A Seat at the Table

Working with Local Responders

Tool Kit

Tennessee State Library and Archives

April 2017
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Class Notes
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Agenda

➤ Needs of the general public
➤ Needs of first responders
➤ Roles of libraries
➤ Business Continuity
➤ Partnerships, collaboration and politics

Learning Objectives

➤ Identify and understand the roles played by governments and other entities in disasters.
➤ Recognize library roles that are valuable in disaster response.
➤ Develop relationships that will secure a “seat at the table.”
➤ Utilize relevant, impactful, situationally-appropriate, 21st Century language.

“If we really want to have effective partnerships and make a difference in our communities we have to be part of the decision-making process within those communities.”

-- Sarah Ann Long, ALA President, 1999-2000
(McCook, p. ix, forward)

Why does this matter?

➤ Why is this class important?
➤ What is in it for the library?
➤ How will I know if I’ve been successful?
➤ What goals should I set for my involvement?
Setting the Stage

➤ What is meant by “the table”? What table?
➤ For public libraries?
➤ Who is already at the table?
➤ Why are they at the table?
➤ Why is it important for you, as a librarian, to get a seat at the table?
➤ What is the librarian’s role once at the table?
➤ What is accomplished for the library by being at the table?
➤ How can you show that you have a place at the table?
➤ Who are community partners?
➤ How can you add value to what they do?
➤ What might some barriers be to getting a seat at the table?
➤ How might these barriers be overcome?

Four Phases of a Disaster

Using FEMA and Library Language

➤ Prevention
➤ Planning & risk analysis
➤ Response
➤ Recovery

“How nearly 1 in 5 businesses suffer a major disaster every year. No...business...can ever be fully removed from the effects of a disaster.”

--Shaw, 2006

Four Phases of a Disaster

Using Business Language

➤ Identify stakeholders and Organizational Resources
➤ Identify hazards and assess risk
➤ Develop mitigation plan
➤ Adopt / implement the plan
IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

➢ Regardless of the terminology used by the different sectors, it is clear that these four phases are of critical importance for any organization to be able to achieve business continuity during and after a disaster.

➢ Of equal importance is the ability of those seeking “a seat at the table” to be able to communicate with, and at the very least understand, the language of business and governmental sectors where, in some instances, libraries are not considered essential.

Library / Federal / State / Local Roles

➢ Pre-Internet
➢ In each of the 4 phases

“Libraries are not essential services”

—FEMA, Cameron Parish, Louisiana, 2005

Library Roles

➢ Post-Internet
➢ In each of the 4 Phases

Vulnerabilities

➢ What are some of the vulnerabilities for a library when it comes to natural disasters, man-made disasters, unexpected events, an active shooter, civil unrest (riots & demonstrations)?
   o To facilities, resources, services
   o To staff and clients

Types of Disasters

1. Hurricane
2. Wild fire
3. Tornado
4. Pandemic
5. Earthquake
6. Chemical Spill
7. Flood
8. Active shooter
9. Civil unrest
10. Building fire

Exercise 1: Needs
➢ What services do the general public need?
➢ What services do first responders need?
➢ Who are the first responders?
➢ What services does local government need?

Categories of Needs
➢ Communication
➢ Social services
➢ Access to information
➢ Comfort and sense of normalcy
➢ Place

Roles Libraries Play
*Eight roles identified by MLA Oral History Project*
➢ Institutional supporter
➢ Collection manager
➢ Information disseminator
➢ Internal planner
➢ Community supporter
➢ Government partner
➢ Educator & trainer
➢ Information community builder

Roles Libraries Play
*New roles created by recent events*
➢ Sanctuary
➢ Ad hoc school
➢ Cooling/warming centers
Creator of the disaster narrative
Community “living room”
Neutral zone
Provider of emergency public services when their offices must close
Counseling services
Food services
Shelter

“Libraries are vital information hubs, and in the aftermath of a disaster, libraries take on an even greater community role...”

--Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), 2011

Libraries ARE Essential
Post-Katrina

- Citizens flocked to public libraries for assistance.
- State librarians in states affected by Katrina & Rita react to FEMA denying temporary facilities for their libraries.
- COSLA, ALA, librarians & supporters push congress for FEMA rule changes.
- Jack Reed (D-RI) works on behalf of libraries.
- January 7, 2011 FEMA changed its policy to recognize libraries as essential service.

Situational Assessment

- Institutional role assessment
- Institutional capacity
- Cores services
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Community capacity
  - Satellite communications, Internet access
  - Water, electricity, public transportation

Partnerships

- Definition
- Public/private partnerships and their value
- Benefits
Problem partnerships

➢ Know what you can do and stick to your core values
➢ Know when to back out

Working Together

➢ Collaboration
➢ Consensus
  o 80% agreement – 100% buy-in
➢ Unanimity

Politics

➢ Community builders and political allies
➢ Characteristics of successful partners
➢ Understand your community
➢ Sincerity of commitment
➢ Donations
➢ Having relationships in place before the disaster

Community

➢ Definition
➢ Community builders and successful partners
➢ Social capacity
➢ Emergency communities
➢ Diversity

Community Leaders

➢ Elected or appointed officials
➢ Influential members of the community
➢ Know who they are
➢ Leaders vs organizers
“Administrators are not born with a ‘librarian appreciation gene’.”
-- McKnight, p. 2

Influence = perceived value to decision makers
-- McKnight, p. 43

Exercise 2: Skills

➢ List skills needed to succeed in a political environment

Elevator Speech

➢ Needs to be succinct and brief
➢ Convey only the important information
➢ Follow these steps
   1. Identify your goal
   2. Explain what you do
   3. Communicate your value.
   4. Put it all together.
   5. Practice.
      --Adapted from MindTools website

Exercise 3: Elevator Speech

➢ Draft your own elevator speech
   o Use buzzwords
   o Include the most important services/points
➢ Share aloud & critique
➢ Discuss how to improve
➢ Refine your elevator speech
ALA Elevator Speech Template

➢ How do I craft a good introductory elevator speech? Describe what you do and why it's important in the world.

➢ **Sample template:** “I help_____________[your main customer group] _______________[verb] in order to _______________[large, positive result].”

➢ **Sample Speech:** “I help kids and families unpack their curiosity at the library so that the kids can go out and change our world for the better.”

Building Influence

➢ Know – Show – Tell (McKnight)
➢ Know your business! Be vocal about the roles you can play which will leave a lasting impression
➢ Look professional, make good 1st impression
➢ Be clear, concise and articulate when speaking of your value

Be Ready

➢ Assess the environment
➢ Show ROI
➢ Know the group and what they need
➢ Use business language, not library jargon
➢ Give more than they expect

“It’s not what you say, it’s what people hear”

-Luntz, p. 70

“But that’s not what I actually meant”

-Luntz, p. 4
5 Rules That Build Influence

➤ Understand the chain of command
➤ Know when to hold and when to fold
➤ Believe in win-win situations
➤ Play fair and be honorable
➤ Say yes to everything initially

Image & Dress

➤ Dress appropriately
➤ Carry business cards
  o Have a professional card case
  o Never keep them loose inside a handbag or briefcase
➤ Look professional & dress for the occasion
  o Senate committee hearing vs. moving books
  o Be ready

Meetings 1

➤ Arrive on time/keep appointments
➤ Arrive ready to work
➤ Be prepared, confident and competent
➤ Show up and speak up
➤ Learn names of key players (and their assistants)
➤ Meetings 2
➤ Act professional
➤ Stay positive
➤ Define what you can/cannot do ... in their language
➤ Meetings: the Finale
➤ Be open to criticism
➤ Utilize 21st Century Skills for you & team

Exercise 4: Worksheet

Create a disaster worksheet for the following potential disasters:

- Tornado
- Active shooter in the area
- Civil unrest/riots
- One more of your choosing
Disaster worksheet

Elements of Some Status Reports

- Names and Titles – who is in charge of what
- Description of Incident/date/time/duration
- Damage to: buildings, utilities, staff, etc.
- Status of your communications structure
- Response activities so far
- Needs: from state, federal, police, utilities, etc.
- How your library can help

Exercise 5: Status Report

Using what we have learned about language, community needs, library vulnerabilities and library resources, prepare a brief status report on your library’s response to your disaster to present at the Emergency Operations Center in your community.

What Next?

- Get to know the key players in your community.
- Learn more about your library’s operations.
- Look at best practices of other area libraries.
- Finish your COOP.

“If you are not at the table, you might be on the menu.”

-- Unknown

Diane Brown
Deputy State Librarian
State Library of Louisiana
dbrown@crt.la.gov

Rebecca Hamilton
State Librarian
State Library of Louisiana
rhamilton@crt.la.gov