

Exercise 5 Examples of Benchmarks

Descriptive benchmarks are often anecdotal and refer to what we can see and hear.

- Library users are heard complimenting the new building.
- Children are seen playing outside after school.
- No one has scribbled graffiti in the hallways.
- Seniors are seen teaching each other the new computer system.
- More intergenerational groups form around the computers.
- Reference librarians are seen walking around and offering assistance.
- More staff members are asking for responsibility for marketing duties.
- Different staff members are volunteering to run meetings.
- The library manager is heard laughing in her office for the first time.

Measurable benchmarks are written down and based on counting.

- New library card sign-ups have increased 12% for the entire library system.
- Requests for new children's books are 15% higher than in other branches.
- Circulation figures for graphic novels are up 10%.
- Requests for computer access are up 23%.
- Complaints about the computer from library users are down 7%.
- An online survey shows a 73% satisfaction with the new interface.
- Donations from civic groups to the library are up 23%
- Positive stories about the library have increased 10% this year.
- Staff retention is up 21%.

Strategic benchmarks are about the goals and mission/vision in the strategic plan.

- The new library is reaching previously underserved neighborhoods.
- The new library building is catalyzing economic development in the area.
- The new library has become the center for community life in the neighborhood.
- The library users are becoming more computer literate.
- The computers are successfully expanding the library resources beyond its walls.
- More non-English-speaking people are using the library.
- Staff members are growing their management skills and stepping in new roles.
- The director is partnering with other economic and political leaders.
- A library foundation has been established.