Librarian as the Candidate

Montana Library Association Conference

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Session Outcomes

- Understand Librarian as the Candidate
- Win them over
- Develop messaging that works
VOTE LIBRARIES
The Toolbox of Our Community
Voter Data that Frames Our Discussion

“From Awareness to Funding” says…
Voter Attitudes

Nationwide, of all voters:

37% will Definitely vote yes for the library
37% will Probably vote yes for the library

26% will Probably or definitely vote no or may vote either way.
Library Use Does Not Matter

A voter’s willingness to support increased library funding is not driven, or limited, by library use.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-2
Library as Transformative Force

[T]he library is not perceived as just a provider of practical answers and information; the most committed supporters hold the belief that the library is a transformational force.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4
Attitude - Not Demographics

The factors that determine residents’ willingness to increase their taxes to support their local library are their perceptions and attitudes about the library and the librarian.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-3
Perception of the Librarian(s)

[Voters] recognize the value of a ‘passionate librarian’ as a true advocate for lifelong learning.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4
What Activates Voters for the Library?

#1 - Nothing Impacts Voter Behavior More than their Perception of the Librarian and the Library as Institution.

#2 - Awareness that there is a Measure on the ballot.
What Activates Voters for the Library?

The Librarian is the “Candidate”

The Library is the “Incumbent”

Library = Librarians + Community
You Are the Candidate
Thanks for Running
The Big Question for Libraries

How do we talk to people who may not support the library?

or

How do we talk to people who may not know what the library can provide?
Messaging that Works
Guiding Principle: The Haycock Rule
Message Box

Small Group Work
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we say about ourselves.</th>
<th>What we say about them.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What they say about us.</td>
<td>What they are saying about themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Message Box - Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we say about ourselves.</th>
<th>What we say about them.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarians can help you find the right answer.</td>
<td>Digital residents aren’t using the library.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What they say about us.</th>
<th>What they are saying about themselves.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who needs the library when you have the Internet?</td>
<td>I go with the first result in Google because that is the most popular one.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
27 Words
9 Seconds
3 Points
How to Win Them Over
You are judged in the first 30 seconds
Your Attitude Matters

- Smile
- Be positive
- Friendly
Physical and Verbal Cues
Before you walk in
What Do We Do Now?
Meeting: Assignment

Messaging

- Use the Message Box to get started
- Use 27-9-3 as your script
- The invite email is your first message
What do you need?
Thank You

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