

SAMPLE 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE AD HOC PLANNING COMMITTEE

TRILLIUM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

BY-LAW

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

(Ad hoc)

This **ad hoc planning committee** was established by motion 93-12 of the library board at its meeting on August 24, 1993. The formation of this committee is in direct response to a request for a needs assessment of the Trillium community. Section 20 of the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P. 44* specifically identifies the need for the library board to be responsive to community needs and we wish to ensure that our library service reflects the community's unique needs.

Purpose

The purpose of the Planning Committee is to facilitate a community needs assessment study within the next two years. A needs assessment will provide the basis for long-term planning and budgeting. The information obtained from a needs assessment can provide the critical basis for upcoming decisions which need to be made about library services in the Town of Trillium.

Resources

The committee has the support of the entire Library Board and the staff of the Trillium Public Library. The CEO, a member of the committee, will act as the project manager ensuring that the necessary data is collected and analyzed. Up to twenty per cent of her time can be spent on the work of the committee.

Membership

The membership shall consist of two board representatives, one appointed as chairperson of the committee, two staff representatives, including the chief executive officer, and at least two members from the community-at-large.

Specific duties and reporting schedule

1. Draft terms of reference for the community needs assessment study for review by the board at its regular meeting on November 26, 1993.
2. Prepare an outline of the process to be used for the study (December 1993).
3. Arrange for a community needs assessment to be done (January to March 1994).
4. Draft surveys as needed (January to March 1994).
5. Final report to be prepared by June 1994.

Approved 93-40

SAMPLE 2

SURVEY INFORMATION

Sample size *

You have to decide the degree of confidence you wish to have in the results; this in turn depends on the over-all size of the group you are sampling.

Diagram Six indicates the minimum size of sample needed to represent the over-all group to a degree of confidence of 1 percent, 5 percent and 10 percent respectively. This table also assumes the answers given by the sample are accurate within 5 percent.

The issue of sampling is further discussed in Appendix A.

(Editor's note: Appendix A of *Assessing Your Community for Library Planning* is reprinted in this *Sourcebook*. It can be found two pages over.)

Definitions for Diagram 6:

Population: number of people overall for whom data is needed.

Confidence level: number of responses needed to ensure that the data received represents the overall population accurately to within 1%, 5%, 10% probability.

Variation in sample results: the assumption is made that the results will be accurate within 5 percent.

* The information on this page and the next is taken from pages 20 - 21 of *Assessing Your Community for Library Planning*. Published by the Ministry of Culture and Communications, 1987.

SAMPLE 2

SURVEY INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

Diagram 6

Calculation of minimum required sample size

Population size	Confidence level		
	1%	5%	10%
10	10	10	9
25	25	24	20
50	50	44	33
100	99	80	50
200	196	133	67
300	291	171	75
400	385	200	80
500	476	222	83
600	566	240	86
700	654	255	88
800	741	267	89
900	826	277	90
1,000	909	286	91
2,000	1,667	333	91
3,000	2,308	353	96
4,000	2,857	364	96
5,000	3,333	370	96
6,000	3,750	375	96
7,000	4,118	378	96
8,000	4,444	381	96
9,000	4,737	383	96
10,000	5,000	384	96
20,000	6,667	384	96
30,000	7,500	384	96
40,000	8,000	384	96
50,000	8,333	384	96
60,000	8,571	384	96
70,000	8,750	384	96
80,000	8,888	384	96
90,000	9,000	384	96
100,000	9,091	384	96
200,000	9,524	384	96
300,000	9,604	384	96
400,000	9,604	384	96
500,000	9,604	384	96

SAMPLE 2

SURVEY INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

APPENDIX A: SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRES *

When planning a survey/questionnaire, it is important that you choose a sample that is the most appropriate size and type. If your sample is too small, then your results can be attacked on the grounds that they are not sufficiently representative of the population. This will be even more so if the range of answers to a question is broad. If, on the other hand, your sample size is too large, then you have spent time and money needlessly on collecting data that you do not require. Further, if your sample consists of a group of people whose characteristics are significantly different from those of the population at large, then, again, you can be accused of producing non-representative statistics.

If possible, make sure that persons who fall under the special services categories can fill out the survey. If not, ensure that their needs are assessed through interviews, focus groups and public meetings.

SAMPLE RESULTS

One of the first things you need to determine is how wide a range of variation you can tolerate in your sample results. Can you live with a result that tells you what you want to know within plus or minus 10 percent? Or do you need to be more specific, and be certain that the information is correct within a plus or minus 5 percent interval? Your needs might be very demanding, requiring results accurate within a plus or minus 1 percent interval. For most purposes, a plus or minus 5 percent interval is the acceptable norm.

Example:

If you ask five individuals a question, the average of the answers you get will be less certain of representing the views of any one individual than if you ask 20 individuals the same questions and calculate the average. That is, the influence of the answer of one individual will be much greater in a sample of five than it will be in a sample of 20.

REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE GENERAL POPULATION

You need to decide the degree to which the results of the survey represent the community. Do you need to be 100 percent certain? If so, you have to interview everybody, which would be a formidable task in a community of 50,000. Can you get by being only 95 percent certain that the sample represents the general population? Is 90 percent confidence tolerable? For most purposes, 95 percent is an acceptable norm.

* The information on this page and the next two is taken from pages 27 - 28 of *Assessing Your Community for Library Planning*. Published by the Ministry of Culture and Communications, 1987.

SAMPLE 2

SURVEY INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

Example:

If you ask 10 individuals in a population of 1,000 what they think, their averaged answers will be far less representative of the total population than if you took the averaged answers from 100 individuals.

Once you have thought out these factors, it is possible to calculate the sample size you require using a relatively complex mathematical formula. Diagram Six in the manual indicates the sample size required for different levels of confidence in the sample data, for a 95 percent representativeness of the community.

Note that as the population size increases, the required sample size decreases as a proportion of the population. This effect allows you to be statistically representative and accurate for large populations with relatively small sample sizes. For example, a sample size of about 400 permits accuracy to within plus or minus 5 percent, representing the parent population 95 percent of the time, for very large population sizes.

QUALITY OF THE SAMPLE

It is no use choosing a sample that appears to give you sufficient narrowness in the range of results, and sufficient quantitative representativeness of the general population, if in fact the kind of people you are sampling are not the same kind of people as the general population. You need to choose your sample so that it is random. If you do, it is very likely that your sample will have the characteristics of the general population. You should also build in questions that enable you to check whether or not you have been successful.

Example:

If your survey is answered largely by teenagers, it is not likely to represent the views of a population whose composition has a much smaller percentage of teenagers than exists in the sample. The factors you should watch for will very much depend on the kinds of questions you are asking, and the impact that decisions made as a result of the survey will have on the population. The most common factors to watch out for are: age, sex, education level, home ownership versus tenancy, marital or equivalent living status, children living at home (and their ages).

SAMPLE 2

SURVEY INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

WATCH OUT FOR BIAS!

“Bias” occurs when the sample you select does not truly represent the characteristics of the people you are surveying. This can seriously distort the results of your survey, and therefore the planning-related conclusions you draw from the data.

Below we indicate the major types of bias, and what you should be watching for to avoid getting into these “traps”.

Non-response bias

Non-response bias occurs when the people who choose to answer your survey are different from the general population. For example, if you were doing a mail questionnaire, only avid library users might take the trouble to respond. This would give you a non-response bias because you would have no information about the non-users. A better approach might be to do a telephone survey, where most people called, library users or not, will give you answers.

Selection bias

This is another type of bias that may be encountered as a result of how you select people to respond to your survey. In the example above, only households with telephones were eligible to respond to the survey. If there were many households in the community without telephones, then clearly the survey would not be representative (it probably would not contain information about lower-income groups in the community). The classic example of this type of bias is the young man doing “man on the street interviews”, who surveys only pretty young girls. You must design your survey to minimize selection bias.

Response bias

This occurs when the respondent’s answer and the “true” answers are not the same. For example, threatening or uncomfortable questions (e.g., about the respondents’ income or age) can produce response bias. Also, if the questions are unclear or ambiguous, this type of bias can result. For example, the question “What is the length of your residence in Canada?”, can produce answers like “25 feet” when really what you want to know is how long the person has been living in Canada. To minimize response bias, make sure that you pretest the questionnaire thoroughly.

SAMPLE 3

MISSION STATEMENT

Trillium Public Library

Mission Statement

The mission of the Trillium Public Library is to provide individual learners with access to the resources of information or experiences which they find relevant to the changes, choices and decisions of their lives.

We believe that our library must meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of our community. We attempt to do this by providing access to an organized collection incorporating both print and non-print materials.

We attempt to provide access to current information as well as the ideas, thoughts, and opinions of the past. The library is a place for lifelong learning.

We also recognize the need to co-operate with other libraries in networks, now and in the future, to share resources to provide the best possible service to our patrons.

We also intend to carry on an active role in making the community aware of resources, and the service we have to offer.

SAMPLE 4

ROLE SELECTION PROCESS

Service Roles*

In preparing this long-range plan the Library Board discussed the eight possible library service roles outlined in *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries*. These conceptual service roles were developed to assist in planning and priority setting. They are not definitions of this or any public library's actual service programme. A brief summary of the roles is provided in Figure 1. A more extensive description of each of the service roles is contained in Appendix C.

(Editor's note: Figure 1 and Appendix C of the Newcastle report have not been included since the information in Figure 1 can also be found on page 13 of this *Sourcebook*.)

Members of the Board discussed each of the eight roles and used the point allocation technique outlined in the planning guide to select and prioritize appropriate roles for the Newcastle Public Library. Throughout this process, the Board was aware that it was absolutely necessary to select some areas for development and identify some areas for non-development.

Note even a large, well-funded library system can accomplish all eight roles with any degree of excellence. The serious resource inadequacies of the Newcastle Library outlined in the previous section make it imperative that the Library tightly focus those resources it has. High quality service in any area at all requires identifying those aspects of service which are to receive priority.

The Library Board chose four roles which will receive priority for the Library's effort and its resource allocation over the next five years. These roles, in order of priority, are:

- Community Information Centre
- Popular Materials Library
- Reference Library
- Independent Life-Long Learning Centre.

* The information in Sample 4 is taken from pages 8 to 15 and 17 of *Building the Network: A Plan for the Newcastle Public Library, 1992 - 1996*. Town of Bowmanville: Town of Newcastle Public Library Board, 1992.

SAMPLE 4

ROLE SELECTION PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Two additional roles have been selected as lesser priority roles. These will be maintained but strengthened only as opportunities and resources allow over the next five years. These roles, in order of importance, are:

- Preschooler's Door to Learning
- Formal Education Support Centre.

Finally, two possible roles have been rejected as inappropriate for the Newcastle Library during this five-year phase in its development. Currently allocated resources will be re-directed where possible and no new initiatives or new resource allocations will be made. These roles are:

- Community Activity Centre
- Research Centre.

Exposition of the Mission and Role Choices

Citizens increasingly recognize that they require information to cope successfully with the daily decisions of both their work and personal lives. The Library facilitates effective contact between its users and resources of expression, experience, inspiration and knowledge which meet their individual requirements.

Newcastle's 'Network' Library will be organized, both internally and through its relationships with other institutions both inside and external to the Town, to take full advantage of available resources, minimize duplication of effort within the municipality and maximize access to a broad range of information resources beyond its own collections. In pursuing its selected roles the Newcastle Library will look for those key opportunities where roles overlap and where modest investment in service improvement can provide the greatest possible returns for library users.

The choice of **Community Information Centre** as the first priority role may seem surprising at first. The Board is very much aware, however, of the extent of population change which is expected for the municipality in the next five to ten years. The number of residents will increase rapidly and the newcomer residents will have a primarily urban orientation. Traditional methods of accessing information about the community will not be adequate as change accelerates. Asking a neighbour for advice on nursery school options for your children simply doesn't work well when your neighbours moved in just weeks before you. The Newcastle Library can make a valuable and positive contribution to the Town's development by acting as a broker or clearing-house for information about the people, clubs, agencies, events and resources that make up the community of communities that is the Town of Newcastle.

SAMPLE 4

ROLE SELECTION PROCESS (CONTINUED)

The Newcastle Public Library will work as the hub of an information access network for residents of the municipality. As a community information centre the Library will organize or create some information files in-house. In addition, the Library expects that other nodes of the information network (organizations and agencies) will also be information creators. The Library will strive to put its information distribution and delivery strengths into full service for the municipality in its role of broker or network hub, making all public information easily accessible both to the public at large and to all of the nodes in the network.

The role of **Popular Materials Library** commits the Newcastle Library to providing the collection resources which its card-holders wish to use. This means an up-to-date high-turnover collection, selected for current use rather than a long-term book preservation warehouse. Popular materials include both the fiction best-sellers which most would expect and the persistent non-fiction 'hot topics' such as resume preparation manuals and home improvement guides.

The Newcastle Library has been slowly growing over the past few years into a Library which provides basic reference service. Selection of the role of **Reference Library** means that the Board has chosen to continue this process. The Library will continue to look for appropriate ways to increase its capabilities in providing timely, accurate and useful information to residents.

Selection of the role of **Independent Life-Long Learning Centre** reflects the expectation that personal knowledge development will continue to grow in importance in the lives of many Newcastle citizens. In some circumstances, learners will choose to undertake a formal course of instruction. In other circumstances, learners will choose to create their own 'course' with the Library's assistance and accept that the only examination necessary is whether they can successfully apply new knowledge in the way they wish to do so in either their work or personal lives.

A major aspect of the Library's interpretation of this service role is to foster the basic, essential tool for life-long learning -- literacy. Given its resource constraints, the Library will direct efforts toward support of literacy activities within the family setting. For this planning cycle, the Library will target both preschool and older children but not adults. The Library is aware that a significant contribution to the future social and economic well-being of the municipality can be made through efforts to ensure that every child can read and every child experiences the empowerment of reading.

SAMPLE 4

ROLE SELECTION PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Two roles not selected for development in this planning period require some comment. The **Preschoolers' Door to Learning** role is a demanding one which focuses service on parents and on outreach to other agencies serving preschoolers. While the Newcastle Library cannot undertake such a narrowly specialized role at this time, it fully expects to serve the needs of preschoolers directly through the four roles that have been selected for development. In many ways, the reading readiness and reading enjoyment aspects of this role have been subsumed into the Library's interpretation of the Independent Life-Long Learning Centre role. As library users, preschoolers are simply our youngest independent learners.

The role of **Formal Education Support Centre** will also not be pursued. Resource material support for curriculum needs is the responsibility of the two school boards through school libraries or of academic libraries in the case of college and university courses. The very limited resources of the Newcastle Library for this five-year plan will be directed to roles where the Library has sole responsibility for meeting user needs. The only exception to not investing Library resources in this role would be in areas where the Newcastle Library can assist in broadening the implementation by either or both school boards of the principles outlined in *Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum*.¹

1. Ontario. Ministry of Education. *Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum*. (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education, 1982).

SAMPLE 4

ROLE SELECTION PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Table 1

ROLE PRIORITIES FOR NEWCASTLE'S 'NETWORK' LIBRARY

	Library System Network	Main Branch	Area Branch	Community Access Branch
Community Activities Centre	x	x	x	X
Community Information Centre	33	33	3	x
Formal Education Support Centre	x	x	x	X
Independent Life-Long Learning Centre	3	33	3	3
Popular Materials Library	33	3	33	33
Preschoolers' Door to Learning	x	x	x	X
Reference Library	3	33	3	3
Research Centre	X	X	X	X

33 = Primary Priority - to receive most of the organization's effort

3 = Secondary Priority - to receive only a modest share of the organization's development effort

x = Non-priority - to be maintained, if possible, without investing additional resources; no new initiatives

X = No activity - no new initiatives; current efforts to be phased out