

STRATEGIC PLANNING COACHING FOR RURAL LIBRARIES

We approach strategic planning with the belief that when their operations are aligned with community needs, rural libraries can be transformational institutions.



The size and budget of a library should not be a barrier to strategic planning.

Rural libraries are uniquely positioned to bring positive change to their communities through the traditional library values of access to information, freely circulating resources, and community engagement.

However, given the challenges faced by many rural libraries, it is vital that these organizations operate in a strategically oriented and efficient manner. Despite the value libraries provide, resources supporting them are increasingly limited.

An effectively designed strategic planning process can help these libraries best utilize limited financial, human, and physical resources to maximize their impact on the communities they serve.

We know that every library and every community are different, but the importance of strategic planning is universal: it can help any public library increase its relevance to the community it serves.

BENEFITS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Prioritize Your Work

A common misperception about strategic planning is that a strategic plan is intended to demand more from the library, despite a library's finite resources. To the contrary, a thoughtful strategic plan should be used to prioritize the library's work rather than necessarily expand it.

Engage Your Stakeholders

Strategic planning is an ideal time to bring together feedback, input, and ideas from library staff members, trustees, library volunteers, representatives from local organizations, and residents. A collaborative planning process will result in a dynamic plan that has buy-in from the community.

Use Strategic Planning as an Opportunity for Community Engagement

Planning offers a host of options for increasing awareness of what your library has to offer, soliciting feedback from the community, and later, marketing what the library plans to do as a result of the input that was provided.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Coaching provides an affordable and convenient alternative to more extensive planning processes.

Throughout your library's strategic planning process, we can help your library develop the capacity to:

- Use data to determine your library's strengths and weaknesses
- Develop a community survey designed to provide actionable data
- Learn how to effectively involve your community, your board, and your staff
- Develop goals based on what your community tells you