

Focus: Urgent or Important?

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Dysart & Jones Associates

THLA, Toronto, April 29, 2009

Tonight's Focus

- Talk on adaptability or prioritization within the workplace
- Focus on Focus
- Tips: HBR, Dixon
- Why Libraries Fail -- top tips & strategies
- Interactive Conversation

Leaders Say

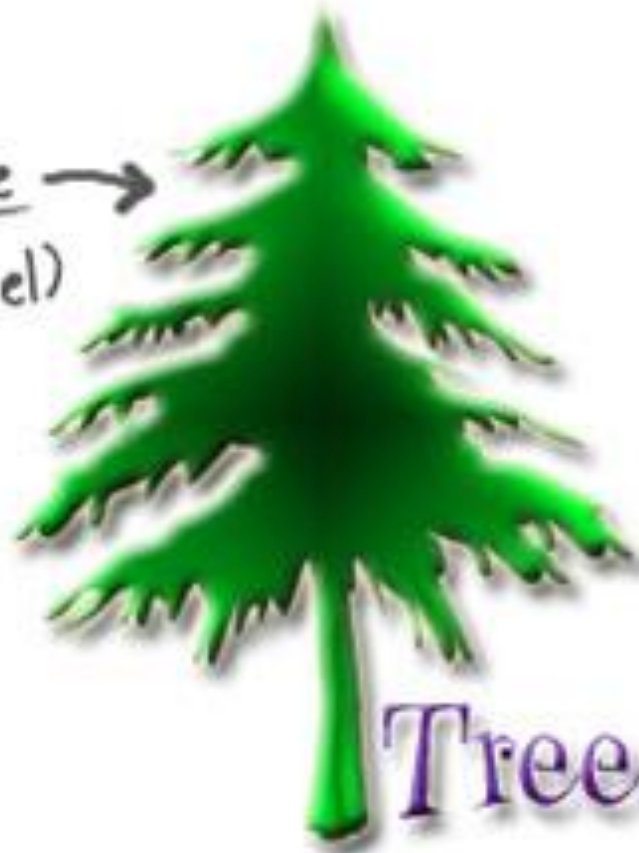
Staying focused is one of the hardest parts of the job.

B. Obama, 60 Minutes, Sun Mar 22



Forests and Trees

We get stuck here →
(implementation level)



Tree 2.0

The Big Picture – The Important

But this is what matters most
↓ (meta level)



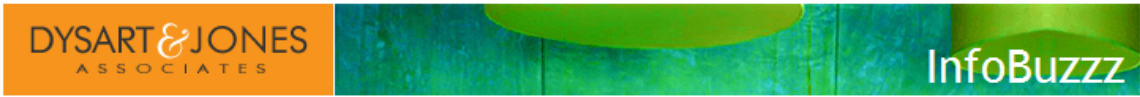
Focus on the Important, not the Urgent

- Harvard Business Review's "Management Tip of the Day"
- "How to mitigate the urgent to focus on the important" :

Strategies:

- choose 3 important tasks to focus on each day — only 3 - any more than 3 and you won't get any accomplished
- only check your email a few times a day so that you aren't constantly interrupting yourself
- have a scheduled 20 minute weekly meeting with YOURSELF





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April 22, 2009

Made to Last: Celebrating 100 years



SLA is 100!

It must have been a very interesting world in 1909. Here are three immediate (to me) organizations celebrating their centennials. The Special Libraries Association, an organization representing 12,000+ librarians with specialized collections and services in corporations (law firms, banks, pharmaceuticals, manufacturers, hospitals, etc) around the work, celebrates their centennial this year. The Toronto chapter of SLA is having a gala to celebrate next month — I'm very excited about attending.

The association's 100th annual conference is being held in June in DC (where SLA's HQ has been for many years, including when I was President in 1995/6). Should be a great event starting off with keynote speaker Colin Powell.

And now we are into ice hockey NHL playoffs and the Montreal Canadiens are 100! Check out the many jerseys and logos from their past. I am not a Canadiens fan but I certainly respect their longevity and strength over the years. It will be interesting to see what's in their future.

Leons is a furniture store in my area and it is 100 years old too. Quite a history. I was most impressed that the current CEO went across Canada celebrating with all the employees. Nice.

Filed under: Enterprises, Organizations — Tags: Add new tag, Canadiens, Centennials, Leons, SLA — by Jane Dysart at 8:37 pm | Comments (0)

Happy Earth Day!



Looking For...

- Planners
Speakers

Check These Out

- Cognitive Edge
How to Save the World
KMWorldBlog
Stephens Lighthouse

Conferences

- Computers in Libraries
Internet Librarian
KMWorld
Taxonomy Boot Camp

Our Stuff

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Why Libraries Fail

1. Failure to see changing patterns in the community
2. Failure to keep up with new developments/trends

Strategies:

- Environmental Scans – landscape/context
- SWOT – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats
- Conversations
- Reading & listening – print, electronic, F2F

Why Libraries Fail

3. Failure to align with & engage the community, especially in the wake of changes
4. Failure to identify key market segments/clients

Strategies:

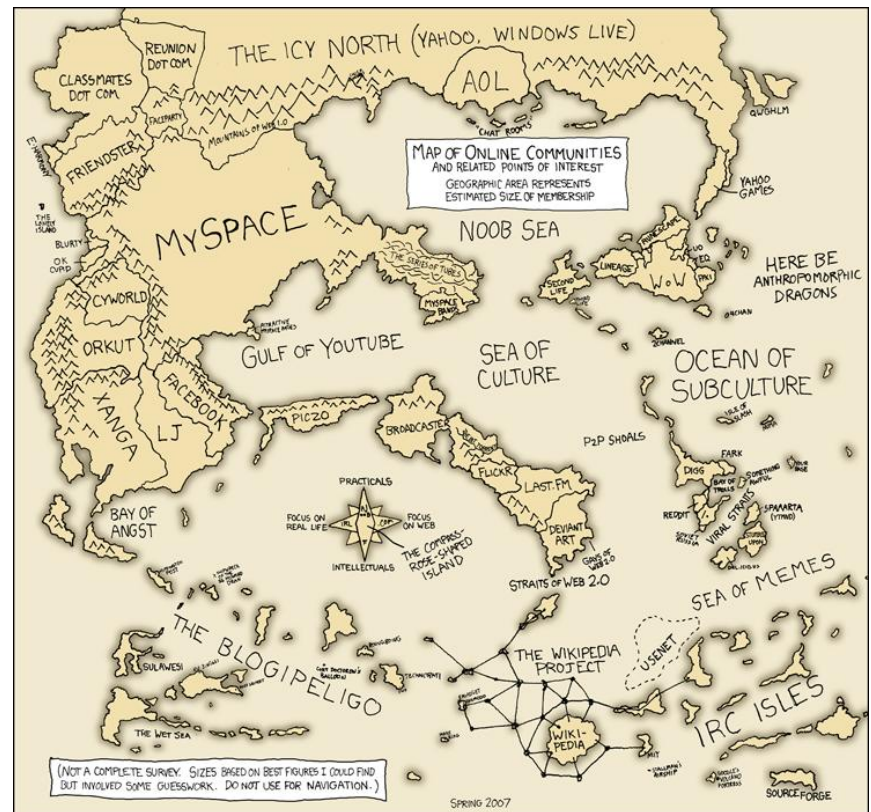
- Market segmentation – attractive/profitable, relevant, strategic, measurable, accessible
- Information audit – information needs/use/flow with focus on clients, content, info cost/value & info flows
- Market analysis – understanding the org & market

Why Libraries Fail

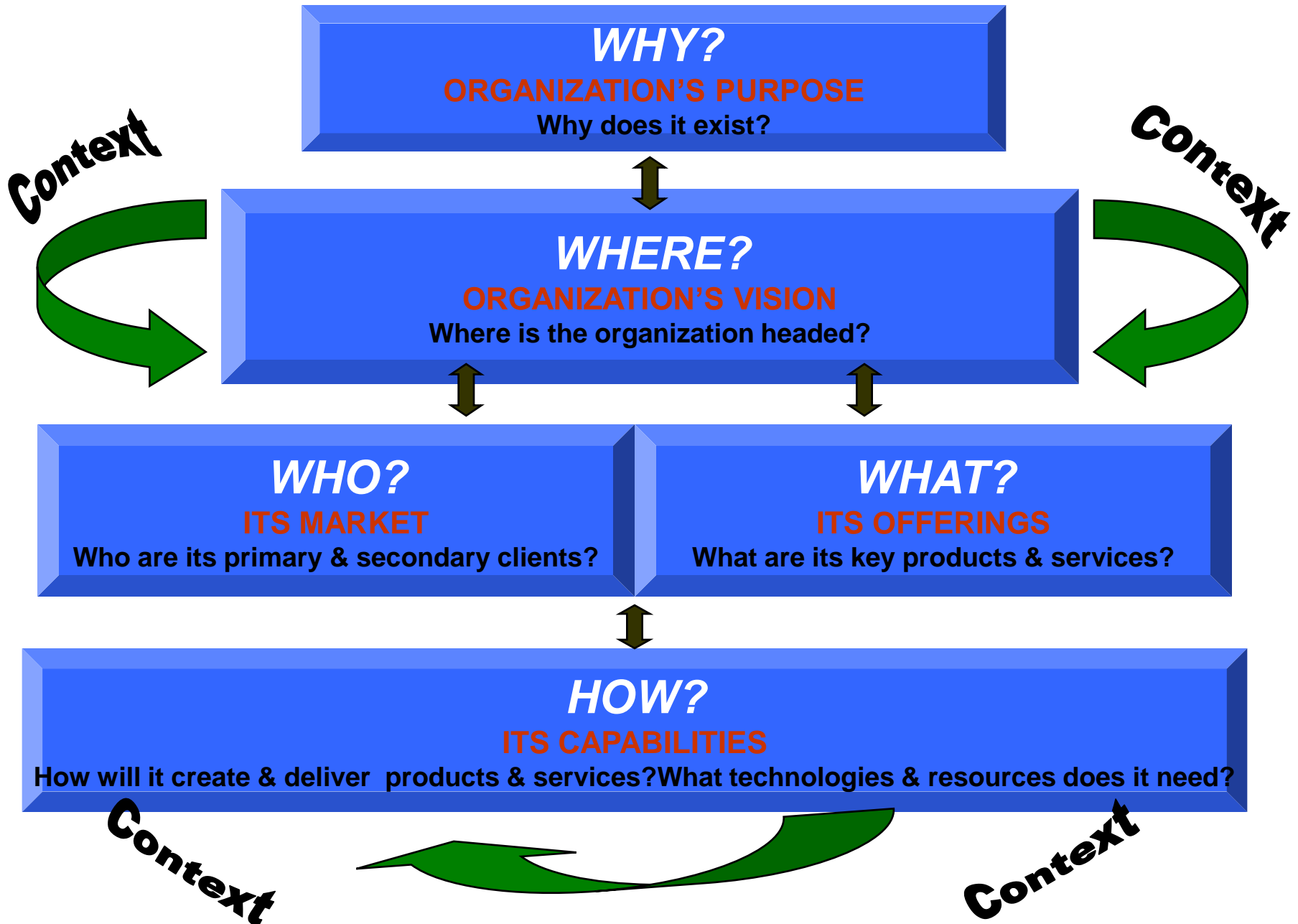
5. Having no clear direction

Strategies:

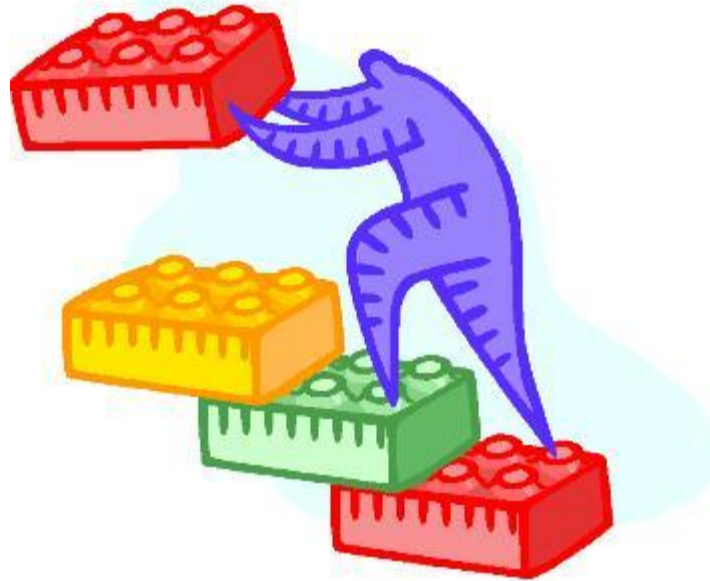
Plans & visions



Business Planning Framework



Plan = Decision Making Tool



Our College: the post-secondary education community of the 21st century

As an academic partner and a critical link in the learning process, the Library collaborates with faculty, staff and students to build collections and services made easily accessible through cutting edge technology and best practices. The Library supports all modes, levels and locations of teaching and learning with information resources and high quality services.

Strategic Priorities Overview

Collections

Current, curriculum-based content, in all formats, in support of all programs.

Objectives:

- Develop & implement a 3 year content strategy, aligned with College goals
- Partner with faculty to develop & maintain collection profiles for each program
- Expand access to digital resources
- Investigate & implement solutions for improving access to & sharing with campuses

Services

Customer-driven, state-of-the-art services.

Objectives:

- Ensure our service portfolio is offering relevant services that optimize high-tech delivery & service equity for all customers
- Expand digital or “virtually live” services & ensure customers can use these effectively from anywhere
- Establish services to support DL & other programs with unique needs
- Develop performance measures to manage & improve customer satisfaction & service value

Places

Physical & virtual environments enabling our customers to maximize their usage of the collections & services & be fully engaged in research & learning.

Objectives:

- Develop & initiate implementation of a facilities model & multi-year plan, based on College goals & in consultation with students, faculty & staff, that best accommodates near-term & long-term conditions
- Establish & manage a collections maintenance plan, aligned with the collections strategy, which ensures irrelevant resources are removed from active space

Capabilities

Organizational infra-structure, including the people, funds & partnerships, to fully manage the content, services & places.

Objectives:

- Ensure our organization structure & staffing is in place with professional & support roles to lead & sustain our strategic priorities
- Develop succession, career development & replacement plans for librarians
- Develop & implement a comprehensive communication strategy & marketing plan that conveys the Library's role, value & services
- Partner with & program coordinators

Why Libraries Fail

6. Failure to be a part of the knowledge value chain

Strategies:

- Impact – client's clients
- Alignment – stakeholder goals & yours
- Value – from the client's perspective

What Impact Do You Have on Your Clients' Clients?



Are You Aligned?



Value in Your Clients' Eyes

Their perceptions! WIIFT

- **ASK!**

- Conversations
- Interviews
- Observation; ethnographic studies
- Surveys

Why Libraries Fail

7. Failure to tie direction into all staff's expectations & plans
8. Faulty leadership, team development & succession

Strategies:

- Cascade the plans
- Develop leaders & foster collaboration – all generations
- Develop a succession plan

Aligning Plans & Staff Expectations

Cascade...

- Purpose
- Direction for next 2-3 yrs strategic plan & priorities
- Annual business plan -- annual achievements & resources needed
- Department & individual plans and expectations
- Quarterly discussions



Why Libraries Fail

9. Faulty communication & lack of influencing skills

Strategies:

- Conversations
- Influencing skills
- Communications plan

Conversations Matter

Nancy Dixon, <http://www.nancydixonblog.com/>

Our most effective knowledge sharing tool is conversation. The words we choose, the questions we ask, and the metaphors we use to explain ourselves, are what determine our success in creating new knowledge, as well as sharing that knowledge with each other.

Conversation -- “the interaction that occurs when each person is actively working to understand the meaning the other is trying to convey”

- Conversations to address adaptive challenges: relationship building, mutual understanding, possibilities, action

“At The Table” Voice

To move to the decision-making table:

- Clear direction which can be articulated
- Cross-functional experience
- Financial understanding of ROI & investments
- Presence

» Rebecca Jones research for SLA
Executive Institute, Information
Outlook

Communication: Defined & Detailed

Audience <i>who</i>	Message <i>what</i>	Timing <i>when</i>	Channels & Feedback <i>how</i>
Management			
Target Audience/Board			
Staff			
Partners			Mary Lee Kennedy, HBS

Why Libraries Fail

10. Failure to take risks/try new things/ challenge thinking patterns

Definition of Insanity

Doing the same thing
over and over again
expecting different results!

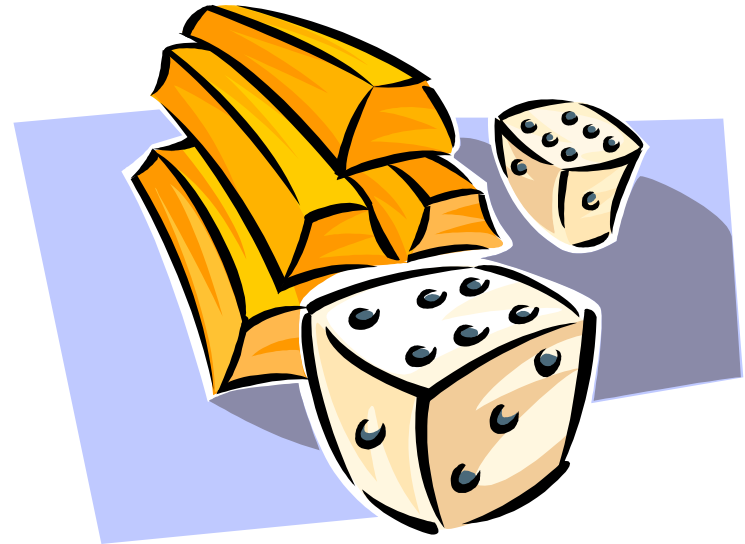


Challenging Thinking Patterns & Taking Risks



Comfortable?

Biggest risk?



Why Libraries Fail

10. Failure to take risks/try new things/ challenge thinking patterns

Strategies:

- Neoteny: retain youthful qualities as adults (curiosity, playfulness, eagerness, fearlessness, warmth, energy)
- “What’s the worst thing that can happen, if we
- 23 Things
- Be bold, try things, learn from mistakes/imperfect implementations

Being Helpful

Nancy Dixon:

Get deeply into the context & concerns of the help seeker, not just the presenting issues but the “blooming, buzzing confusion” (Wm James) that surrounds the issue.

Begin by assessing what the organization might stop doing to create more space for development. One aspect of Jack Welch’s effectiveness in leadership at GE was his emphasis on shedding as well as development (Tichy 1997). This is particularly true in today’s overloaded, skinnyed down settings.

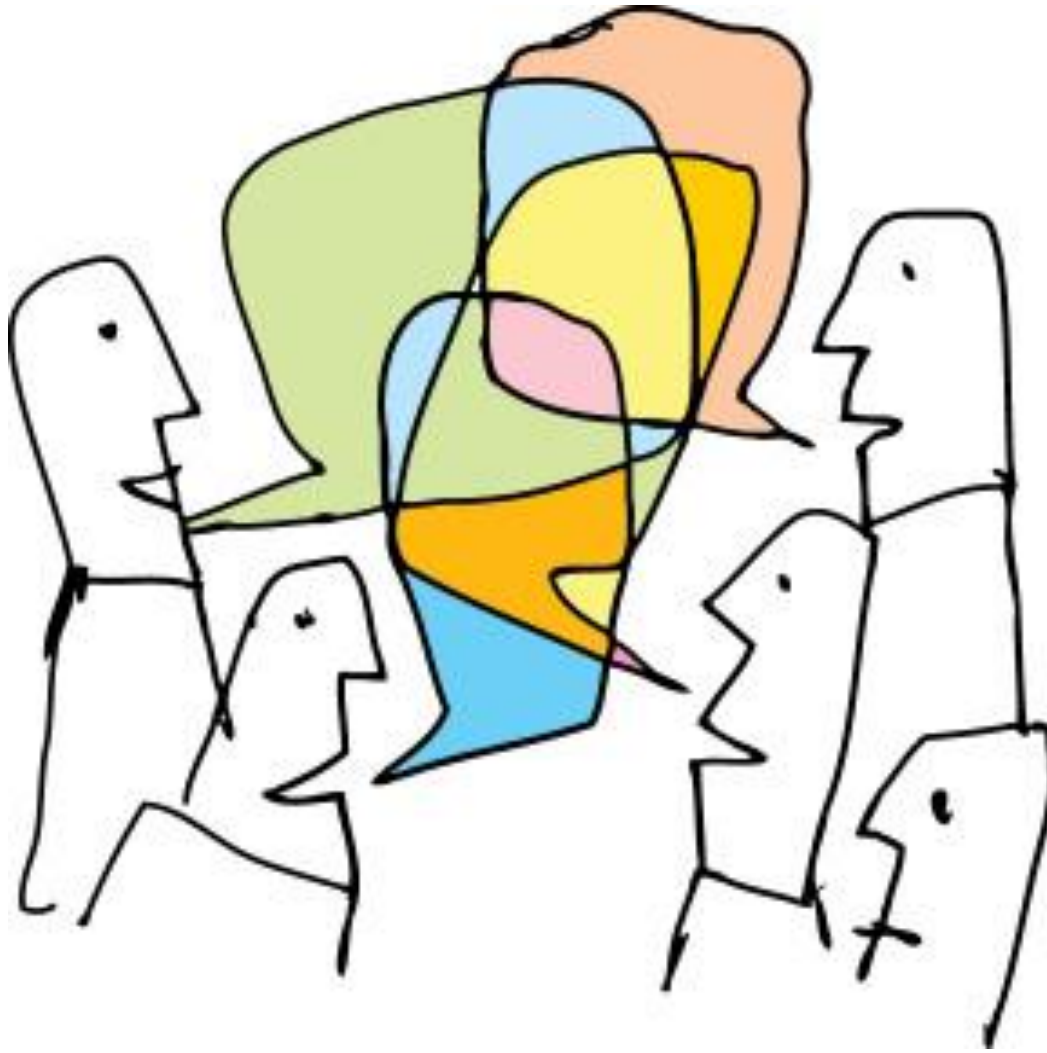
Janice Lachance, CEO, SLA

- From President Bill Clinton, VP Al Gore & Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, I learned that having a clear vision of what you want to accomplish, and the ability to communicate it, was essential to being a great leader.
- A vision helps you distinguish good ideas from bad ones, helps you prioritize, and make difficult decisions easier.
- Successful leaders transcend two-way communications and connect with their audiences. Listening and making every conversation count.
- Work directly with senior management, and gain a complete understanding of your organization's goals, priorities and values. Learn to speak the language of management.

Janice Lachance, CEO, SLA

Constantly evolve to align with your organization's priorities and take advantage of new technology & innovative methods of communication.

Questions? Conversation?





May you find
the direction & focus
that has the largest
impact on your
community!

Thank YOU!

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