

Library plan needs ?measurables?

I was at the library this week and read the Aurora Public Library's Strategic Plan for 2017 to 2021. I was quite impressed with the child-like nature of the presentation.

Unlike a strategic plan used in business, there were no measurables/metrics in the plan. So, in five years, how does the Aurora Public Library expect to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the ?plan?? The answer is the library can't measure it, so they can always claim that they are meeting or exceeding the plan.

While words like ?inclusiveness?, ?innovation? and ?accountability? are great buzz words if they were writing a high-school essay, the plan showed no concrete examples as to how these grandiose claims can be realized. Nor, is there any allusion to the successes or failures from the Strategic Plan in 2010 to 2015. (What happened to 2016? I certainly hope that they didn't waste a whole year on this fiction)

For example, the statement that the library will ?utilize social media activity to engage new segments of the community? is as broad a statement as you can get.

Where are the tangible goals? What about engaging patrons in weekly Twitter chats through hashtags, holding contests for Book Face Friday on Instagram, or hosting live events on Periscope or Facebook Live?

I realize that a publicly funded institution like a library does not have the same requirements as private industry; however, I can state without equivocation that this plan would have received a failing grade in any first-year university business course. While it may be full of prose and is formatted with pretty icons, and reflects a diverse community including women, children, persons of colour, this is negated by its lack of depth and substance.

Everything cited is ?warm and fuzzy? that no one would object to. What is really fuzzy is the thinking of the ?planners? who created this trite verbiage on four colour stationery.

I encourage Aurorans to read the document and decide for themselves if they find it to be a suitable blueprint for the coming years. It is available in-person at the library, or for download on its website.

Should you wish to contact members of the Strategic Planning Committee with your thoughts, I wish you luck, since this strategic plan and the library's website, do not supply any contact information. One can assume that they do not want to be contacted.

And in the case of this strategic plan, they are justified in not wanting to be held accountable.

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