Roadmap for Success: The 5 Documents that Every Library CEO Must Have (and 5 Steps to get there)!

In our FOPL universe of members, we are noting that we're approaching 25% of our CEOs have less than two years in their roles. We have a lot of new and dynamic CEOs entering the role of leadership in Ontario's public libraries.

What a great opportunity!

That said, taking a new role of CEO involves a huge mindset change from managerial to leadership thinking. There are a lot of courses you can take (and maybe already have). Here's FOPL's list of Ontario-based leadership training:

Made in Canada Solutions for Public Library Leadership Development

http://fopl.ca/news/made-in-canada-solutions-for-public-library-leadership-development/

And there are lots of resources available through your FOPL membership:

Key Ontario Resources for FOPL CEOs

http://fopl.ca/news/key-ontario-resources-for-fopl-ceos/

Differences Between Managers and Leaders

Most of this mindset shift is from manager (without losing all of those wonderful skills) to leader. Here's what Forbes Magazine says:
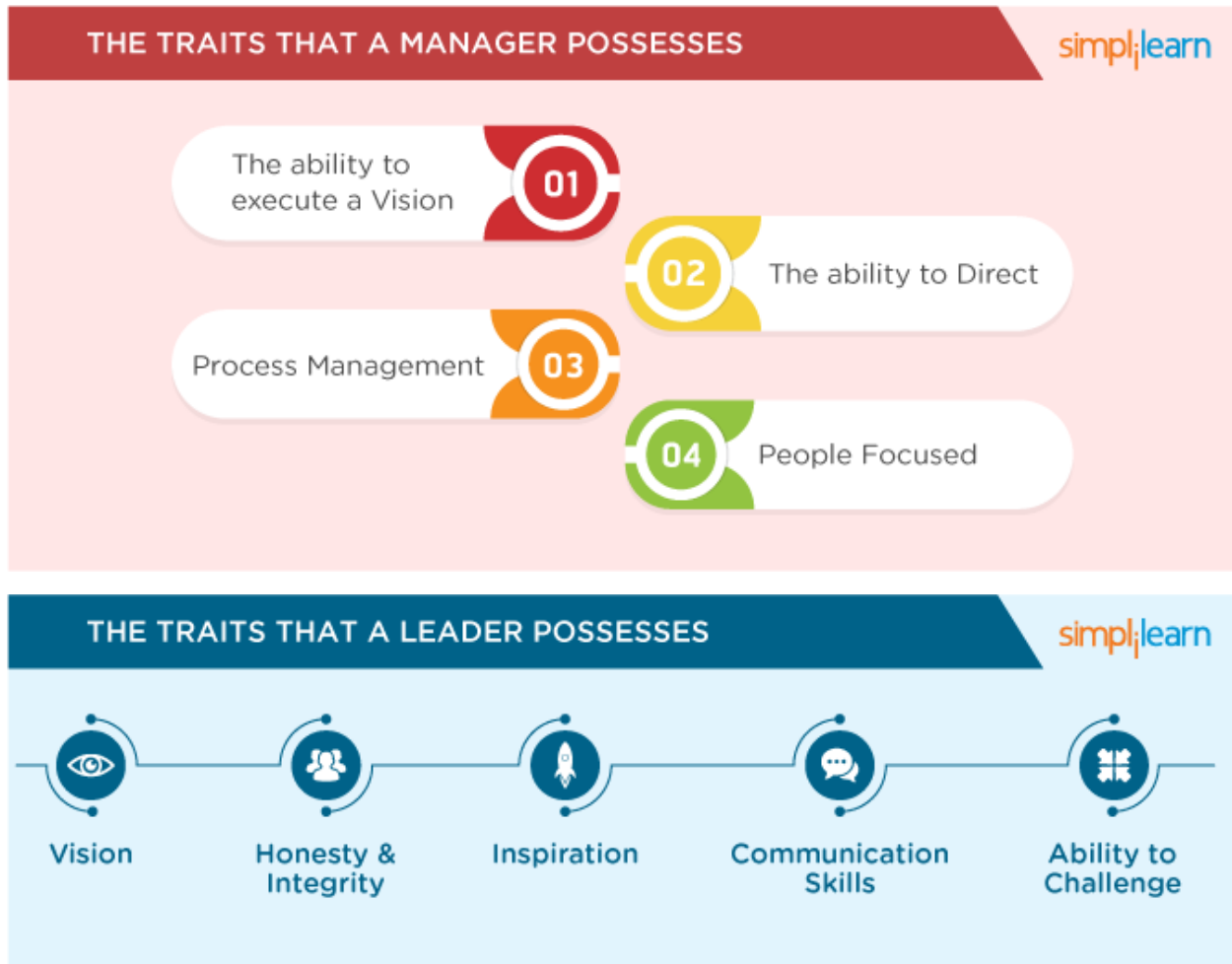
"1. Leaders create a vision; managers create goals.

2. Leaders are change agents; managers maintain the status quo.

3. Leaders are unique; managers copy.

4. Leaders take risks; managers control risk.

5. Leaders are in it for the long haul; managers think short-term.

6. Leaders grow personally; managers rely on existing, proven skills.

7. Leaders build relationships; managers build systems and processes.

8. Leaders coach; managers direct.

9. Leaders create fans; managers have employees.

Are you a manager or a leader?"

If you're reading this and thinking "I need to do both!", you're right. Avoid taking the advice to extremes, it's all about the matrix of skills and the priorities you place on your

efforts. It's a good place to start a discussion with your CEO peers and management staff. Surveys show that most staff are hungry for leadership.

Read this article: https://www.simplilearn.com/leadership-vs-management-difference-article Highlights below:

THE TRAITS THAT A MANAGER POSSESSES — simpli|learn

- 01 The ability to execute a Vision
- 02 The ability to Direct
- 03 Process Management
- 04 People Focused

THE TRAITS THAT A LEADER POSSESSES — simpli|learn

- Vision
- Honesty & Integrity
- Inspiration
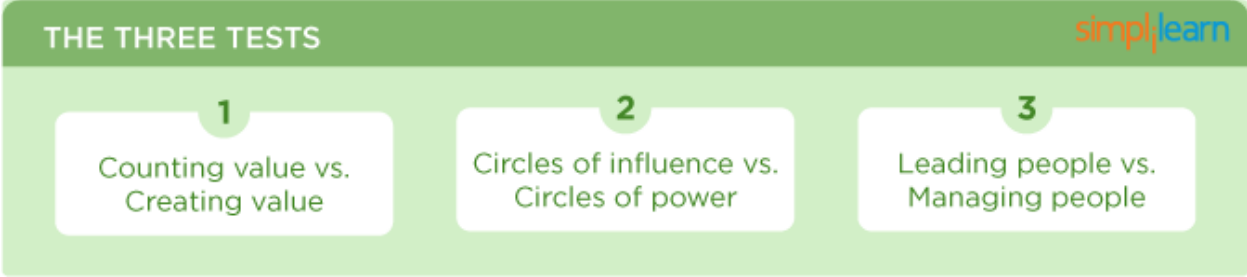- Communication Skills
- Ability to Challenge

The Three Important Differences

"#1 A leader invents or innovates while a manager organizes.

#2 A manager relies on control whereas a leader inspires trust

#3 A leader asks the questions "what" and "why whereas a manager leans more towards the questions "how" and "when."

In the article Three Differences Between Managers And Leaders, Vineet Nayar discusses three tests he devised to help managers decide if they have successfully made the shift from managing people to leading them."

THE THREE TESTS
simpl|learn

1	2	3
Counting value vs. Creating value	Circles of influence vs. Circles of power	Leading people vs. Managing people

Differences Between the Private and Public Sector

As a public library CEO you'll be presented with challenges that often come from a place of misunderstanding about the context of the public benefit (sometimes called not-for-profit) sector we work in. That said, we do deliver both economic and social returns on investment at a very high level. Hear the challenges you face from the public, funders and board members in this context where you may need to lead them to understanding the context of public library value and impact.

Private Sector	Public Sector
- Competitive advantage is the ideal - Innovation is key to long-term existence - Focus on clients and market share - Business strategies - Responsibility to shareholders or owner/investors - Increasing revenue - Risk oriented - Economic success is a prime personal motivator - Competitors, partners and allies - e-Business is the challenge - Focus on "results"	- Collaborative advantage is the ideal - Good service is the key to long-term existence - Focus on citizens and social contract - Political agendas and government imperatives - Responsibility to parliament and to citizens - Wise use of tax dollars - Risk averse - Making a positive impact on society is a strong motivator - Other departments, levels of government, unions - e-Government is the challenge - Focus on "process"

So what? What is the Role of the Public Library CEO?

Simply put it is managing and leading the processes of community, staff, and Board engagement to achieve impact, outcomes and growth for your library system.

Strategic Leadership are the bywords and you employ strategic thinking for your libraries. Sometimes this involves using outside support for critical milestones. Leaders

recognize that they're often too close to the situation. This is a fascinating topic for discussion. Indeed, Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher born in 544 BCE said, "No man ever **steps in the same river twice**, for it's not the **same river** and he's not the **same** man." From this ancient insight we can posit that librarian CEOs are **different**. (Yay!)

So, here's a simple list to follow as a library leader:

1. Choose a Future

2. Set Phased Priorities

3. Make Choices

4. Take Action

5. Do each the Step

6. Adjust Tactics with Experience

7. Seek Feedback and Adjust

8. Measure Progress and Outcomes/Impact

9. Follow Through

Sounds simple enough but these are ALL big decisions and you, as CEO, need to assess the human resource and community readiness for each aspect of your library's vision. You'll likely come up with hundreds of good ideas in any planning exercise. The challenge isn't in choosing the best 3-5 to focus on each year – it's in sacrificing the others and keeping them in the parking lot so that you can build the foundations for future success in the realm (I'm making a pretty good assumption here) of limited financial, staff, and physical resources.

So where do you start – especially if you're in your Honeymoon period and starting off with a short period of 6-18 months to lay a foundation for future success with your staff and Board.

It can't be stated clearly enough that you need to put in place the processes to create and receive endorsement for five critical documents. These documents are not magical in themselves. It is the process of creation that engages you, your Board, your staff and your community that builds the Launchpad for future success (and, by the way, the relationships and respect you need as a great community leader!). You're building awareness, understanding, endorsement, and inspiration.

What are the 5 documents?

Your Library's **Leadership Strategy** (as distinct from your management strategies and personal philosophies) is embodied in these documents:

1. Up-to-Date 5-year Strategic Plan
2. Your 3-year Long-Range Programs Plan
3. Your 5-year Technology Plan
4. Your 20-year Master Plan for Facilities
5. Your 5-year Strategic Financial Plan (Capital & Operating)

Using a consultant, or doing it yourself is your choice. Sometimes a mix is great. However, if they're dusty volumes sitting on a shelf, they're not living strategy documents. The CEO's role is to bring life to the plans and inspire staff and communities. Indeed, vision and creating an environment for staff and management to motivate themselves is key.

Annual Management Performance Plans

From each of these plans fall out a number of operating and managerial plans that are delegated to staff teams or handled by yourself in concert with your staff. These include your library system's *annual*:

1. Budget(s)
2. HR and Staffing Plans
3. Marketing and Promotion plans
4. Program and events plan and schedule
5. Technology Roadmap
6. Partnership Strategy

Each of these plans informs the quarterly performance review process and starts with the performance contracting process as you launch the plans and give guidance to your management team. Every manager needs to implement key goals and priorities in their domain of effort and embodying these into their annual performance contract is a good start. But remember, it's not the written document that's key – it's the conversation.

STEP 1:

Pre-reading

Seek out the key background research and reports about your library:

• Older or current Strategic Plans
• Older or current program, technology, partnership, marketing, and human resources plans.
• Master Facilities Plan
• Minutes of meetings with staff and management.
• Any reports on library focus groups and surveys in the past 5 years.

Assess whether they are current, sufficient and have the best milestones and SMART Goals (https://www.projectsmart.co.uk/smart-goals.php). Are they managerial and inform your managers' activities and actions? Are they visionary and meeting your community goals and challenges? Are the priorities correct in the current environment?

Seek out the key community plans that your library should align with:

- Building(s) Condition Assessment Report(s)
- Comprehensive Space Needs Analysis
- Region, County, Town or City Official Plan and strategy
- Region, County, Town or City Housing and Economic Development Plan
- Region, County, Town or City Parks & Recreation Plan and Strategy
- Region, County, Town or City Culture Plan and Strategy
- Region, County, Town or City Tourism Plan and Strategy
- Region, County, Town or City Green Plan and Strategy
- Region, County, Town or City Anti-Poverty Plan and Strategy
- Local community Demographic studies
- Any other plan that may be focused on your community's needs and critical issues facing your neighbourhoods.

Well, that'll fill a shelf – and your mind. You're now better prepared for engaging with your community and you have the facts and goals at hand that you need to engage your local community's other leadership folks. By the way, you might also want to create profiles of the key community leaders that you need to build relationship with. It's just a simple reference question with high impact. Build profiles of your:

- Library Board members
- Municipal Mayor and Councillors
- Region, County, Town or City Department Heads
- Heads of local Board of Trade/Chamber of Commerce
- Heads of local cultural institutions
- Heads of key social services agencies and services
- Key opinion leaders including the local news media (radio, news, etc.)

Build a plan to meet with them. Don't let yourself get overwhelmed. Time exists so everything doesn't have to happen at once!

STEP 2:

Assess your strategic plan including your library's vision, mission, values, and goals. Is it appropriate for today and the 21st Century? Does it provide motivation for you and your staff to achieve?

Assess the priorities and what formal and informal progress is being made. Ensure that you can report on these to your Board to prove that this document is a living document.

Do you have all of the key plans you need? Are you happy with these plans?

1. Your 3-year Long-Range Programs Plan
   - Does it comprise the entire year for both active and passive programs?
   - Does it cover measurement strategies to prove success?

2. Your 5-year Technology Plan
   • Are you ready to know exactly what capital costs you need to invest in your critical technology infrastructure this year?
   • Are you adapting to change and ensuring that your technologies are up-to-date?
   • Do you have goals to free up staff hours for strategic activities with self-checkout or other productivity systems?
3. Your 20-year Master Plan for Facilities
   • Do you need renovations, branch replacements, new branches?
   • Are your facilities big enough to handle your strategies and programs? Will they be in the future?
   • Would you be prepared for shovel-ready money if it became available?
   • Is it integrated with your community development charge and funding requirements and endorsed as part of the overall community plan?
   • Can you prove cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity?
   • Are you aligned with the community's vision and goals?
4. Your 5-year Strategic Financial Plan (Capital & Operating)
   • Again, is your budget strategic? Are you investing where your strategic plan says you will? Are you making the tough decisions for rebalancing and change?
   • Are your capital plans (buildings, collections, and technology) ready, endorsed, and costed)?
   • Are you ready for grants, donations, or new funding opportunities?

STEP 3:

Does your management team have the detailed step-by-step high level plans they need to execute? Do you?

Fill in the gaps. Start creating or updating any plans your library needs to succeed (and be a credible requestor of funding – especially capital or external foundation funding).

Are your staff up-to-speed on the operational goals? These documents should be shared entirely with your management team. They are also wisely shared as appropriate with all staff at appropriate junctures. When staff understand the context, and are respected with the information, you're halfway there!

1. Budget(s) – Management needs to know where money has been invested for greater growth and strategic impact.
2. HR and Staffing Plans – Management needs to know succession plans, new hires, replacement versus upgrade strategies, retirement issues, etc. Surprises are best framed as opportunities!
3. Marketing and Promotion plans – This is critical and needs an annual plan and calendar. With the introduction of social media marketing, we can change the traditional mix of channels and print/virtual costs as we evolve our engagement

strategies with our communities. FOPL's OMD project and training is a leader in this space.

4. Program and events plan and schedule – Staff must move beyond the monthly plan to an annual planning cycle for programs and move from one-off events dominating the schedule to programming series for strategic success. The number of programs (83%) and attendance (66%) is the fastest growing component of public libraries success in Ontario.
5. Technology Roadmap – With over half of our visitor usage coming to Ontario's public libraries through our digital initiatives, this plan is critical to quarterly goals, in the context of a five-year plan.
6. Partnership Strategy – Have you audited your formal and informal partnerships? Do you have your maps - community maps, social service maps, government service maps, business maps, parks and recreation maps, education maps, etc.? Community mapping exercises are the foundation of setting priorities for your partnership strategies aligned with the library's goals and not duplicating or co-opting other local services. Fill the gaps.

Now you have all the documents you need. You're ready to lead the charge ahead. You have five key documents on your desk and a shelf full of community reports at hand. Your management team has their marching orders – and you have the high-level plan that they have created with your coaching, support, and guidance.

STEP 4:

Execute.

I'll leave aside the role of your management team in execution. They now have their plans and you've engaged them in their performance contracting process and reviews to guide the good ship public library. Trust them but check in often to coach and reward.

So what do you do now? What are your execution goals?

1. Engage the staff. Build understanding through a staff day. Help them to understand the thinking and community goals that are addressed in the plans. Often, they are relieved to have a plan and address what they are seeing on the front line and to see the policies and training plans being put in place to underpin their success.
2. Engage your community partners. Build relationships and seek opportunities for greater formality (MOU?), partnerships, and integration.
3. Engage your Board. Some Boards need the servant leadership of the CEO. Ensure they're taking advantage of the Governance Hub resources and training available to them. [http://fopl.ca/news/ontario-library-board-centralized-governance-hub-launched/]

4. Choose a library policy philosophy and a customer service philosophy. Empower your managers and all staff. Simplify and trust while building a foundation based on sound thinking.
5. Set priorities and stick with them. Learn the tools of priority setting – but that's another article. 😁

STEP 5:

Measure. Don't just collect statistics. Measure impact, outcomes and value. There are a ton of tools now to help in Ontario [http://fopl.ca/news/what-are-all-of-these-library-statistics-tools-in-ontario-and-what-can-i-do-with-them/]. Choose a few and implement them gradually as part of your metrics philosophy.

Track Progress. Know your milestones. Celebrate the milestones and the ultimate achievement.

Lead!

Conclusion

There you go! I hope you find this useful. I stand ready at FOPL to provide direction and point you towards resources. I am also happy to respond to RFPs/RFIs and propose on assisting you in any of these steps or training activities. I'm always at the end of the phone or e-mail!

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