Supporting Applied Innovation in Your Library

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How do we innovate?
Begin with the end in mind...
...but utilize an agile, iterative process.
The process matters.
Getting closer to “customer-first”

• “The community is the heart of the library”
• Validate what you know
• Find out what you don’t know
• Map key user journeys
• Review what you’ve learned with someone else
• Use trends as headers for customer strategies
• Prepare to test and learn
• Listen, adapt, repeat
A brief case study
Open Access
Open Access
More big ideas?
50% of all searching will be through a Voice User Interface by 2020.
The catalyst
Sharon Almquist
Adjunct Professor, Northern KY University
Ideation/Creativity Techniques
It All Starts With YOU!
#OCLCARC18
The 5 P’s

1-Passion-

Why can’t we do something about this situation?
How can we make it better?
Communicate with your colleagues!
The 5 P’s

2-Perseverance-
Be an optimist—even when others see obstacles not opportunities
Understand rejection-turn it positive with improvement
Once approved-stick with it without becoming monomaniacal
The 5 P’s

3-Promotion

Create value
Bring solution to fruition
Convince others
The 5 P’s

4-Planning

Short/long-range attainable goals
Plan for success
Failure = learning
Avoid persistent planners
Successful Change Agent Characteristics

- Enthusiastic not Obnoxious
- Networker not Lone Wolf
- Collaborator not Dictator
- Communicator not Witholder
- Troubleshooter not Whiner
- Proactive not Reactive
Self-Confidence

What do you fear?
- Success more than failure
- Ridicule or Public humiliation
- Covert backbiting, criticism, sabotage, blame
- People saying your idea is stupid or impossible

What is the worst thing that can happen?
You have to look for another job!
Embrace Risk!

Risks?

- Calculated
- Accept ambiguity and variables
- Your reputation
- Your time
- Your creativity
- Your ability to communicate and collaborate
- Your ability to inspire
Finding Your Way to Success

Ideas and brainstorming – begin
Client-needs assessment – gather information
Think through ideas – fine tune concepts
Create, modify, expand – SCAMPER
- Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Magnify, Put to other uses, Eliminate, Reverse/Rearrange
Distill – all ideas are not created equal – assessment, discussion, feedback
Define value – express the idea, the outcomes
SCORE analysis – strengths, challenges, options, responses, effectiveness
Screening, research - feasibility study
Pitch the Idea - Get Others to Join

Support & Buy-In
Create an Elevator Speech
Define the pitch
Accept “no” – ask for advice
Present to right audience
Embrace acceptance
Run pilot tests and gather feedback
Consider funding – internal and external
Create your team

OCLC 2018
Arne Almquist
Dean of Library, Lamar University, Beaumont, TX
Buy in and commit time/resources
Supported by administration
Successful team = formal, but flexible
Characteristics of members
Assign roles & responsibilities
Managing – reports, documentation, milestones, timetables, priorities
Rewards & incentives
Communicator

Loyal

Expertise

Accepts Risks

Flexible

Characteristics of Effective Innovation Team Members

Trust

Supports Change
Within organization
Short-term contract employees
Unpaid volunteers
Students
External partnerships
Other disciplines
Managing the Project

Organize plan
Set deadlines-communicate
Establish budget
Manage process to completion - feedback
Success=effective delivery of new service/happy users
Failure = learning experience -new opportunity
Focus

Big picture - Dream big
Key components
Don’t let perfect get in the way of good
Never take “no” personally
Did people know they needed the iPhone?
Time + costs (staff time) + impact on user interest

- Approval
- Implementation
- Feedback
- Evaluation
- Tweaking

Good-Implement!

Waiting for Perfect!
Glitz and Glamour to Nuts and Bolts
Implementing Innovation in your Library
Glenn Kneebone
Program Manager
University of Montana - Missoula
Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library
The nuts and bolts

• Should you offer new services or create new innovative spaces if you don’t a line of funding for staff support?

• What will be the other costs one need to consider?
Support Constraints

• Don’t let the notion of a perfectly polished and refined model of service and support be an inhibitor for innovation in your library
Staffing Logistics

• Staff needs are sometimes difficult to anticipate but we are part of the library world!
  • Other library folks tend to be a helpful bunch of people. They are a great resource
• A well received service can serve as justification for additional staffing
In our case, the service staff impacted were already quite busy and there was no possibility of additional staff positions.
Reworking role descriptions was necessary

- My position was rewritten to include innovative technology exploration and the travel associated with it
- I was approved to create higher-level student positions to assist with more specialized services
  - A well-paid student who is given responsibility and managerial support serves a vital role
Is the reallocation of support justified?

- Queue the strategic plan…
  - Where are you headed?
  - What is the cost/benefit of redistributing staff time from existing services?
  - Do you see any potential silver linings to changes in role descriptions?
• What were the silver linings?
  • My hair…
  • Better job buy-in with my student employees and their positions
  • A model for other positions to be changed with greater efficiency.
Focus on the opportunity

- It was clear that traditional services were falling out of demand and new directions were necessary
- Specialized equipment and expert services were increasing in demand
- There was an increasing need to justify our existence on campus
How do I estimate the long-term costs

- Replacement or updates
  - Life expectancy of equipment
  - Life expectancy of service
- Damage by patrons
- Maintenance
- Auxiliary costs
- Repurposing the space when life cycle of service is up
How do you measure success?

• Metrics

• Anecdotal (gasp!)
  • “Failures” in an innovative service are not true failures
    • Example: A professor stating that Virtual Reality is “$#!&”
  • Influx of new inquiries related to innovative technology or spaces
  • Stories are far more compelling than numbers.

• Buzz / Media Coverage

• Emulation and attention
What were the biggest payoffs?

• Stories of success
  • “I now have a place where I can…”

• Strategic alignment of services
  • As a library, our projects have earned us recognition and positioned well to be better supported as our university embarks on a complete revamp of its operations
    • Never waste a crisis
  • Donors respond well to applied innovation
What are some of the human costs of success or failure?

• The pace of innovation can be draining
• Increased expectations to continue the trend of innovation can be overwhelming
• Traditionalists may become contentious
• Frustration associated with new technology or processes
• The monetary impact of investing in technology that quickly becomes eclipsed

• Detractors emphasizing failures as a disaster and not as a teaching moment
Our Projects:

• 3D Printing and creativity equipment (art printing, laser cutting, etc.)
• Video Studios
  • Presentation / Interview / Practice
    • Based on One Button Studio by Penn State
  • Teaching / Graphic integration
    • Based on Lightboard Studio by Dr. Peshkin at Northwestern
• Virtual Reality
Good ideas, staffing, and funding are not enough

• Buy-In
  • Be strategic in how you gain buy-in
    • For us, the most resistance to creating non-traditional spaces and services was internal
• Example: Studio Spaces

• **Strategy:** Create momentum for plan external to the library

• **Benefit:**
  
  • Feedback
    
    • Both pro and con – allows modification and revision
    
    • Direct / concrete cases of support
    
    • Uncovered new potential roles or audiences for the space

  • Created advocacy and promotion beyond our reach
To achieve this strategy we approached select individuals who we felt may be beneficiaries of our proposal

- **Student body government**
  - Received the endorsement of the student body government

- **Our student employees**
  - A vital resource and a very good group to vet ideas with

- **Non-Library Faculty and Department Leaders**
  - Support from a cross section of Deans and Chairs

- **Non-Library Staff**
For our first studio, the inertia provided the justification to overcome internal resistance, justify the change of use for the space, and provide solid footings for the use of funding for the project.

For the second studio, the strategy resulted in funding by multiple other departments even when our university was facing enormous budget and employee cuts.
Reducing internal resistance

• Have a strategic vision
  • Helps you say no to good ideas and why without discouraging engagement
  • Provides direction to resource allocation and staffing duties
• Create a culture of change and innovation
  • Support staff and faculty to attend events geared toward innovation
  • Encourage ideas, even when they are outlandish, seemingly impossible, or completely impractical.
THANK YOU