

# THE PATRON EXPERIENCE PROJECT

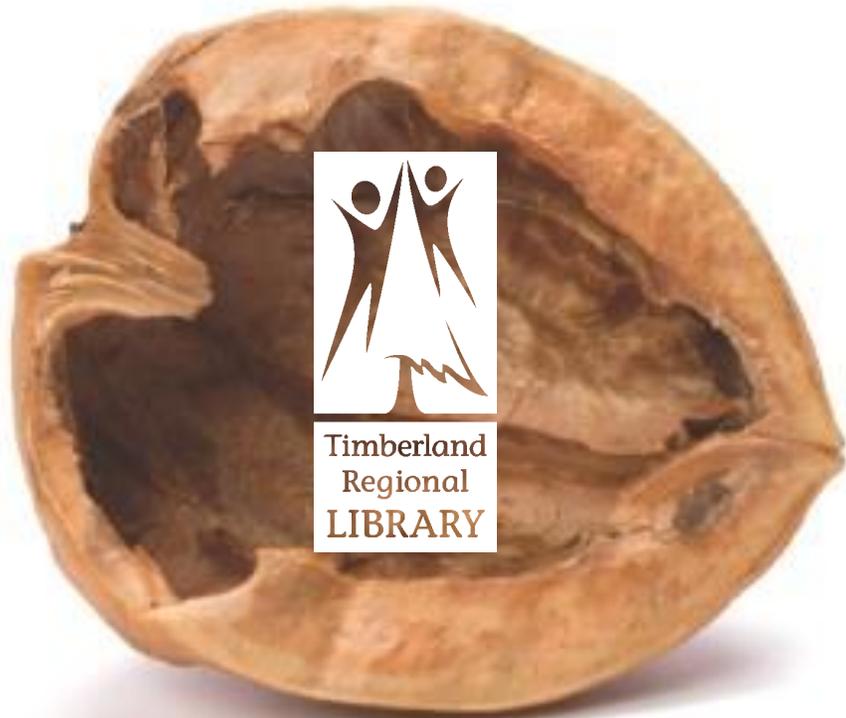
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Experience one library's Patron Experience Project pilot from beginning to end with all the successes, hiccups, and lessons learned along the way. From assessment to decluttering and reorganization, participants will be led through the process of assessing a library's appearance and functionality based on the user perspective, with emphasis on collaboration, flexibility, project planning, and patron input. Things were accomplished; there are pictures to prove it!

Experience one library's Patron Experience Project pilot from beginning to end with all the successes, hiccups, and lessons learned along the way. From assessment to decluttering and reorganization, participants will be led through the process of assessing a library's appearance and functionality based on the user perspective, with emphasis on collaboration, flexibility, project planning, and patron input. Things were accomplished; there are pictures to prove it!



- 5 county service area
- 7,000 square miles
- 500,000+ residents
- 27 branches
- ~320 employees
- Hierarchical management structure



**DISTRICT MANAGER,  
INNOVATION & UX**

# THE QUESTION









Large Print

Nonfiction

Nonfiction

Videos

EXIT

Teen Books

Spinner Paper  
No due date.  
Return when finish.

Holds Español  
← →

Information

Internet  
Computers

BINDERS  
RECORDS REFERENCE CENTER

please  
take one!

WI

WI

balloons!  
do the word...

TEEN  
SPACE







No  
Loitering / Camping  
on  
Library Grounds

2  
HOUR  
LIBRARY  
PARKING  
ONLY  
←

NO  
PARKING  
LOADING  
ZONE  
TRUCKS ONLY  
30 MIN. LIMIT  
6AM-6PM

Olympia Timberland  
Library

EXIT ONLY

EXIT ONLY





# THE PLAN













# THE CHALLENGES

## COMPANY CULTURE

How do we shift the  
thinking of an  
entire organization?

**CHANGE  
IS GOOD.**

**You go  
first!**

# PATRON FEEDBACK

How do we get the  
information that we  
need?



# FUNDING

How can we do more  
with less?



# DISASTERS

How do we retain  
focus in the midst of  
chaos?



# THE DISCOVERIES

COMPANY  
CULTURE

Slow

Persistent

Repetitive

**CHANGE  
IS GOOD.**

**You go  
first!**

# PATRON FEEDBACK

Offer alternatives  
and don't expect them  
to be experts.



# SHELTON



## Timberland Library

### Shelton Timberland Library

@SheltonTimberlandLibrary

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Reviews

Goodreads

Notes

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Send Message

#### HELP US OUT!

We are looking at how our patrons use the library, and how everything we have here either helps or hinders you making the most out the facility and what it has to offer. So starting next Monday, we will be asking a bunch of questions, one a week, to find out what you think. What do you like; what do you hate? We need to know.

In the meantime, tell us one thing you don't like about how the library is set up, or how it looks, or how the building works. What could be better or should be different?



Like

Comment

4.8 ★★★★★

Open Now



ABOUT SHELTON TIMBERLAND LIBRARY

#### Not your grandpa's library

Everybody thinks they know what a library is all about, but unless you know about the magic shows, o...

See More

#### Community

See All

1,571 people like this

1,532 people follow this

#### About

See All

# FUNDING

A little help, please?



# DISASTERS

Don't create your own  
unnecessary chaos!





# Timberland Regional Library

## Phase I: Patron Experience Audit

### Step I: Patron Experience Assessment

It is essential to look at your building (or a building you are assessing for a co-worker) with fresh eyes. It is also essential to have several sets of eyes when completing an assessment. Remember that we are looking at the building as if we were a new patron. As you complete the assessment make sure to walk around the building and examine it from several angles. More than one walk through is recommended as you will become more comfortable with what initially feels like a negative and punitive process.

**Note:** When you are completing an assessment for another building it is important to remember that this exercise is a tool for improvement and not a means to criticize. Be radically candid but consider the language you use when describing problem areas.

#### Thoughts When Assessing Focus Areas:

- 1. Appearance.** This category focuses on the overall visual appeal of the building. Consider how well all of the elements in the building work together.
- 2. Building Entrances.** This category focuses on the initial access points to the building. There may be multiple entrances in the library building you are assessing. Each one should be assessed separately.
- 3. Collection.** This category focuses on the physical collection in each building. This includes books, audiobooks, music, magazines, and newspapers.
- 4. Decorations.** This category includes decorative items in the library and encompasses framed and unframed artwork, plants, and statuary.
- 5. Displays.** This category includes staff-created displays, both book displays and interactive or artistic displays.
- 6. Equipment & Furniture.** This category includes, but is not limited to, equipment such as printers, copiers, microfilm machines, computers, and laminators. It also includes furniture such as chairs, computer cubicles, tables, stools, and shelving.
- 7. Layout.** This category includes the placement and grouping of shelving and furniture, pathways through the building, and consideration of access to equipment and collections in all areas of the library.
- 8. Service Desk(s).** This category includes customer service desks in the main library spaces.

9. **Signage & Advertisements.** This category includes area location and wayfinding signage, brochures, and flyers. This includes signs that are created by the Communications department, building staff, Friends groups, and outside organizations.
10. **Staff Storage & Workspaces** This category includes any area in which staff store items and spaces for staff work including the spaces behind service desks, office spaces, and processing areas for circulation tasks.

### Tools:

1. [Patron Experience Assessment Worksheets](#) (Library Staff)
2. [Patrons Experience Assessment Worksheets](#) (Non-staff)
3. Building floorplans for comments/measurements

## Step II: Declutter the Library

### Guidelines for Decluttering:

1. **Appearance.** Pick up litter and miscellaneous items that do not belong in public spaces. Develop a schedule for regular pickup and maintenance. Follow the 5s system.
2. **Building Entrances.** Remove flyers from windows and doorways other than the required messaging.
3. **Collection.** Neat shelves with covers visible. Multiple copies of circulating items—clear out the items that don't circulate. No items on the bottom shelf. The collection main be in need of an assessment by Collections Services staff. Make use of this resource.
4. **Decorations.** Pick the paintings and photographs that will remain in the building. Consider reframing them for a consistent look. Remove extraneous plants. Make sure all other plants are potted properly and will not leak and damage surrounding items.
5. **Displays.** Designate an area to post flyers and make sure to spotlight one-off programs/offerings. If your library has a regular and established storytime you probably don't need to feature that program. Designate a limited number of display areas. Remove tired-looking displays. Consider the amount of staff time devoted to creating and maintaining displays. Keep in mind that overwhelming book displays actually inhibit patron checkouts from the display.
6. **Equipment & Furniture.** Tag items that are broken or dirty. Coloring coding helps to establish what is being tossed. Use colored dots to designate what is leaving and what needs cleaning or further attention. It's better to do without that piece of furniture that is broken or disgusting than expect patrons to use that item. Refer to the [Surplus FAQs](#) for guidance.

7. **Layout.** Not needed at this time.
8. **Service Desks.** Follow the 5s system.
9. **Signage & Advertisements.**
10. **Staff Storage & Workspaces.** Follow the 5s system.

**Tools:**

1. [Declutter and Reorganization Guidelines \(5s\)](#)
2. [Surplus FAQs](#)
3. **Exercises from:**
  - a. **Putting the User First: 30 Strategies for Transforming Library Services**
  - b. **UX Workgroup**

### Step III: Patron Experience Reassessment

This time with feeling! This is an iterative process that benefits from several rounds of reassessment. Once items have been moved or removed other areas in need of attention will make themselves known.

**Tools:**

1. [Patron Experience Assessment Worksheets](#) (Library Staff)
2. [Patron Experience Assessment Worksheets](#) (Non-staff)
3. Building floorplans for comments/measurements

### Step IV: Review of the Patron Experience Audit Process

Now it's your turn!

**Tools:**

1. [Patron Experience Audit Process Review Worksheet](#)

# Patron Experience Assessment

Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## PUBLIC WORKSHEETS

<b>Building Appearance &amp; Layout</b>			
• How do you feel when you enter the library?			
• Did you find the library entrance easily?			
• Did the doors open easily (could a child or person with disabilities open them)?			
• Are the bathrooms in good condition (would you want to use them)?			
• How do you feel as you walk around the library?			
• Are pathways clear and open?			
• Is the library clean and in good condition (holes in walls, carpet worn or dirty)?			
• Is the lighting in the library adequate?			

Comments:

<b>Furniture, Shelving &amp; Equipment</b>			
• Does the furniture in the library have an organized feel?			
• Is the furniture in good condition (broken, chipped, torn, worn, obvious repairs)?			
• Is the furniture clean and presentable (feels greasy, stained, smells unusual)?			
• Is the shelving in good shape (any dents, scratches, old, tape residue)?			
• Can you get to all of the books and materials on shelves or are they blocked?			
• Does the customer service desk feel approachable?			

Comments:

<b>Signage, Displays &amp; Decorations</b>			
• Does the signage help you find your way around the building?			
• Is the signage professional and in good shape?			
• Are there temporary paper signs?			
• Is the signage consistent throughout the building (same size, fonts, colors)?			
• Are the flyers attractive and useful (too many, overwhelming, out-of-date)?			
• Do the displays encourage you explore and to check items out?			
• Are decorations clean and presentable (old, frayed posters, dusty mobiles)?			

Comments:

# Patron Experience Assessment

Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## STAFF WORKSHEETS

### Building Appearance & Layout

#### Entrances (includes doors, windows, hallways)



- Is the library entryway obvious from the street?
- Do the doors work properly? (could a child open it, ADA access)
- How do you feel when you enter the library?
- Are the windows clean and unmarked?
- Is the paint/siding unmarked?

Other comments:

#### Library Interior



- Is the library clean?
- Is the library in in good condition (holes in walls, carpet worn or dirty)?
- How do you feel as you walk around the library?
- Is the lighting in the library adequate?
- Are the bathrooms in good condition (would you be happy to use them)?

Other comments:

#### Layout/floorplan



- Are pathways clear and open?
- Does the library have obvious teen and children's areas?
- 
- 
- 

Other comments:

# Patron Experience Assessment

Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## STAFF WORKSHEETS

### Furniture, Shelving & Equipment

#### Furniture



- Does the furniture in the library have a cohesive feel?
- Is the furniture in good condition (broken, chipped, torn, worn, obvious repairs)?
- Is the furniture clean and presentable (feels greasy, stained, smells unusual)?
- Is the purpose of existing furniture clear (random tables, one chair by itself)?
- 

Other comments:

#### Shelving



- Does the shelving in the library match?
- Is the shelving in good shape (dents, scratches, old, tape residue)?
- Is the collection accessible (overfull shelves, books on bottom shelf, narrow aisles, items stored that require a special process for access)?
- 

Other comments:

#### Equipment (printers, computers, microfiche machines)



- Does available equipment appear to be used regularly (dust, out of order signs, inaccessible)?
- Do patrons have what they need (waiting lines for computers)?
- 
- 
- 

Other comments:

# Patron Experience Assessment

Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## STAFF WORKSHEETS

### Signage, Displays & Decorations

#### Signage (program flyers, wayfinding, instructions)



- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| • Is the signage professional and in good shape?                                    |  |  |  |
| • Are there temporary paper signs?  |  |  |  |
| • Is the signage consistent throughout the building (same size, fonts, colors)?     |  |  |  |
| • Are signs helpful and accurate?   |  |  |  |
| • Are the flyers present targeted and useful (too many, overwhelming, out-of-date)? |  |  |  |

Other comments:

#### Displays



- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| • Do the displays present add value to the library (purposeful, overwhelming)?  |  |  |  |
| • Do the displays encourage browsing and checkout?                              |  |  |  |
| • Are the displays visually appealing (torn books, old resources, empty spots)? |  |  |  |
| •   |  |  |  |
| •   |  |  |  |

Other comments:

#### Decorations (plants, artwork, statuary)



- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| • Do the decorative items endanger or block the collection (unprotected plants on top of bookshelves, large plants in front of bookshelves)? |  |  |  |
| • Do decorations enhance the public space?   |  |  |  |
| • Do decorations have a cohesive look (similarly framed photos/paintings)?   |  |  |  |
| • Are decorations clean and presentable (old, frayed posters, dusty mobiles)?  |  |  |  |

Other comments:

# Patron Experience Assessment

Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## STAFF WORKSHEETS

### Staff Spaces

#### Service Desks



- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Other comments:

#### Storage



- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Other comments:

#### Offices



- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Other comments: