

VISION STATEMENT WORKSHEET

DEFINITION: A vision statement serves as a guideline for future strategic decisions. It simply answers the question, “Where do we want to go?”

Our vision is a description of our “desired future state.” Thus we’ll create a vision statement describing the library as the board would like it to be. Note the emphasis on the future. For the vision statement isn’t true today. Rather it describes the organization as we would like it to become - in the future. Below are some guidelines on what a vision statement should have in it:

Imaginable: It conveys a picture of what the future will look like. It is like painting a picture with your words. It is an image that people can carry around in their heads.

Desirable: It appeals to the long-term interests of anyone who has a stake in the organization. It is a vibrant, engaging, and specific description of what it will be like to achieve the vision. Passion, emotion and conviction are essential parts of the vivid description.

Feasible: It comprises realistic, attainable goals. It has a clear finish line.

Focused: It is clear enough to provide guidance in decision making.

Flexible: It is general enough to allow individual initiative and alternative responses in light of changing conditions.

Communicable: People get it right away; it takes little or no explanation.

Visionary: It should not be a sure bet – it will have only a 50% to 70% probability of success – but we must believe we can reach the goal anyway.

Here are some sample vision statements:

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library “aspires to be America’s best public library”

Riverside Public Library “To be the foremost promoter of self-directed life-long learning. We spark curiosity and provide tools for discovery.”

The Grand Rapids Public Library “to be our community's foremost source for information, viewpoints, resources and programs.”

Dearborn Public Library “to foster the spirit of exploration, the joy of reading, and the pursuit of knowledge for all ages and cultures starting with the very young.”

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To craft a vision statement, we must first develop a vision of what type of library we want to have in the future. Think forward about 10 years and answer the questions below.

What image do you have of the library in the future?

What will distinguish the library from other community organizations?

What benefits can residents expect from the library?

How would you like people, especially non-users, to describe the library?