

Cutting The Budget



A mini-presentation by

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THE BAD NEWS

- The economy is slumping and revenue collections are down.
- The City Manager or the County Administrator announces all Departments must cut their budgets by at least 2% for the new fiscal year.

What does this mean?

- Since the cost of most things is going up by at least 2.5% in the coming year, the budget cut will need to be 4.5% or more.

Evaluating Potential Cuts: Four Criteria

1. Will the cut be visible to the public?
2. Is it a short or long term cut?
3. Does the cut require staff layoffs?
4. Which library constituency will be most affected?

Visibility

- Public must understand it costs \$\$ to run the library
- Invisible cuts help people think that the library can continue to deliver services with less and less money
- Hard to get invisible cuts restored
- What are some visible cuts?



Short or Long Term Cuts

- Is the city-imposed cut temporary or long-term?
- Can we live without this item forever?

Long Term Cuts Are Hard To Achieve

- Closing a branch, reducing open hours, etc.
- They involve painful staff layoffs, but that isn't what makes them hard to achieve
- It's the politics

Will It Involve Staff Layoffs?

- Almost always, the layoffs are at the bottom of the library staffing array
- BUT: easier to get back support staff to restore open hours than a reference librarian
- Watch out for bumping rights

Which Constituency Is Most Affected?

- Who benefits? Nobody.
- Who is hurt the most and what kind of power do they have?
- Again, a political issue



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Three Things To Avoid At All Costs

- Cutting off your nose to spite your face
- Allowing groups to pit one branch or service against another
- Handing the issue to a candidate for office



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Don't Take It Personally

