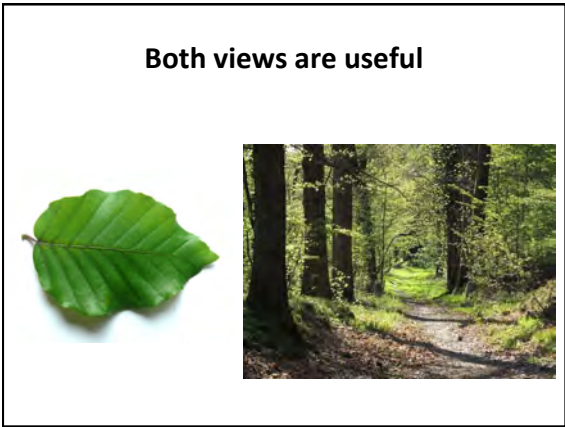


Seeing the Big Picture





Why add this task when you're already so busy?

- More "yes" answers
- Clearer priorities
- Fewer surprises
- Less work in the long run
- Greater sense of connection
- Improved chances for promotion

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Seeing the Big Picture

Today's discussion



- ✓ Six important big picture perspectives
- ✓ Things to consider before you act
- ✓ Barriers to big picture thinking
- ✓ Inspiring big picture thinking in others
- ✓ What you can do when people get bogged down in the details



1. Look beyond library processes to community results


Observe and learn



- Patterns of library use over time
- What people do after they come in contact with your services
- How specific services connect to the library's stated mission

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Seeing the Big Picture



Visualize before you act

- What difference you want to make to the people you serve – the “big why”
- How this action moves you in that direction
- How you will evaluate progress
- What else you can try if this doesn’t get you there

Don't stop at "If we're happy, they'll benefit."



Don't overlook the need for a shared vision

2. Look beyond your immediate team to your stakeholders



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Internal stakeholders

- Other library departments
- Union
- Board, friends, foundation
- Library users



External stakeholders

- Elected officials
- Other city/county/campus departments
- Partner agencies (current and potential)
- Vendors
- Neighbors
- Non-users
- Media




Observe and learn



- Different groups' stated priorities
- Their patterns of action
- Their preferred vocabulary
- What gets them excited
- What they do well
- Where their authority begins and ends

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Seeing the Big Picture




Visualize before you act


- Who will be affected by your action
- How your work aligns with their interests
- How your path might be smoothed by bringing them into the process
- Questions they'll have, and how you'll answer

Don't stop at "They don't get it."

Don't overlook the people you don't usually see



3. Look beyond situations to causes and consequences



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Seeing the Big Picture

Observe and learn



- How workload, information, and decisions move through your organization
- Who's responsible for what
- How failures happened, and what was learned
- Triggers for conflict or resistance

Visualize before you act



- What problem you're trying to solve
- Who else is having the same or a related problem
- How your action will eliminate the problem, not just move it elsewhere

Don't stop at "They need to change."

Don't overlook preventive measures



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Seeing the Big Picture

4. Look beyond out-of-pocket expenses to actual costs and benefits



Observe and learn



- Which tasks take the most staff time
- Which projects take the most calendar time
- Which specialized resources are already stretched too thin
- Steps and deadlines in annual budget and grant cycles

Visualize before you act



- The service payoff for taking this action
- The strategic payoff for taking this action
- How important this is, compared to what you're already doing
- What it would cost to take a new approach instead of struggling to fix the one you have


Don't stop at "Without new resources we can't do anything."

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Seeing the Big Picture






Observe and learn 

- The basics of relevant laws
- The basics of relevant contracts
- Library policies
- City/county/campus policies
- Long standing arrangements and traditions
- Go-to resource people on these topics

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Seeing the Big Picture



Visualize before you act

- What this action says about the library and its priorities
- How this action aligns with the library's existing commitments
- Where higher level permissions or negotiations might be required

Don't stop at "It's management's job to worry about that."

Don't overlook the need to prep your boss





6. Look beyond today to the future

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Seeing the Big Picture

Observe and learn



- How the community you serve is changing
- Where demand is increasing, and whether you have the capacity to respond
- Where demand is decreasing, and how you might scale back to make room for new priorities
- Trends and fresh practices in customer service, technology, and collection development

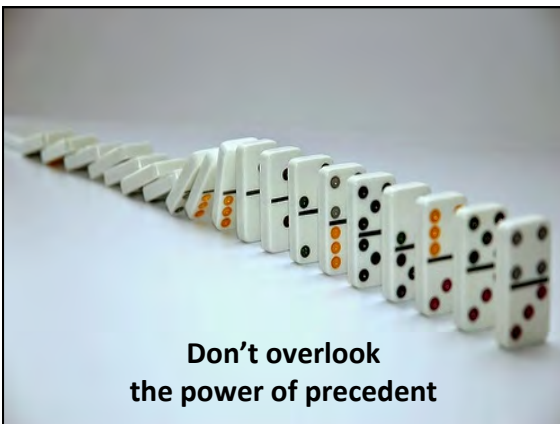
Visualize before you act



- Likelihood that the library will be dealing with this (or a similar) situation again in 10 minutes, 10 days, 10 months, or 10 years
- How you'll cope if your action is a roaring success and you don't get any new resources
- How you can package this work for others to use

Don't stop at "I just need to get (person or group) off my back."

Don't overlook the power of precedent



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Seeing the Big Picture


Barriers to big picture thinking

- Perfectionism
- Procrastination
- Pessimism
- Fear of conflict
- Complacency




To inspire big picture thinking in others, communicate

- Fit
- Trust
- Caring
- Openness
- Development
- Ownership



If you get bogged down in the details

1. Acknowledge – *“Good point”*
2. Step back – *“I’d like to look at that in context for a minute”*
3. Visualize (start with one of the points outlined in previous slides)
4. Reframe – *“In light of what we just discussed, how can we...”*
5. Repeat as necessary



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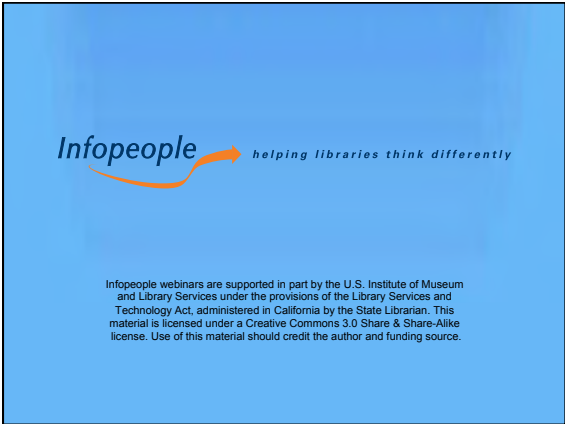






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