Science Reference Strategic Planning Process (University Libraries)

Edward J. Eckel

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/acad_leadership

WMU ScholarWorks Citation
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/acad_leadership/59
Science Reference Strategic Planning Process (University Libraries)

Edward J. Eckel, Engineering and Applied Sciences Librarian
In collaboration with Linda Rolls (Head) and Carrie Leatherman (Natural Science Librarian)

Problem Statement
Science Reference serves:
- College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
- College of Health and Human Services
- College of Arts and Sciences
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Environmental Studies
  - Geosciences
  - Mathematics
  - Physics
  - Statistics

We are a small department - three full-time librarians and one full-time evening coordinator.

Changing information world and student/faculty body
- More reference questions via email and chat
- Fewer in-person reference questions
- More librarian time spent on rich activities:
  o Information Literacy instruction
  o Committee and taskforce work
  o Consultations/collaborations with faculty, staff, administrators
- Difficult to maintain librarian staffing on Science Reference desk due to other responsibilities

We began to ask ourselves: Is our current service model effectively meeting the needs of our students and faculty?

We needed a methodology to guide our exploration.

Strategic Action Planning – Peter Dams

The Total Performance System – Peter Dams
- Review what an organization does and why (Figure 2)
- Ask questions:
  o Why does the organization exist in the first place?
  o Who does it serve?
  o What are the main products or services?

Next Steps
- Develop mission and vision statement
  o Mission – What you are and do NOW
  o Vision – What do you want to be and do
- Find gaps between what organization is and what it wants to be
- Develop goals
- Develop action plan for achieving the vision (Figure 3)

Brainstorming Sessions - A Messy Process

Unexpected Complication

During the second month of our strategic planning process, our long-time Science Reference coordinator Faizan Haq left his position. There has been lingering uncertainty about whether the position would be filled, or revised in some fashion. This has led to some delays in the process of working on our plan. However, we decided to keep going, regardless of the panic we felt.

Next Steps
- Develop mission and vision statement
- Find gaps between what organization is and what it wants to be
- Develop goals
- Develop action plan for achieving the vision (Figure 3)

Step Three: Drafting a Vision Statement
Currently drafting a vision, which will answer:
- What would we (ideally) like to be and do?
- What added value can we provide to natural, health and applied sciences on campus?
- Will dovetail with University Vision:
  - Learner centered
  - Discovery driven
  - Globally engaged

Contact information
Edward Eckel, Engineering Librarian
Science Reference Dept.
University Libraries
Western Michigan University
T: (269) 387-5140
E: edward.eckel@wmich.edu

References

Acknowledgements
Special thanks to my department colleagues Linda Rolls, Carrie Leatherman, and our former coordinator Faizan Haq for their invaluable assistance in this project. This really is our project, rather than my project.