

**STATE TECHNICAL LIBRARY
PRAGUE**

WORKSHOP:

STRATEGIC PLANNING

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1. KEY ISSUES

What is the future of the library, and of librarians?

What does the library want to do, where does it want to go?

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE 'MARKET'

Why plan? The Library must decide where it wants to go

Define 'market' and needs. Assess how far needs are being met. Define the market i.e. determine the boundaries of the potential customer community. Customer requirements & preferences: market-led (customer wants); supply-led (provider decided). **Demand** is overt. **Want** may not be expressed. **Need** may not be consciously felt.

- analyse and segment the market i.e. divide into identifiable groups.
- consider the market position i.e. in relation to the competition.
- assign priorities, plan services.

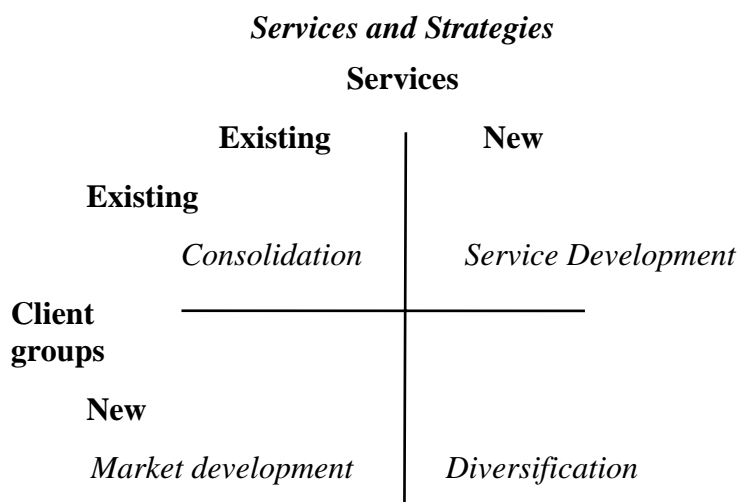
Possible strategies for the library to adopt:

Consolidation or Market penetration = more use of existing services by existing customer groups;

Market development = new customers for existing services;

Service development = new services for existing customer groups;

Diversification = new services for new customers.



It is normal to suggest that risk increases in this model as you move from top left to bottom right. However, there are also risks in the top left, in "carrying on as we are".

What are the main risks, and how might you secure a position within such a strategy?

The main risks are that the existing user needs will change, while the 'services' provided will not. So elements of both extension and innovation may be needed even within this option. Furthermore, competition from others will have to be countered by leadership on either quality or some other aspect of service. This is a financial issue and may also involve (re)training of staff. Finally, one can compete by being distinctive from competitors, offering something different or 'extra', such as computers, foreign-language book or long opening hours, to enhance the 'product' in the eyes of 'customers'.

Product life cycle: birth, growth & death.

Pricing = marginal, full, or market forces (value added = profit)

Placing = where, when service offered & by whom

External pressures

- i.** Rapid change
- ii.** Reduced funding
- iii.** 'Value for money'
- iv.** Re-examination of functions
Who serving? What subjects? What services?
Where going? (mission). What environment? (pressures). What library does, how it does it, and for whom?

Internal factors

Set out your mission, who your customers are, where you want to go and how you are going to get there.

Whatever the conditions, every library has to look ahead, see where it wants to go, and have some strategy for getting there.

Discipline of preparing business plan (Appendix to Strategic Plan) showing income and expenditure for next three years.

Determine priorities, including negative priorities = cuts.

Key Result Areas where success is essential for long-term viability, where improvements must be made and where effort will bring the greatest benefits.

2. The STARTING POINT

STRATEGIC PLANNING

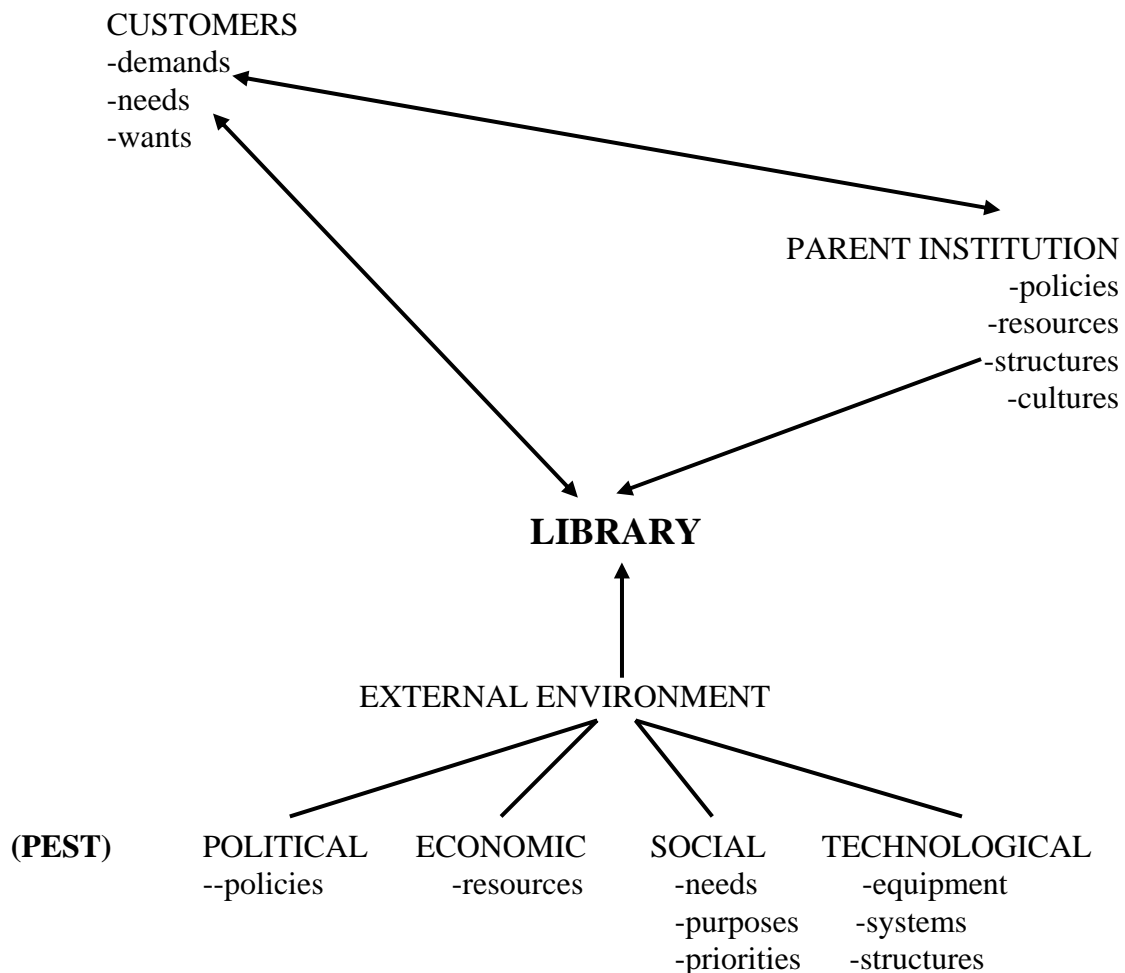
"To plan is to choose" - J. Nyerere

"Planning is not thought, it is action" - J.V. Stalin

Activity analysis of current situation. Wastage rates. Forecast of demand.

A library does not stand alone. It is an organisation that must be related to surrounding organisations and the needs that they have.

The following diagram shows how a library of any kind (academic, research, specialist) is, or should be, related to the most relevant organisations



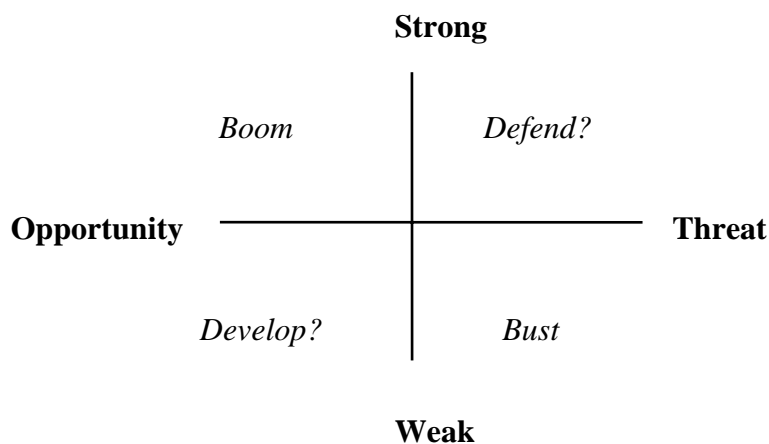
SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths and weaknesses

The library must be aware of its strengths and weaknesses; and know how to make best possible use of the resources it does have. Opportunities and threats

SWOT analysis in groups cutting across hierarchy & departments. But within departments for departmental plans. Few staff remain complacent after a good SWOT session.

Situation audit of current position including the internal and external forces that influence the library and its future.



EXERCISE

Individual Exercise

A. Outline the major changes which are taking place, both externally and within the Library. Make a realistic evaluation. The Swiss watch industry. The catalogue card cabinet industry.

B. Carry out a SWOT analysis of the changes you have described above. If possible differentiate between changes occurring outside the Library, and changes taking place inside the Library.

C. Identify, on Worksheet 1, those changes you think are positive (STRENGTHS) and those you think are negative (WEAKNESSES).

D. On Worksheet 2, select those changes you think offer an OPPORTUNITY to develop the library service, and those you think represent a THREAT to the success of the library service.

Please note that a change can be both an OPPORTUNITY and a THREAT.

3. WHAT, HOW & WHO?

Planning has been defined as **the continuous and collective exercise of foresight in the integrated process of taking informed decisions affecting the future.**

The **key terms** here are the following:

continuous: planning is not just undertaken every five years, though it may be useful to establish such a period for major review. Plans, however, provide a framework for responding to external changes and need, therefore, to be adapted in response to them;

collective: despite the need for an individual leader to have a clear vision, collectivity too is important because a group process brings a diversity of views and adds richness to the perspective of the future. The involvement of others in developing plans also enhances commitment to their delivery;

integrated: many stress how planning should not be something separate, done only by the 'planning officer'. It needs to be linked to current activity, set within budgetary and personnel processes, and accommodate the decisions of many people. Plans in separate areas - services, staff, buildings, and customers - need to be brought together in a unified whole.

informed: an extraordinary number of decisions are based on inadequate information. Sometimes a leap in the dark is indeed necessary in what may be termed "sensible foolishness". Any decisions about the future involve risks inherent in its uncertainties, so it is reasonable to decide now. While in one way this is foolish in the absence of all the data, it makes sense to plan rationally for the future rather than await it passively. Many decisions can be based on better data. A first priority for many libraries and national systems is a better supply of data or, in other words, a better management information system to help process data for the purposes of understanding and building management models.

PLANNING

Ends	What are the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes?
Means	What policies, programmes, procedures and practices are to be used?
Resources	What quantities are required. How are these to be generated or acquired? how are they to be allocated?
Implementation	What decision-making procedures are needed and how are they to be organised?
Control	What will be the procedure for anticipating or detecting errors or performance in the progress of the plan, and for preventing and correcting them on a continuous basis?

The 'Information Strategy' of the organisation.

Plan in parallel with the plan for the whole organisation. If the organisation has no plan it will be necessary to make informed guesses. The process of making and publishing a plan for the library may stimulate the organisation to make its own plan. Agree with parent body what outputs are expected. How are they to be measured and how often.

Relate plan to the existing decision-making process in organisation - committees, boards. Try to get the higher committees and boards in the organisation to approve the library strategic plan. This will give useful support when difficulties arise.

PLANNING PROCESS

Stages in policy development

The processes of policy development, planning, and management of consequent change need to involve all the sections of the library, and maybe the wider community. There is normal progression through the successive stages of discussion, decision and delivery. Attempts to accelerate the process endanger the whole effort, as all links are necessary to the chain. The following *key questions* in strategic planning relate to stages in the development process:

- **Review** - where are we now?
- **Values** - what do we want to be?
- **Goals** - where do we want to go?
- **Strategy** - how do we get there?
- **Targets/tactics** - what do we do next?
- **Monitoring** - who is going to check progress?
- **Evaluation** - what performance measures do we set?

TYPES OF PLANNING

Static planning. Intended to ensure the effective use or redistribution of existing resources or the more effective operation of existing services.

Strategic or Development planning techniques:

- Consideration of the policy to be adopted and planned for
- Analysis of the existing situation
- Determination of objectives (What needs are to be met)
- Assessment of available resources

- Examination of alternative courses of action and selection of the appropriate strategy. (How needs are to be met)
- Preparation of logical sequence of steps to be followed in implementing the chosen strategy.

The plan as a stimulation and not a straightjacket.

Workforce planning

An attempt to relate present human resources to future staffing needs. It combines a rational assessment of organisational requirements with people considerations. The organisation's objectives are translated into staffing requirements: the numbers of people and skills needed. Each job is defined and analysed, and a job specification drawn up. Then (re)training can be carried out.

Workforce planning is making sure that the right number of staff is available at the right place at the right time, and that they have the appropriate skills and experience. It is an attempt to relate the current human resources to future staffing needs. It combines a rational assessment of the requirements of the organisation with personal needs of individuals.

The preparation of a Workforce Plan follows the preparation of the Library Strategic Development Plan.

This process enables the organisation to identify, analyse and prepare for future changes in staffing structures (caused by the introduction of new technology or new patterns of service provision) in a rational, planned way. It can help to determine the grading of posts and the costs (in terms of staffing) of developments in services. It helps to identify training needs.

The challenge for management comes when the analysis of future staffing needs is set against existing staffing resources. There may well be a mismatch between needs and actual resources or skills.

Workforce planning can create conflict between the needs of the organisation and the best interests of the staff. Fixed term contracts give flexibility to the organisation but are unwelcome for staff. It may be possible to re-deploy staff elsewhere in the organisation. A major programme of staff training and development may be necessary.

The **need for a continuous, informed, decision-making process**. Many problems, when 'solved', give rise to further problems. The skill lies in making each successive one smaller. Furthermore, many problems are about symptoms, not causes. To deal really effectively with an issue, there is a need to get beyond the background and identify the real problem.

A. Strategic **thinking**, or the creation of visions, is the process of capturing what the manager learns from all sources (both 'soft' impressions from experiences and 'hard' data) and synthesising this into a vision of the direction the organisation should pursue. It involves intuition, creativity and synthesis.

Real strategists get their hands dirty digging for ideas, and real strategies are built from the nuggets they discover.

B. Strategic thinking requires a committing style. Managers with a committing style engage people on a journey. They lead in such a way that everyone on the journey helps shape its course. As a result, enthusiasm builds along the way. That is leadership, anything else is only management.

C. Strategic **planning** or strategic programming.

- the articulation and elaboration of strategies, or visions, that already exist.

Is NOT strategic thinking.

D. Planning is **NOT**:

- formulating intentions

- forecasting the future

- a 'wish' list

- completed with the preparation of a plan document

- an exact science

E. Planning **IS**:

- a means of fulfilling intentions

- a means of reaching objectives within a certain period of time. Without the introduction of the time element, intentions and objectives remain no more than hopes.

The identification and implementation of courses of action (strategies) required for the achievement of the library's goals and objectives.

Calculated planning fixes the destination first, then decides how to get there.

PLANNING STRUCTURE & STAFF

Planning staff

Doubt and resentment in chief librarian are a recipe for disaster.

i. Plan Co-ordinator

Single person. Good writer & progress chaser. Need not be very senior.

ii. Planning Group

To oversee plan, monitor progress, decide priorities.

Should have a spread of interests and views. Reasonable authority. Chief + Deputy, and second & third level. Elected and appointed.

iii. Staff participation

Top down or bottom up?

Bottom up is much better for ensuring staff commitment to the plan and acceptance of the changes that it will cause.

Involve the people who do the work. This takes advantage of their knowledge and strengthens their commitment. Good to ask staff because they identify the problems.

Middle management for chapter/section drafting.

Strategic mentality in staff

"...one of the chief benefits of planning is not so much the plan itself, but the process, which if conducted properly develops management attitudes and skills in the staff, as well as achieving their participation and commitment - and to achieve this the process must, of course, involve many if not all of them."

The production of a strategic plan is a good way of looking at the library as a whole and developing staff by involving them in the planning process.

4. WHAT IS THE LIBRARY FOR?

The Library must decide where it wants to go

Set out your mission, who your customers are, where you want to go and how you are going to get there.

Whatever the conditions, every library has to look ahead, see where it wants to go, and have some strategy for getting there.

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LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The vision of the Library. Should relate to the vision of the parent organisation. In abstract terms.

The Mission Statement is the first section of a development plan.

It is a general statement of the vision of the library.

The long-term values, roles and hopes of the Library. Defines the basic "business" of the Library and the fundamentals of the purpose and reason for existence of the Library. May be amplification of Govt. statute.

The plan becomes a chart of expected/intended progress in the next 5? years toward realising the vision.

Definition of mission/vision/role in relation to environment of institution. Finance, teaching, & learning climate. Clear statement of where library wants to be in the future, followed by blueprint for getting there. Library can be proactive, need not be reactive.

Broad and inspirational statement of fundamental purpose.

The Library which has a Statement:

"To provide books, documents and other media to support teaching and research within the institution"

will be very different from the library that believes that it has a role:

"To make a positive contribution to the education process within the institution by developing, in students and staff, the information skills which are fundamental to independent learning".

Discussion of examples

e.g. *"The library serves the by delivering information that records the past and will shape the future."*

"To advance the teaching, research and public service missions of the University through the application of state-of-the-art technology and information management, thus providing a model for comprehensive universities."

"To be on the leading edge of information services, access, and delivery... To pursue excellence in all our endeavours."

"The university library is the central university institution supporting the development and delivery of library and information resources, and the preservation of knowledge. The mission of the university library is to provide collection and staff resources in support of teaching, research, service and public outreach, and to respond to the need of all members of the university community to be library and information literate."

"The university library, guided by the mission of the university, must support teaching, research and service at all university sites by providing access to knowledge and information, through the use of appropriate storage, access and communications technologies. In doing so, the library develops and manages collections and provides space and interpretative services to support their use, as well as assuming leadership in providing access to other information resources. The library facilitates information access by forging links to university, regional, national, and international information networks through participation in co-operative efforts which promote the sharing of information and access to the world's knowledge."

"The university library is a body established under the which, in an equitable, effective and efficient manner, promotes and provides access to resources and services which meet the: intellectual, economic, social and recreational needs of members of the university by actively seeking, acquiring, organising, preserving and distributing appropriate library and archival materials and data through co-operation and consultation where appropriate with: local govt., library and information-based organisations world-wide, state organisations and, relevant professional bodies."

"The mission of the university library is to provide the teaching and research activities of the university with materials and services necessary for the effective pursuit of the purposes of the university."

"The purpose of the university library is to provide recorded information in all of the subject fields pertinent to university goals and needed by students and academic staff of the university. Further, because many specific collections are of national and even international importance, the library recognises a service obligation not only to the university community but also to certain scholars and students from outside the university who require for their research access to unique materials or specific distinctive collections."

EXERCISE

5. WHAT DOES THE LIBRARY DO?

AIMS or GOALS

Expresses targets within the context of the Mission Statement. Each aim defines the basic function of the Library in terms of one particular area of work. Clear and operational terms.

Contribution of all areas to fundamental mission.

Statements of long-range, broad intent, which represent the means of achieving the Mission.

e.g.

"- to develop and maintain library collections appropriate to the information and reference needs of members of the university

- to collect, conserve and preserve materials that record the culture and heritage of the university

- to provide responsive reference and information services"

"1. Provide a comprehensive range of information resources and services to the university community and the public.

2. Provide access and delivery mechanisms for a full range of information resources in all media in a networked research environment.

3. Strengthen the library's unique role by providing leadership in the areas of scholarly communication and information management.

4. Strengthen the role of the university library in local, regional and national networks.

5. Play a leadership role in the development and implementation of programmes that support university instruction and the information literacy needs of students.

6. Develop a coherent infrastructure for library/information management and planning."

"The library will:

1. Select and acquire the information resources most needed to support the research and teaching programmes of the university.

2. Assure continuing development of the distinctive collections that have been established, thus acknowledging the obligations inherent in custodianship of significant resources of regional, national and international importance.

3. Make needed materials readily available to students and academic staff, and others as appropriate, whether from the collections of the university library or by purchase or on loan from other libraries.

4. House library collections and service activities in space that meets staff and user requirements, assures collection security, safeguards the condition of resources, and enhances operating performance.

5. Maintain and, when possible, improve the physical condition of materials in the collections, with special attention to protecting the unique items and distinctive collections or categories of materials that are an essential part of the record of humanity.

6. Assist users in the processes of identifying and locating recorded information, understanding the organisation of library resources, and using library services.
7. Develop better ways to offer library resources and to provide additional services for users as means for improving the quality of academic activities and the effectiveness of research programmes.

8. Maintain purposeful working relationships with academic departments and with other offices of the university to help ensure development of library capabilities that are consistent with academic objectives and university plans.

9. To create opportunities for individual staff members to define and achieve their career goals in the context of the general objectives and staffing requirements of the library.

10. Promote and create constructive working relationships with other libraries and related organisations to obtain access to resources and to effect development of programmes of many kinds that would meet the needs of scholars and improve performance of individual libraries in significant ways."

"1. Undergraduate students develop library and information skills using traditional materials and state-of-the-art information technology to achieve success in academic pursuits and to prepare for a changing world.

2. Faculty, student and staff research are fully supported through comprehensive discipline-based services.

3. Professional staff of distinction and a well-trained support staff representing diversity in all regards are recruited and retained in appropriate numbers.

4. Collections fully support current and changing teaching and research needs of the university, and are accessible in a variety of formats and technologies.

5. Information technology is integrated into all aspects of the collections, the provision of services and access to library and information resources on campus and elsewhere.

6. Physical facilities provide efficient space for the housing and preservation of collections and the provision of services.

7. Library collections and services are an integral part of all planning and major initiatives by academic departments and programmes.

8. Development and public relations programmes increase the visibility of university library services and collections to numerous constituencies.

9. The university library, as the largest library in the region, supports the university's initiatives in information transfer and the region's efforts in economic development."

"1. To provide quick and easy access from its own stock to a specialised and limited range of material in support of the university's teaching, research and service programmes.

2. To provide ready access to a much wider range of material and recorded data from outside its stock.

3. To provide a range of information services in support of research groups and other academic needs.

4. To develop personal information handling and management skills, to promote an understanding of library and information service capabilities, and to encourage informed use of its resources and services."

DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES.

Objectives. [Strategy formulation]

Converts each Aim into a series of specific actions achievable within given timescale, and measurable. Quantifiable, timed, short-term. Key activities to achieve objectives. The link between planning - where objectives and targets are set - and control - where performance is measured.

Strategies for achieving aims/goals. May include potential sources of funds.

Objectives are statements of what is going to be achieved and when.

May be on departmental basis.

USER SERVICES

e.g.

"1. All members of the university community have equal right to use university library materials and services.

2. Rules, regulations and procedures that affect routine public transactions are published and made generally available.

3. Servicing the largest number of users is given first attention in planning library services.

4. The primary public service obligations are:

A. To provide prompt access to library materials.

B. To provide a suitable physical environment for the use of these materials.

C. To give the appropriate level of bibliographic and reference assistance to all library users.

D. To give instruction in bibliography and in the organisation and use of library materials.

E. To maintain consistently excellent public relations in the day-to-day operations of all service points."

EXERCISE

6. PLAN CONTENTS, and IMPLEMENTATION

The Library Strategic Development Plan will propose new objectives for the library. To achieve these a new grouping of activities must be made from which a new structure of departments can be prepared.

Strategic plans must take people into account.

Contents of the plan

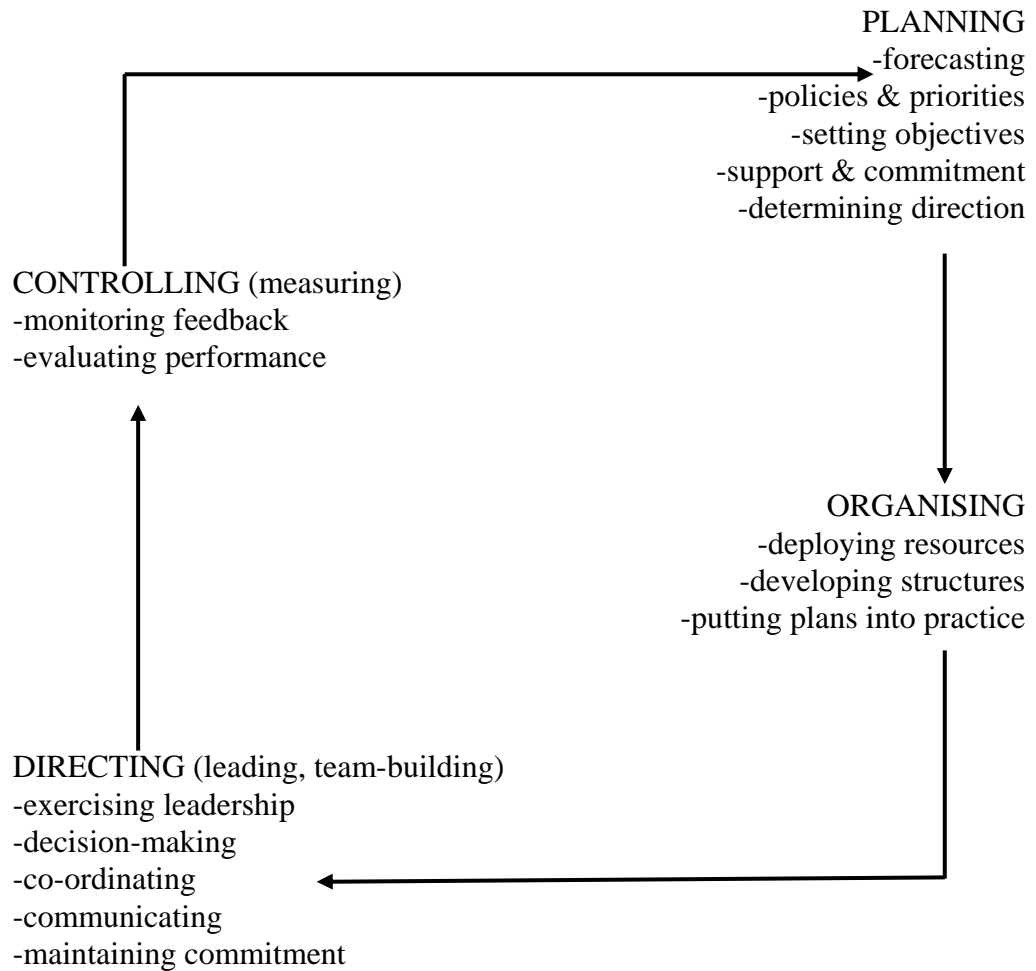
- i.** Foreword explaining intended readership
- ii.** Mission Statement
- iii.** Background - institutional and external factors
- iv.** The 'market' served by the Library
- v.** Activities: Collections; Services; Equipment; Staff

For each: statement of objectives & stages in progress to achieving
 brief statement of present position, strengths & weaknesses
 list of actions to deal with weaknesses
 indication of priorities
 estimate of costs and timescale + performance indicators
 new services with costs & timescale + performance indicators.

- vi.** Executive Summary

Total pp.20-40

IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE



WHY PLANNING MAY FAIL

The following factors may explain why plans fail, or why policy does not necessarily become practice. These affect either the policy decision stage (A) or the implementation (B).

A. Policy decision stage

- Insufficient consideration of wider issues.
- Policy lacks clarity.
- Implementation strategy absent.
- Differing interpretations by managers.
- Lax implementation and monitoring.
- Policy implementation on-the-run following a review.
- Inconsistency.

B. Policy implementation stage

- Staff too busy.
- Too many issues to handle.
- Structures lagging behind decisions.
- Poor communications.
- Lack of status/power.
- Lack of consultation.
- Lack of clear targets for evaluation.

In this respect, libraries are not unique. Pitfalls in corporate planning in commerce and industry may similarly compromise strategic effectiveness in ways such as the following:

top managers/leaders may assume they need not be involved - planning can be delegated to a 'planner';

top managers/leaders spend too much time on the demands of the day, neglect longer-term planning and so downgrade it in the perceptions of other staff;

there is no development of agreed goals as a basis for plans;

leaders do not involve the managers of major units in collective planning;

plans, where they exist, are not used to set standards and targets for managers who implement them;

corporate comprehensive planning is separated from ongoing management;

the planning process is so formal that it lacks flexibility, restraining staff creativity and innovation;

plans at departmental level are not reviewed by top managers/leaders, so there is little 'bottom-up' input;

top managers persist in making intuitive decisions, which conflict with, or do not reflect, the official, formally agreed plan.

Success and failure factors

Successful change should have many of the following:

- planning*
 - good analysis, including costs and benefits;
 - filling obvious policy gaps;
 - openness about background information and financial constraints;
 - identifying good examples as benchmarks to emulate;
 - defining the rules for implementation and operational behaviour;
- process*
 - a positive attitude, demonstrating that targets are within reach and not emphasising obstacles;
 - a strong commitment from leaders at the top;
 - keeping up momentum and motivation throughout the process.
- people*
 - finding the self-motivated and supporting them;
 - working with younger people looking to their own future.

Mechanisms for planning among staff may fail because:

although director and senior staff are in favour, middle manager(s) are conservative. Failure to deal with this sends mixed messages to staff;

complex structures involving all staff are in place to undertake planning and preparation of Mission Statements. May work but if everyone already accepts Mission & vision then there will be frustration at the waste of time;

task force structure to involve all levels of staff is established. If task force members do not understand their role, have a poor Chair, have opposition from departmental heads, or the administration is slow to accept, act on, recommendations or reasons for not, then may fail.

Doubt and resentment in chief librarian are a recipe for disaster.

Common reasons for **failure** include the following:

- planning*
 - lack of good preparation;
 - lack of clear roles/tasks;
 - fuzzy objectives;
 - insufficient resources (a constant problem!);
 - slow legislation;

- resistance*
- entrenched power of some staff who prevented restructuring;
 - lack of staff mobility;
 - resistance from the top preventing decentralisation;
 - inertia because of attachment to the past;
 - abuse of administrative power;
- motivation*
- no real expectation that change would succeed;
 - no attempt to motivate those who had to implement proposals;
- use of instrumental incentives, without mobilising
intrinsic commitment;
unrealistic expectations regarding speed of change.

top managers/leaders may assume they need not be involved - planning can be delegated to a 'planner';

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top managers persist in making intuitive decisions, which conflict with, or do not reflect, the official, formally agreed plan.

Performance indicators. [Strategy evaluation]

Establishment of valid, reliable and practical statistics and measures of Library operations and activities.

Performance goals are shorter-range, more specific, frequently quantifiable or measurable desired achievements that are the components of overall objectives.

Annual operational plans. [Strategy implementation]

Internal plans for the whole Library and for each Department relating to master plan. Can be used in conjunction with performance measures to evaluate individual staff performance.

Monitoring. [Strategic control]

Using performance indicators to measure progress in relation to the plans.

If the gap between goal/objective and performance is seen as an opportunity for improvement rather than punishment, then planning, as embodied in the goal- and objective-setting process, provides a powerful organisational and individual learning device.

12 months for planning because staff attitudes need to change and new skills need to be learnt. Meetings every 2 months to discuss drafts. don't drag out so long as to lose staff interest and commitment.