Organizational Change: The Role of Online Continuing Distance Learning in Libraries
What do you want to get from this presentation?

- Learn about organizational change in libraries
- Learn more about distance learning
- Find out how distance learning can benefit your library
- Discover new options in distance learning online
Don’t you think it’s time we changed the way we do things around here?

- Council has voted to change... so we need you to...
- Our staffing ratios have changed, so you have to...
- We’ve decided to change programming to...
- I need your help in changing the...
- Let’s change our...
- The plan has changed...
- How about changing ...
How should I respond?

- Does this mean I’m a change agent or a trouble maker?
- How will this change effect my job and the jobs of my staff/co-workers?
- Where does this change begin and end?
- How do I get this change started?
- I’ve never changed anything here before. What happens if I fail?
- Will others be willing to accept the change? If not, what then?
- Are you sure you want to change this? Is it feasible?
- How much is it going to cost us?
What have been the most significant changes in libraries within the last 20 years?

- The Internet & Automation
- Population & demographics
- Service offerings & programs
- Access to funding
- State & Federal Laws

Some Straight Talk About Change

Types of change:

- **External Change**: Generated from outside forces. (i.e. social, legal, political)
  
  Example: Election of a conservative board member versus a liberal one. A change in demographics or clients.

- **Internal Change**: Generated from within; generally seen as positive.
  
  (i.e. roles, operations; cooperative) Example: Adopting outcome measures.

- **Combined forces of change**: Pulls energies and efforts in both directions.
  
  (i.e. new technology/tool) Example: Upgrading to a new OPAC.

- **Imposed Change**: Arbitrary, no way around it.
  
  (i.e. tax cut, hiring freeze) Example: Non-resident library card fee.

- **Initiated Change**: Amenable, easily accepted; often rolled-out incrementally.
  
  (i.e. project related) Example: Transition from five days of operation to seven.

The Infusion of Change

A process through which an innovation is incorporated into a social system; informational use, social interaction, and behavioral change; the spread of new ideas.

- Professional Ideology (professional group or body)
- Local autonomy (civic body, council, dean, director)
- Dominant organizations (university affiliate, sponsors, main branch)
- Opinion leaders & Change agents
- Lay control (Friends groups, library boards, trustees)
- History & Culture (tradition; “the way we do things around here”)
- Resource dependent (contingent upon funding sources)

Change Factors in Libraries

**External Change Factors**
- Finances
- IT Progress
- Changes in Higher Education
- Legal & Public
- Cooperative

**Internal Change Factors**
- Teaching & Education (Skills of Librarians)
- Collections
- Electronic & Digital
- Reference & Research
- Scope of support
- Library expansion
- Management & Information Access
- Cooperative
- Social

In 2005 a “combined forces” change occurred at my branch. Our library management team decided that due to lack of use and lost revenue, a former coffee shop should be sublet. Within one month of the announcement we were on our way to housing a new resident, in addition to our usual clients. The only difference in this case was that our new client was a national distributor of online continuing education for librarians. Consequently, this meant that my former coffee shop would need an overhaul to accommodate the move-in that would include: 8 new desktop computers; independent telephone and network access; additional ports, cabling, and other special amenities.

Although I had led an IT project team, I had never performed a full-scale build-out of a library space before. In addition our new client would be providing after school tutoring to neighborhood teens. We were ecstatic, however, in addition to mapping out the logistics of this new partnership, and promoting continuing education, and training our staff from within, I also had the task of guiding the course of the after school program as well.
Considering Strategy for Change

- What is the rational for change?
- What is the priority to change?
- What is the value of the change worth?
- What are the limits of the organization?
- What parameters exist in the change?
- Is the change consistent with the organization?
- Is the change needed?
- Has the entire organization been considered?
- What repercussions will be experienced as a result of the change?
In an organization that is accustomed to change a “high degree of diversification” will occur. As for information services related organizations, and their unique nature of operating as an “open system,” comprised of sub-systems that are inter-related, change at one level generally leads to changes at other levels of the organization (Pugh, 2000).

Considering Distance Learning Online

Distance learning has been around since the mid 1800s in America, when land grant colleges, under Cooperative Extension Services and the Department of Agriculture, provided cooperative training media through the mail (Knowles, 1969). By the mid-sixties, the process of life-long learning had become a major initiative. As a result, emphasis to offer greater access to life-long learning was orchestrated through a national coalition of higher educational institutions. The Internet has served as a catalyst in promoting continuing education among adults online (Pungitore, 1995).

Although distance education and distance learning are often used interchangeably, the United States Distance Learning Association’s (USDLA) Web site currently defines distance learning as, "the acquisition of knowledge and skills through mediated information and instruction" (United States Distance Learning Association, 2000). Studies have found little difference between distance learning online and face-to-face learning as suitable approaches to teaching (Simonson, et al, 2002). Of a greater interest to researchers in the area of distance learning has been the issue of interaction as a key to its success, whereby it has been consistently found in research, a high positive correlation between student interaction and student achievement (Roblyer and Wiencke, 2003).

A recent finding on distance education programs for librarians showed great success in learning and the rate of information that was being accessed, with the only downside being, the need for increased support from library administration (Mynott, 2000).
Roles and Functions of Distance Learning Online

Roles that distance learning plays

- Mitigates cost
- Expands access
- Alleviates capacity constraints
- Capitalizes on emerging market opportunities
- Serves as catalyst for institutional transformation (*virtual university vs. traditional)

Note: In the pursuit of life-long learning, adults have desired flexibility and convenience to overcome time, distance, quality, relevant education, and value challenges, thus research has adopted the term virtual university/classroom. Definition of Jones International University 2002.
What is Library Education at Desktop (LE@D)?

Library Education at Desktop (LE@D) was created from a collaborative project between the University of North Texas School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) and Northeast Texas Library System (NETLS). Since 2003, LE@D has fostered learning among more than 60 libraries nationwide, educating over 9,000 students. NETLS, the largest library system in Texas, with 102 member libraries, maintains a leadership role in fostering the needs assessment and evaluation contributions of LE@D, while SLIS provides leadership in course creation, content structure, and courseware design (www.LE@Donline.info). Our former coffee shop became their first satellite office.

As a member of NETLS, our library was already entitled to access LE@D courseware, yet having them in-house, we received the opportunity to serve as alpha-testers of courses that had not reached the market. In order to make a proper determination about the LE@D project, I not only participated in a free trial but was also provided statistical assessments to assist my decision to adopt the program for training purposes.

LE@D courses are hosted on UNT servers using the nationally known WebCT Vista learning management system, allowing you to track and document student progress and completion. They require from one to two hours to complete and offer students the flexibility to work at their own pace and schedule.
Desktop Access Just a Click Away!

Every library staff member (professional, paraprofessional, clerk, page, custodian and volunteer) needs all the help he or she can get to deal effectively with our difficult patrons. This is one course that is rarely, if ever, offered in the course listings of library schools. In fact, as most of you have found out, this is a skill that arises out of necessity once you begin to work in the real world of libraries. The content presented here is meant to be a tool-kit from which you can draw to deal effectively with your own problem patron situations. You are benefiting from the real world experiences of many of your peers, including myself. You and your library will continue to benefit by regularly reviewing and addressing the situations each of you encounter, whether they occur daily or just once in a while. In addition you need to review library policies you have in place or develop them if they don't exist.
Get Your Mouse Ready! Get Set, and… Go!

Welcome to the Library Education at Desktop (LE@D) tutorial series. This is a collaboration between the Northeast Texas Library System and the School of Library and Information Sciences at the University of North Texas.

If you are new to WebCT Vista, this page will summarize the key things you need to know about how to navigate through tutorials.

NOTE: Print this page for your future reference! Throughout the tutorial, always click first in the middle of the page before clicking your print button.

Start Here - Course Content

This folder will take you through the tutorial. Following this page, the tutorial starts with Welcome page, continues with Pre-test, Content materials, Post-test and...
LE@D Course Interface

ABOUT ANGER

You probably have asked yourself "Why did this patron get so angry?"
Perhaps the best way to understand anger in others is to understand it in ourselves. Think about the kind of situations that get you angry. It is safe to assume that your patrons are dealing with the same kind of day to day frustrations and obstacles, and may often come into your library already angry about something that happened to them earlier. If you would like to assess your own anger level, click here to take this Anger Quiz. It will serve as a good reminder of the role that anger can play in the interactions you have with patrons everyday.

[Image of LE@D Course Interface]

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Virtual Classroom at Every Desktop?

There are numerous online continuing education programs available today. At last count there were over 245,500 distance education courses online (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000-2001). However, only a handful are tailored specifically for libraries, librarians and library staff. Less still, are able to provide a “virtual classroom” atmosphere due to cost and technology constraints. Although similar to basic online classrooms, virtual classrooms use streaming media or pre-recorded media offered via the Internet in a teaching capacity (http://www.myispforum.com/glossary). Thus, asynchronous provides an affordable option.

Asynchronous programs allow staff to train 24/7 at the convenience of their own desktop. Costs are affordable. Instructors and students may interact either by email or chat. Besides LE@D, WebJunction, PBS TeacherLine, OCLC, and Nylink Educational are just a few providers that offer online distance learning for librarians.
Breakout for Staff Development

Getting staff used to the idea of having a specially designed training program onsite, at the convenience of their desktop PC took a bit getting used to. After the merger of two service units; youth and adult, our librarians were brought together at one central desk. Of the three desktops available at the new reference desk, one was designated exclusively for LE@D access. Initially, staff were encouraged to participate as Alpha-testers, where they each could take turns familiarizing themselves with LE@D’s learning format.

Staff development had always been incorporated into performance planning, yet since the adoption of LE@D we had new incentive. Although LE@D courseware is non-credit based, interest was peaked. We continue to encourage staff to attend training and development sessions at external locations, however LE@D allows staff access when travel and other training options are not convenient.
Strategies for Supporting Continuing Distance Learning Online

Simple ways to serve staff at a distance:
- Offer staff remote access to library Website
- Offer staff remote access to email or live chat
- Offer staff remote access to online courseware

Simple ways to reinforce healthy results through continuing distance learning:
- Provide staff informational gatherings that market learning opportunities
- Provide credit-based continuing distance learning opportunities through cooperatives
- Provide incentives for non-credit based continuing distance learning
- Encourage and engage staff in developing outcome measures for continuing distance learning
- Infuse continuing distance learning in library Master Plan
- Perform regular evaluations of continuing distance learning initiatives

Courtesy of Texas State Library, *Distance Learning: Feeling Remote?* 2005
Future Implications for Librarians and Distance Learning

How does the role of distance learning factor into future organizational development and growth of libraries?

Librarians have an excellent opportunity to improve their image by changing with the times in becoming knowledge managers of information (Materska, 2004). This includes strategic management of information technology. The Internet has proven to be an innovation that has created a major channel for the dissemination of information and new information related technologies, such as distance learning (online) by providing an interactive environments for libraries and library users (Pungitore, 1995). Librarians, managers, and administrators can employ innovations such as these to reinforce and support the adoption of creative cultural norms.
Libraries and Cost Structuring

When Benjamin Franklin established the Free Library Company of Philadelphia, the idea was not as a philanthropic vehicle for serving the less fortunate but as a means of facilitating a book exchange among friends (Franklin, 1995). As was then, and is now, making needs go further is still of the utmost importance. There are numerous theories in operations research and cost structuring in libraries, however new partnering arrangements and ventures are “extending the library’s mission” (Dempsey, 2004).

Information related courseware online is providing a one-size-fits-all product that is breaking down segmented educational markets by “radically unbundling” teaching and cutting costs (Robbins and Webster, 2002). Libraries are quickly taking advantage of this new market through distance learning options.
Meeting Workplace Needs:
Bridging the gap in professional educational development
Former Coffee Shop: An Alternative Revenue Generator
LE@D Administrator Onsite
Libraries and Librarians Following the Path of Life-Long Learning


Resources

US Distance Learning Association: http://www.usdla.org/html/aboutUs/researchInfo.htm
Association and College Research Libraries and Distance Learning:
http://caspian.switchinc.org/~distlearn/
ALA and Distance Education and Teach Act:
http://www.alal/Template.cfm?Section=Distance_Education_and_the_TEACH_Act&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=25939#librarians
Texas State and Distance Learning for Librarians:
http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/dl/opportunities.html
Continuing Distance Learning and Librarians: http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/workshops/index.html
Texas Library Association and Distance Learning for Librarians:
http://www.txla.org/groups/sdcep/selfpaced.html
Services to Distance Learning Students: http://www.westga.edu/~cgoodson/booksites.html
LE@D: www.LEADonline.info
Annual Distance Learning Conference 2006 (Wisconsin):
http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/
Distance Learning Administration 2006: http://www.westga.edu/~distance/dla2006.html
TXDLA: http://www.txdla.org/index.cfm/4,0,92.html