

Welcome to *Not My Circus, Not My Elephant!*

I am Kimberly McMunn and Tammie Adams and I wanted to give you a light-hearted look at some heavy issues – pardon the pun.

Elephant – What Elephant?

- What people see and choose to ignore...
- Agenda – Super Seven Revealed
 1. Expect the Unexpected
 2. Popcorn – Kernels of Knowledge
- Big Finale



<https://www.pinterest.ca>

Very few people like to deal with uncomfortable subjects – it may be lack of knowledge, or fear of results, or just maybe, there is just enough ugly out there already, without you making more of it...

Today we will take a poke at 7 timely topics in Rural Libraries and give some basic positive suggestions to assist making challenges into opportunities .

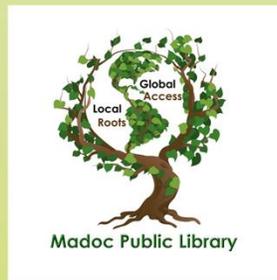
Our Expectations – we hope to make you laugh, at least once, because as they say... laughter is the best medicine. If the only thing that you get out of the next 40 minutes is a chuckle and reaffirmation that we have access to great resources, then we accomplished what we set out to do .

We know every circus has popcorn, but with our budgets, we can only provide Kernels of Knowledge for you to feed on.

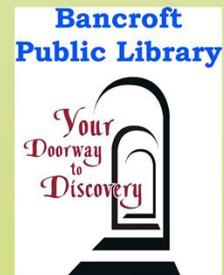
Be sure to hang in for the Big Finale – There will be a special treat for those that make it through the entire session. Sit back, relax and enjoy the show!

Stuff Happens!

Tammie Adams, CEO
Centre Hastings Public Library



Kimberly McMunn, Interim CEO
Bancroft Public Library



For a couple of minutes, let's talk about MY elephant – OLA advertised one of the speakers in this session as the CEO & Community Resource Officer of HH. When Tammie and I submitted this proposal that is where I was working.

Previously I worked at Bancroft Public Library over 10 years, when I was approached by people in HH to fill CEO vacancy and oversee the community-hub. After almost 7 years in Hastings Highlands, I resigned. Ironically, much of what we will discuss in this session had some bearing on my leaving.

For the next 6 months, I am an Interim CEO at Bancroft Public Library. Bancroft has had 4 CEO's leave in less than 2 years. Another local Municipality is on their 3rd administrator. With some good advice from the Southern Ontario Library Service, Bancroft decided to propose a UNION library system to 4 of the libraries in North Hastings. By Union, I am referring to 2 or more Municipalities uniting for shared library service. There would be one board and one Library CEO for the united Municipalities. As to the future, who is to say if some or all of the Municipalities can work together? This may be my last library conference or I may be back next year sharing how the proposal turned out. My elephant has baby elephants, but we are not here to talk about me, at least not all the time.

Agenda – Super Seven Revealed!

- Job Security
- Depleting Resources
- Perceptions – Lack of Respect
- Dealing with People – Change
- Being Short Staffed
- Time Management
- Technology



So, you know a bit about me – let's get to know you... Quick poll, who are library CEOs or staff? Who are Board Members? Who works in the academic setting? I bet at least one of our topics today applies to everyone in the room. Neither Tammie or I claim to be experts but one of the ways that we found useful in dealing with elephants is to bring them out into the open. Create dialogue. One of the best things about the Super Conference is the networking. I attended a session last year and the speaker asked us to exchange business cards. Of course, I packed comfortable shoes, but I forgot to bring my business cards. I did receive numerous other cards though and it opened doors to new opportunities. You never know who is attending these sessions...consultants, staff, councillors, board members, vendors and you won't know unless you introduce yourself. Your next problem solver may be two seats away. Before you leave the conference this year, I hope you engage or are engaged by someone new.



Our beginning presentation is Job Security. Last year at OLA, on behalf of Hastings Highlands, I presented with the Bancroft Library CEO on Performance Measures. At that same conference, I accepted my Advanced Public Library Leadership certificate and the Angus Mowat Award for Excellence at the OLA Award Night. Do you think that HH board or myself, thought I would be presenting on behalf of Bancroft Public Library this year? Better yet, do you think Bancroft Library Board expected a former administrator to be back on the team? Life happens! Things happen. People change. Strategic Plans change. The Key is that the show must go on, regardless of what Town you are performing in...

Irreconcilable Differences

The question is not...
"Why did they quit?"



The Question is
"When did they start looking?"

<https://us.123rf.com/450wm/convisum/convisum1404/convisum140400019/27199067-time-for-change.jpg?ver=6>

I read this in an article about why people are quitting their jobs. It resonated with me. Yesterday, I presented with the HH Municipal Treasurer on Succession planning. He is a very young administrator. After working with him for two weeks, he said "ah, I just found out you are the same age as my mom", Nice right? So, I fired back "Yeah, and I heard you are the same age as my son". Despite my being ready for the home and his just leaving preschool, we spent many hours conversing about job challenges. He became interested in job security and succession planning when he realized that many of his colleagues are due to retire and there are not many qualified younger people to move into their chairs. Retirement affects most industries, and stress is another big contributor to job vacancies. Cost of living, reports, part-time positions, reports, pay equity, reports, operational micromanagement from governance officers, reports, and my personal favourite community entitlement. Funding or lack thereof, time management...the list goes on. We used to worry about being fired, now with our expected level of service, we worry about how we can stay?

SUPPORT FOR LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS

Southern Ontario Library Service : <https://www.sols.org/>

- Ontario Library Service-North <http://www.olsn.ca>
- Assistance with annual survey, funding and legislation
- Networking opportunities
- Pools, purchasing agreements and consortia to spread your budget
- Training

Ontario Library Association: <http://www.accessola.org/web>

- Super conference
- Advocacy
- Marketing assistance
- Training
- Accreditation

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries: <http://fopl.ca/>

- Advocacy
- Information
- Training



<http://www.scarlettentertainment.com/sites/default/files/Juggling-Trio-3.jpg>

In over 20 years of administrative service, I will admit to being pulled in off the ledge at least once every 5 years. I have learned a lot in those 20 years, but I am far from being an expert on anything. Working in libraries, we keep a lot of balls in the air. It can be much more entertaining when it is a team approach. If you have a pending issue or better yet, a great solution, share it with these organizations. Most of them have library-related job titles, but that is only to keep the rest of the world from monopolizing their time. They are amazing at problem-solving because they draw from great resources. We don't have to know everything. We do have to take the elephant out for a walk and deal with the crap. They can't help with the answer, unless they know there are questions. Usually they have seen the exact same elephant somewhere else and know how to find him a new home.



Depleting Resources - Staffing levels, funding, time, print materials, space... about the only thing we have an abundance of is 'need', with a bit of 'want' to keep it interesting.

Grant Funding - It is not FREE Money!

Do the math:

Foundational work – documenting need & gathering support

PLUS completing application

PLUS meeting funders mandates & documenting actions

PLUS writing post-project report

EQUALS actual benefit (profit or loss?)



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Before you cue the music and start dreaming of where you will put all that great stuff that your next grant will get you, do the math! Yes, we need stuff...but do yourself a favour and think about how you will get that stuff. Have you calculated the time that it takes to write, complete and report on that "free money"? I am not saying Grants are bad, I am saying be choosy. I worked with a CAO, that taught me that there is no such thing as FREE grant money. Time is money. Time to prep, time to write and time to implement. Money, money, money. Do you need a partner? If so, then you have double the time invested. When you are working on the grant, you are not working on something else. Did you calculate that loss in your equation? Which of the two has more value? If after careful consideration, you still believe the investment of time is worth the end benefit, then remember...grants are not about money and things, they are about people. (Repeat this). Focus on the needs of the funder. The application is not about you. It is about how you fill THEIR need. Make good decisions about the resources you do have, and do not add your time and expertise to the "depleting resources".

Resource Management

Quick Fixes:

- InterLibrary Loan – small library equalizer
- Audio , DVD & Large Print POOLs – in-house collection enhancement
- SOLS/OLS-North online goldmine - policies, competencies, webinars
- Symposiums & meetings (APLL) – oh the benefits from a day-away!
- Partnerships/Collaboration - measured in quantity and quality

Tammie and I compiled a short list of rural library lifesavers...

ILL – Considering our shelf space and lean budgets – sharing is caring! Buy the popular reads and save the one-offs for ILL. ILL provides collection diversity. Don't lose a whole shelf to a series. Keep the first two to whet the appetite and the last two to show it is a series that you offer. Borrow the rest from the libraries fortunate enough to have the libraries that we can only dream of.

POOLs – a revolving collection that always takes a defined amount of shelf space. POOLs are a small investment with large return. Think about what 240 DVDs would cost you to purchase. Add your time for selection, shipping, cataloguing, extra cases – OUCH! With a Pool you have 3 - 6 rotations a year with a broad selection of titles. Send one away and receive another and use the same shelf space. Win, win, win!

SOLS/OLS-North – I spoke to the people resources earlier and now I will mention the materials resources. Training - online courses and webinars reduce transportation costs, reduce travel time and in some cases, you can play it again! An awesome investment for a small professional development budget. Policies – samples to shamelessly steal. Modify them to fit your library. Wow the board and spend your time on more exciting topics, like budget. Check out the competencies and the user guide. Job descriptions and performance evaluations just got a whole lot easier. They even have an Integrated Library System with customizable reports. Get to know what is available online at your fingertips.

Networking symposiums - I spoke to this earlier. You make your own opportunities. You learn as much from the presentations as you do from the conversations in between sessions. Our libraries are public gathering spaces for our users and silos for the staff & Board. In our area, the administrators and staff carpool so that we can network while traveling. If you haven't had the opportunity yet, I personally recommend the APLL – Advanced Public Library Leadership course through SOLS. I assumed that it was for newbies in the library field. I would sign up again in a heartbeat. Timely topics and networking. Timely topics and networking. It is big investment for your library and for your career.

Partnerships and Collaborations – The more the merrier. When Tammie approached me last year about doing this session, we had no idea that I would be in transition. Our e-mails went from “I'm in” to “I'm Out” to “I'm In”. Partnerships are not always easy, but the benefits of shared workload are numerous. A couple years ago, the Ontario Trillium Foundation used the libraries in North Hastings as an example of how they like to do business. It is easier for a funder to invest in multiple partners than it is in a single entity. They get broader exposure and cover a region, as opposed to an area. Having a partner means Double the resources to draw from. One cautionary note – as with proposal writing, be diligent and make sure the partnership has value. Make sure your end result will be a gain, not a drain.



If I asked everyone in this room...“In an ideal environment, what should a library provide?” There would be some great answers, but I doubt they would all be the same. Perceptions can unite or divide an organization. That is why a strategic plan is so important. I just left a divided community. There are those that meet over coffee, or a beer, have a discussion, and then the leader of that group will speak on behalf of “the community”. Do your due diligence with your environmental scan and ensure your survey is not the local coffee clutch, but IS the community voice.

Director, Staff or Patron?

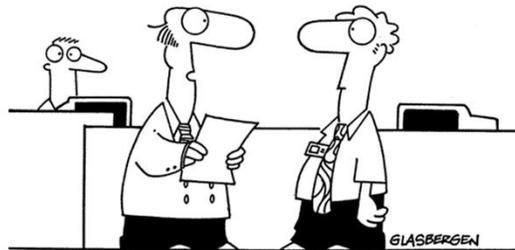


<https://www.askideas.com/media/14/Funny-Woman-Angry-Face.jpg>

OK pick a person. Now I will give you three scenarios! Library Board Director frustrated with policy not being followed. Staff frustrated with lame policy written at the turn of the previous century, or patron frustrated that the library's policy inconveniences her needs. What was your initial reaction to this picture? After you were given the scenarios did your perception change? We tend to make judgements from the eyes we look through. I automatically thought Staff. Who else had the same thought? How about Director...and Patron? Considering the facts presented, do you have empathy for the Board Member who meets once a month for a couple hours and is expected to keep all those policies current. Does working as a staff member with inadequate resources that they cannot change resonate with you? How about the patron? Obviously if she had the resources at home, she likely would have used them. So, she is using a public facility, out of her comfort zone and although the resources are available, the usage is restricted. whose reality is the real issue? Here is another perspective.... said to the patron... "It is a free service. What do you expect for free?" Or, and said to the staff, "you are paid well to deal with 'the little things' like an outdated policy" or said to the Trustee, "I know you are a volunteer, but it is just one policy, what is taking so long? The next time you find yourself ready to scream, take a deep breath and look through a different set of eyes. You may find that it is an opportunity to dial down the stress and consider it an opportunity to problem solve with a broader view.

Operations & Governance

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"I believe it's important to be sensitive to the needs of our employees...but do we really need a paper cut support group?"

<https://ehssafetynews.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/safety4.gif?w=522>

Communication – Ever wonder how lack of respect happens? If you walked into the room and heard "Our library has a significant rise in paper cuts." Would you immediately purchase more band aids or create a support group, or review process to reduce the number of paper cuts moving forward? Do you google 'rise in paper cuts in libraries' to see if it is a trend? Do you tweet Trillium Public Library – first to initiate papercut support group! What if we added more information..."Our library has a significant rise in paper cuts, as we digitize local reference collection. The story is no longer an 'inadequacy in HR', but instead, it is an operational opportunity. Ensure that your lines of communication are clear and detailed. We are judged by our actions – ensure you are acting on the right information.

Perception, Respect – Communication!



The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.

~ *George Bernard Shaw*

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The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place! Words to live by...

Clowns & Ringleaders

Cards Against Librarians

"I read forty-seven books this summer! What's my Reward?"

Cards Against Librarians

"Who *knew* that you could get fired for offering a patron _____?"

Cards against Librarians

There's a special circle in Library Hell for _____.

Entitlement – ENT, ITL...I had a former staff member that would walk into the office, face the wall and sing the Entitlement song. That was my cue to deal with the circus at the service desk. Our circus has numerous clowns, you know the ones that drive you to the brink of insanity or the ones that make you laugh with disbelief, before they walk away. Then there are the ringleaders...those who use their own opinions to speak on behalf of the community, or board, or Council. Your years of training, education and experience have nothing on those that were born gifted with the knowledge of your profession. There is a game called Cards Against Humanity – not a nice game as you get to see your friends and family in a whole new light. Cards Against Librarians is a bit tamer, but now we must wonder about our co-workers too. There are some great courses out there on "Dealing with Difficult People". Reach out and ask questions. Make your challenge an opportunity. Embrace it. It may be patrons, supervisors or has Tammie found out in planning this presentation, even your colleagues. It is much easier to build an opportunity, if all the effected players get to weigh in.



Well we are at the half-way point in our presentation and there is no Intermission, after all we don't get an Intermission when dealing with People and Change. I mentioned what I put Tammie through in our preparation for this session, but she dealt with it.



**Stress is the perception
that the situations we are facing
are greater than the resources
we have to deal with them—
resources such as time,
energy,
ability,
and help from others.**

Joshua Becker – *The Lost Practice of Resting One Day Each Week*
<http://www.becomingminimalist.com/resting/>

Tammie sent me this quote: Stress is the perception that the situations we are facing are greater than the resources we have to deal with them—resources such as time, energy, ability, and help from others. This is Tammie's first time presenting at OLA, speaking of stress. I know that she has even more insights to share, so I will leave the rest of the show in her capable hands and I will be back for the Grand Finale.

Tammie: Thank you Kim, for sharing your circus of events with us, and for all of your helpful insights. Also, for dealing with my constant email communications as we worked on this. Now...on with the show!

Bartenders Without the Booze

I used to be a people person, but people ruined that for me.



Library Bar Personalities

- Gulpers
- Sippers
- Barflies

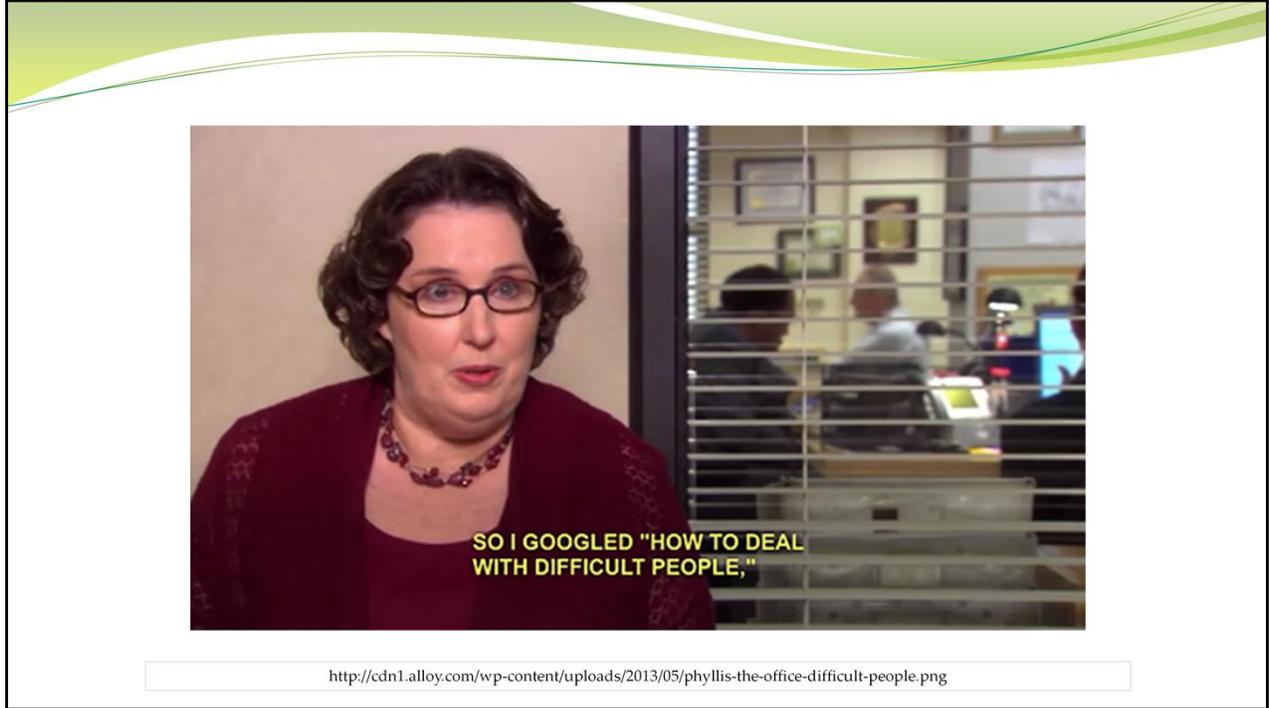
Rural Librarians are bartenders without the booze. And just like bartenders, we have a variety of different patrons who come in to fulfill needs beyond the main product.

Gulpers know exactly what they want. They grab it and get out, with minimal conversation. Sippers are the conversational bunch. They take their time to choose a book, happily chatting along the way.

And then there are the “barflies”. The Patrons who hang out at the library to socialize, often oblivious to your work or other patrons needs. The first type of these are often just lonely and need someone to talk to. Harmless, but their presence makes it difficult to get work done.

The other type of barfly is more difficult - at best cranky, at worst belligerent. They always have something to complain about, and test your patience and ability to bite your tongue. A visit from one of these patrons can deplete your social resources, leaving you feeling like this guy.

So how can we fairly respond to these situations without sacrificing our own mental health?



Well...that is a good place to start. But perhaps we should take a look at something a little more concrete...

Policies and Procedures

- Clear and concise – remove guesswork
- Staff awareness
- When in doubt, defer

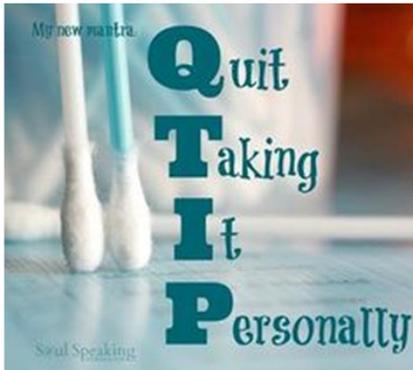


<https://memegenerator.net>

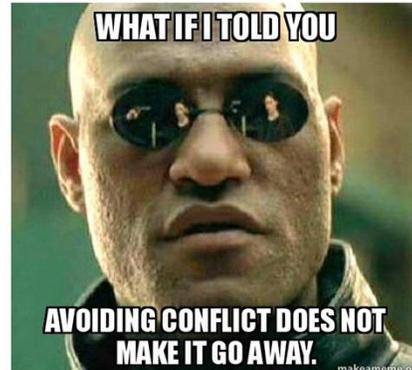
Clear, concise policies and procedures remove guesswork, moderate emotional response and keep consistent results. Make sure all staff and volunteers are familiar with them, and don't hesitate to refer to them when in doubt. Having an established method of handling things builds staff confidence, and quoting policy can even diffuse a patron's frustration.

Conflict Resolution

DO



DON'T



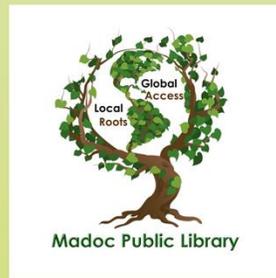
Rule #1 - Quit taking it personally! A patron's anger may be a rough day misdirected, and a reaction from you will only compound the issue.

Maintain composure in conflict situations, and set your natural emotional response aside. Actively listen to make sure you understand the issue, empathize, and try to help.

A good portion of issues arise from simple misunderstandings, and a discussion can bring an instant end to the problem. Conflicts must be recognized before they can be resolved.

Why Am I Here?

Tammie Adams, CEO
Centre Hastings Public Library



I've been a Librarian for 13 years - 8 as Assistant Librarian at Marmora & Lake Public Library and 5 as CEO of Centre Hastings Public Library in Madoc. I loved both roles. While the Assistant Librarian position allowed me to interact with the public directly more often, the role of CEO allows me to make decisions that directly impact our Patrons. But, as Uncle Ben said - with great power, comes great responsibility. In Rural Libraries, we have the added pressure of taking on multiple roles.

Dedicated CEO Position

- Full time hours
- Sufficient staff
- One job – administrative role



This is the door of a Library CEO who has a dedicated position. Looks pretty focused, doesn't it?

Now let's look at the door of a CEO at a rural Or small public library.

Rural/Small Library CEO

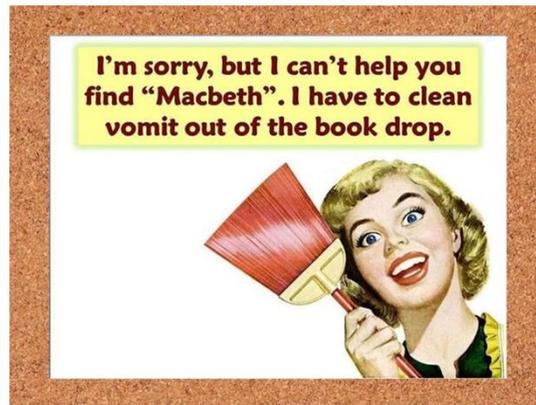
- Limited hours
- Short-staffed
- Multiple roles



There are 19 titles on this door - without including sub-categories. These are the actual roles I fill. The amount of time spent in each role varies from day-to-day, but they are regularly practiced.

If you are not familiar with “Other Duties as assigned”, this is a good example of what it can entail:

“Other Duties As Assigned”



www.pinterest.com

While a CEO in a large public library deals with a lot of stress and pressure, odds are they will not be the ones cleaning out the book drop.

This is my elephant. This is our elephant. And it takes up a lot of space and energy. But when we talk about it collectively and share ideas, we can tame it....especially if we add some humour.

How We Feel



<https://elainefogel.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Guy-Juggling-Many-Office-Things-While-Riding-a-Unicycle.png>



<http://teachircusinschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/juggling-work-on-unicycle.jpg>

All those extra roles we take on can leave us feeling like this:



Add in limited hours and staff, and it makes it difficult to accomplish everything that needs to be done. Many of us work on our own time to keep up. It can be difficult to find a balance. And yet...we wouldn't give it up for anything. We love our jobs. We love to see our libraries thriving because of our extra effort. So how do we find balance without burnout?

We get creative. And we get help.

Temporary or Fill-in Staff



LinkedIn.com

- Be creative
- Fit your budget
- Treat with equal respect

An extra staff member would lighten our workloads considerably, but let's face it - it's just not in the budget. But adding casual staff may be an affordable solution.

Our library has 2 regular staff members. This makes holidays and sick days challenging to work through. So I approached the Board with an idea. Train a regular volunteer on the Circulation Desk, and pay them when they are in to cover a shift. The effect on our yearly salary budget is minimal, but the extra assistance is priceless. So be sure to let your temp know how valuable they are!

**Note to readers: During this segment of the presentation, distractions are thrown at Tammie. An audience member asks for a pen, Kim throws several foam snowballs at Tammie, and a cell phone rings. The reason for this becomes clear in the Time-Management segment which follows.*

Engage Volunteers

- Recruit from all walks of life
- Work with individual strengths
- Get the word out!



<http://www.cambridgeportpto.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/postpicsm-volunteer.jpg>

A well-trained volunteer is a valuable asset, and recruiting from all age groups and walks of life helps to ensure a balanced library, particularly when you let them work to their strengths. Together, the right volunteers make an excellent team and lighten the load considerably for you and your staff.

So where do you find these wonderful people?

Start by asking people who already volunteer – Your Friends of the Library and Board members.

Contact the guidance department at your local High school. Students need 40 volunteer hours to graduate, so engage your teen patrons.

Volunteers can be found throughout the community - just get the word out!

Performance Measures



Meme generated at: <https://memegenerator.net>

- Critical for time-management
- Verifies needed service
- Justifies need for funding

You have a great idea for a program. You plan for it, put all the work into setting it up and promoting it, only to have no one show up. What went wrong? When you are short-staffed, deciding on the right programming can be critical to time-management goals. Establishing and evaluating performance measures ensures that you are providing a needed service, and can assist in proving your case for funding.

DIY Activities

“There’s no right or wrong way to do a makerspace or media lab. The right way is to do it so that it meets your community’s needs.”

*– Tim Miller, Branch Manager,
Simla Branch Library, Simla Colorado*



Logo: Sudbury Public Library

Modern families don’t always have time for scheduled activities. DIY centres allow full enjoyment of library services in a manner that fits your user’s lifestyle.

All you need is a bit of space and some imagination. We tend to associate makerspace with technology, but it can also include old school items like Lego and crafting supplies. In Madoc, we have board games available for in-library use. It serves a dual purpose of providing a DIY activity and promoting our Game Night.

Volunteer Programming and Partnering



Madoc Library Game Night

- Minimal staff effort
- Run by volunteers
- New programming possibilities

Game Night is run by volunteers from a local game group, with a little administrative support when needed. It's win-win. They get space to play, and we get great programming.

Partnering with Local Organizations expands your programming, brings new people into the library, and supports other community groups. Providing access to library resources will further promote your services.

Both methods provide quality activities for the community with minimal staff effort. Reach out to patrons and organizations and let them know you are interested in collaborating.



Sorry for all the distractions in that last segment. They made it difficult to focus, didn't they?

That's a good demonstration of what it's like when you are short-staffed. The day is filled with interruptions, disrupting your focus on administrative tasks. If other staff members are busy you step out of the zone to offer assistance.

And that's how I end up like this:

Dealing with Distractions



Meme generated at: <https://memegenerator.net>

- Acceptance is key
- Work to manage, not eliminate
- Go with the flow - adapt

Look familiar?

I enjoy helping patrons. But once I step out of my office, chaos ensues. The next thing I know, a half hour has gone by, and when I return to my desk, I have no clue what I was doing.

We will never be able to eliminate distractions. They are an inevitable part of being a rural librarian. By accepting this, we can adapt to working around them.

Keeping Track

- Find a system that works for you
- Create an “idea” list
- Review daily



<https://www.productiveflourishing.com/free-planners/>

Choose a method that allows you to prioritize tasks. Work with your personal style, so you can stick with it. I find the free Planners at Productive Flourishing beneficial because they offer a variety of options. Make use of the calendars and reminders on your smartphone. Whatever method you choose, update and review it part of your routine to make your day more manageable. Organized notes and a clutter free environment can positively effect your ability to focus. Spend time to make time!

Managing Communications



<https://cdn.makeuseof.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/problem-with-notifications.jpg>

- Turn off notifications
- OHIO – Only Handle It Once
- Maintain “focus” periods

We are in an age of communication. Notifications fill our days. So how can we manage this onslaught?

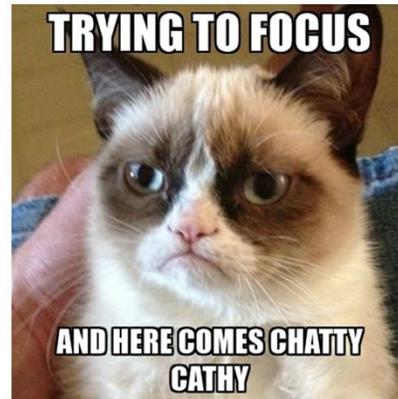
Hold the phone! Ask assistants to hold calls when you need to focus. Unless it's urgent, you can call back at a later time. Make calls only when it will be best for clarity or require a personal touch – otherwise, email.

Minimize that browser window. Having your email at the ready is convenient, but distracting. Follow the OHIO rule - Only Handle it Once. Check your mail at a time you are able to read and respond.

Set your personal cell phone to the side and put it on vibrate to limit distractions. Let family know that they can reach you on the library line when needed.

In Person

- Remember that our Patrons are the reason we are here
- Keep conversations on topic
- It's okay to be busy!



<https://memegenerator.net>

We want our patrons to be comfortable chatting with us. We don't want to be rude, but we need to focus. It's a balancing act. Try to keep the conversation friendly and on topic. Explain that you are busy, and people will usually respect that.

If you need time to focus and have other staff available, now is the time to close your door and eliminate those interruptions.

If you do not have an office, move to a meeting room, or even a quieter corner of the library. You could also work with your Board and staff to have times that you work from home to get high-focus tasks accomplished. At least then you can work in your pyjamas!

Ask for Help



- Set pride and control issues aside
- Be open and honest when you feel overloaded
- Look to others with similar experience

Why do we hesitate to ask for assistance? Pride, not wanting to burden others, and a lack of trust all come into play. But if we don't ask for help, we risk burnout. Actively recruit volunteers for tasks like shelving to free up Staff time. Be open and honest in your communication, and let coworkers know when you are overloaded. Often, they will be more than happy to lend a hand.

Look to your peers for assistance as well. With shared experience comes shared solutions. They may already have an answer to your problem, or the exact document you need. With so much on our plates, it is much better to share and work together than to reinvent the wheel. And remember the valuable resources Kim mentioned earlier!

Perspective

- Step back - evaluate
- Follow the 80/20 rule
- Schedule based on priority



<https://vignette.wikia.nocookie.net/disney/images/1/1e/Stickerline-elsa-let-it-go.png/revision/latest?cb=20140528072653>

Take a step back. Breathe. Walk away for a few minutes and regroup. Our work environment involves deadlines and pressure, but not everything requires immediate attention. Follow the 80/20 rule and schedule based on priority. 20% of what's on your to-do list is really important - the other 80% is just the small stuff. Let go of what you can, so you can focus on what you need.



The role of libraries has shifted dramatically in the last 20 years. While the shift has been a positive one, it brings another item to juggle.

Digital Inclusion



“Canada’s librarians have, with remarkable adroitness, turned their institutions into a key bridge over what they call the “digital divide” and an essential community hub in modern urban settings.”

Brian Bethune, MacLean’s magazine article:
Libraries: Coding, 3D printers. And Books

Note the mention of urban settings, not rural. But we are doing it too.

Lack of online access puts individuals at a definitive disadvantage in the modern environment. Libraries are equalizers, and providing technological service ensures fair access to information, job searches, and government services.

But it comes at a price. Fiscally, providing reliable internet service and up-to-date computer systems can result in a very real budget strain. Thankfully, over the last few years libraries have received funding to help balance that out (Capacity Building Fund Grant, ILDS).

But what about the cost to our already overloaded schedules?

Time Constraints

- Be prepared for standard requests
- Some days, you are IT Support
- Find creative solutions



<http://johnsonlib.org/new-year-new-memes/>

Often, patrons will come in who have little to no previous experience with computers. A simple request can take up a considerable amount of time when you have to go through it step-by-step. And before we can even do that, we need to familiarize ourselves with each web browser, email program, and search technique, and all of the library's electronic resources.

When you are working on your own, or even with one staff member, it can be taxing. There are days when I feel like Tech Specialist would be a more apt title than Librarian, especially when the issue is compounded by a lack of IT Support that leaves us troubleshooting hardware, software and internet issues as well.

Volunteer run computer lessons can help. Find someone with both knowledge and patience to ensure it runs smoothly. You can also direct those who are comfortable with computers to free online classes. Add the links to your library website for easy reference.

I personally found a simple solution to having Tech Support available at all times - I married the Tech Guy! This may not be an appropriate solution for everyone though.

Patron Expectations



It's a library.

- We are NOT free IT Support
- Stay within level of expertise
- You can't fix everything!

In smaller libraries, we really get to know our patrons. That's where a new problem can arise.

We become known as local tech experts who work free of charge. Some patrons will even ask us to come to their homes! Ummm....no.

But when the question is asked about a system the patron has in the library, it gets harder to say "No". Why? We are helpers. And we know that some of our patrons ask us for assistance because they do not have the funds to pay for it. So we take the time, and we help the best we can.

How much you choose to do is defined by you, but it must be kept within your own knowledge and comfort level. Beyond that, refer them to a local Tech Professional.

Managing Online Presence

- Essential to visibility
- Take advantage of shortcuts
- Direct energy to your audience



<https://www.charitydigitalnews.co.uk/events/12-steps-to-launching-a-successful-social-media-strategy-for-your-ngo/>

Your library needs an online presence to be successful. Websites and social media are the ideal way to keep current and get people talking about you, but keeping up-to-date can be challenging.

Make it as simple as possible. Keep permanent information on your website, but add new content by embedding a facebook post. Find out where your audience is and focus your energy there. Use in-app sharing features or third-party apps to post to multiple places at once.



Big Finale?

– NO, the show must go on...

Super 7 Take-home Kernels

- **Job Security – Build your Network on a solid foundation**
- **Depleting Resources – Maximize your assets**
- **Perceptions/Lack of Respect – Communication is education**
- **Dealing with People/Change – QTIP Rule – Quit Taking It Personally**
- **Being Short Staffed – Engage quality volunteers**
- **Time Management – Ask for help and make it a priority**
- **Technology – Expand your knowledge but know your limits**

So remember these helpful kernels of information. We hope they help you to....

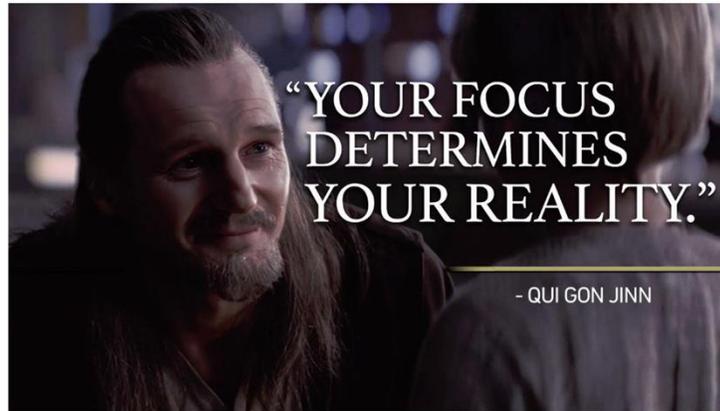
Release the Beast!



<http://i.imgur.com/2WIO64e.jpg>

Don't let it hide – bring it out and have fun with it!

Always Remember



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DCNhmqYV0AEICYr.jpg>

We know some days it can feel like there are too many balls to juggle, and we can't wait for the act to end and the curtain to fall. But face those challenges fearlessly, and they become opportunities for growth and change.

Thank you for attending our presentation! We hope our suggestions help you to lighten up - lighten your workload, lighten your stress, lighten your mood – and just enjoy the show.

And when the circus gets too wild...there is always chocolate! In fact, Kim has some for you on your way out.

Questions or Comments?

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OR

Tammie - Madoc Public Library (Centre Hastings):

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Phone: 613-473-4456

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions or comments. Our presentation will be available on the OLA website - be sure to download it for easy access to these helpful links.

Support for Libraries & Librarians

Southern Ontario Library Service & Ontario Library Service-North

- Assistance with annual survey, funding and legislation, networking opportunities, pools, and purchasing agreements, training

<https://www.sols.org/>

<http://www.olsn.ca>

Ontario Library Association:

- Super conference, advocacy, marketing assistance, training, accreditation

<http://www.accessola.org/web>

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries:

- Advocacy, information, training

<http://fopl.ca/>

Stress and Burnout

Running on Empty: Dealing with Burnout in the Library Setting

http://www.liscareer.com/baird_burnout.htm

Mental Health in the Workplace

https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/mental-health-workplace.html?_ga=2.150345650.567893776.1516292293-454926093.1493647887

55 Tips to Manage Work Stress

<https://personalexcellence.co/blog/work-stress/>

Conflict Resolution

How to Handle Workplace Conflict: The Do's and Don'ts

<https://www.zanebenefits.com/blog/how-to-handle-workplace-conflict-the-dos-and-donts>

Infographic: Workplace Conflict Statistics

<https://managementhelp.org/blogs/crisis-management/2015/06/02/infographic-workplace-conflict-statistics/>

Infographic: 9 Rules for Managing Conflict At Work:

<https://elearninginfographics.com/how-to-manage-conflict-at-work-infographic/>

Library Humour

Unshelved - Comic strip chronicling life in the library

<http://www.unshelved.com>

Librarian Problems - GIFs and commentary that describe our shared experiences

<http://librarianproblems.com/>

I Work at a Public Library - blog where librarian stories are filed by Dewey number

<http://iworkatapubliclibrary.com/>

Shelf Check - library blog and comics that often offer a glimpse at the political side of libraries

<http://shelfcheck.blogspot.ca/>



To Our OLA Super Conference Audience

Thank you very much for attending our presentation! We know it got a little crazy, and we ran out of time to do everything we planned. But what better way to demonstrate how harried our work days can be in a Small or Rural Public Library?!

As promised...the link to the printable Cards Against Librarianship Game:
<http://shelfcheck.blogspot.ca/2014/01/cards-against-librarianship-lets-play.htm>

Feel free to reach out to us. We would love to hear your questions and comments!