

Today's Presenter



Jennifer Pearson

Director, Marshall County
Memorial Library (TN) and
current board member, ARSL

Beyond the Job Description

Ten Practical Tips for the New Rural
Library Director

Jennifer Pearson

Director

Marshall County (TN)
Memorial Library

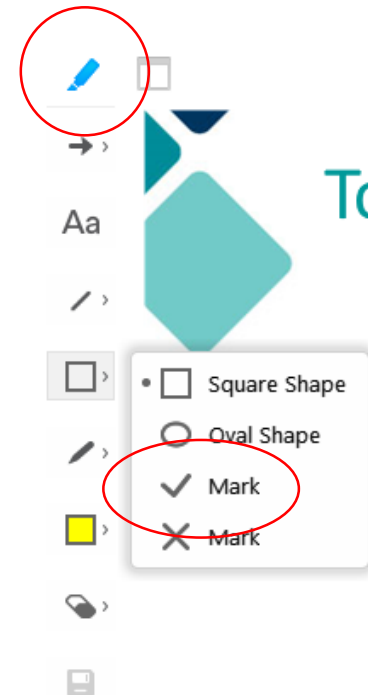


Annotation Tools

The tool buttons will open in a row on the left side of your screen, once you **click on the marker**.

Check mark

- Click on square, half-way down.
- Use the drop-down menu and choose the check mark.
- Click on slide to indicate choice.



How long have you been a library director?

1-6 months

6-12 months

1-5 years

6-20 years

20+ years

Not a director

1. What are your community's needs? How can the library meet them?



Get buy in from your community!

- Create a survey
- Ask current patrons
- Ask people who aren't patrons
- Talk to stakeholders
- Find some partners
 - Schools
 - Parks and Rec
 - Civic clubs
 - Museums
 - Others???



Solving jigsaw puzzle by ePublicist, on Flickr;
is licensed under CC BY 2.0

2. Don't try to do everything at once



It's all about priorities!

Make a list

- Base this list on
 - What you found out from the community
 - Quick wins
 - Medium term
 - Long range
 - Things you can actually do
 - Some aspirational but not too many



3. Stuff takes time



Establish trust first

- Trust is the most important thing
 - From stakeholders
 - From the community
 - From your staff
- Once trust is established you can
 - Build partnerships
 - Build a following
 - For programs
 - Social media
 - Build your vision

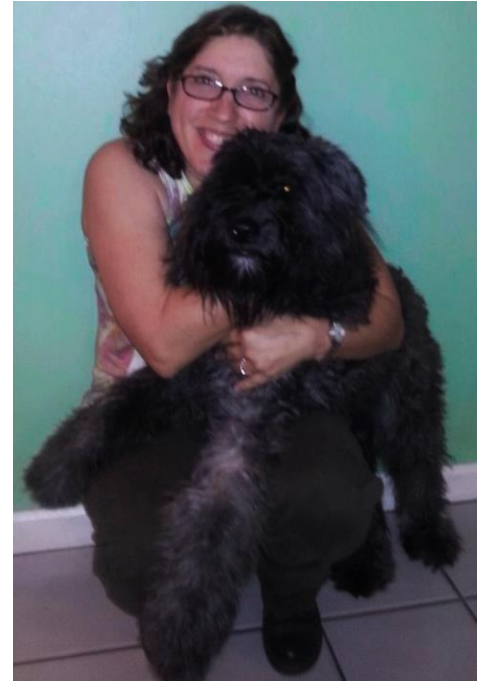


4. Figure out your staff



Finding the right fit

- Assess your individual staff members
 - What are they good at?
 - Bad at?
 - Passionate about?
 - Want to learn more about?



5. Make yourself known to your community



How do you want to be involved?

- Civic organizations
- Community boards
- Leadership programs
- Social clubs
- Religious organizations
- Speaking engagements
- Volunteer opportunities
- Others?



6. ASK FOR HELP

“You can’t do it alone.

As you navigate through the rest of
your life, **be open to
collaboration.**

Other people and other people’s ideas
are often
better than your own.

Find a group of people who
challenge and **inspire** you,
spend a lot of time with them, and it
will change your life.

**No one is here today
because they did it
on their own.”**

-Amy **Poehler**



Who can help me?

- Create a list based on
 - People you TRUST
 - Needs you have
 - Influencers
- Who should be on your list?
Some ideas...
 - Local business owners
 - Economic development officers
 - City/county elected officials (aka– your funders)
 - Anyone who really understands how things work in your community
 - Anyone who gets stuff done



7. Don't bulldoze your way in



Politics ain't easy!

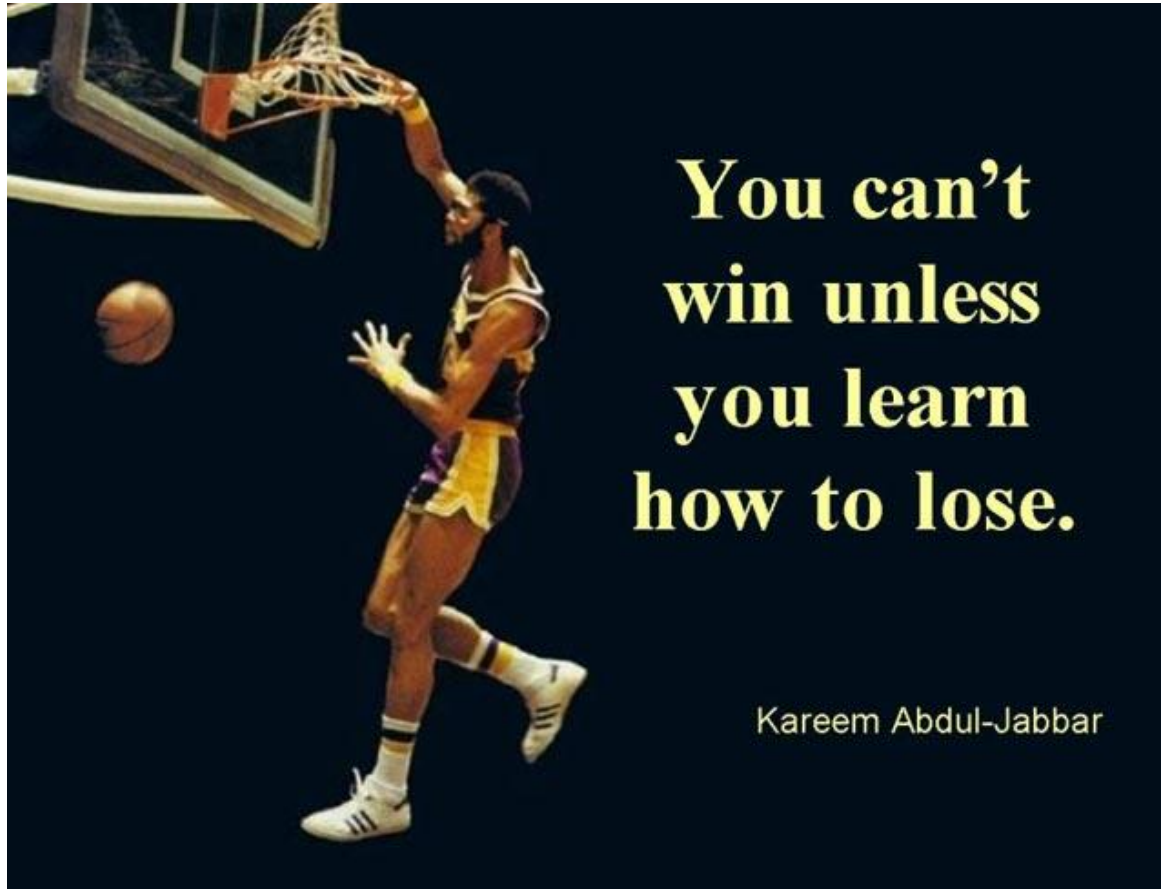
- Always know what is going on in your community that could affect the library
- Know the best way to work with your different stakeholders
- Compromise when you need to
- DROP IT if you have to



“politics
is more
difficult
than
physics”

Albert Einstein

8. You win some. You lose some.



**You can't
win unless
you learn
how to lose.**

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

How to win

- Be Prepared
 - Do your due diligence
 - Know that you are asking the right people
 - Know how to talk to those people
- Ask for the right things at the right time



When you lose

- Why did you lose?
- Is it worth trying again?



9. Own your successes. And your mistakes.



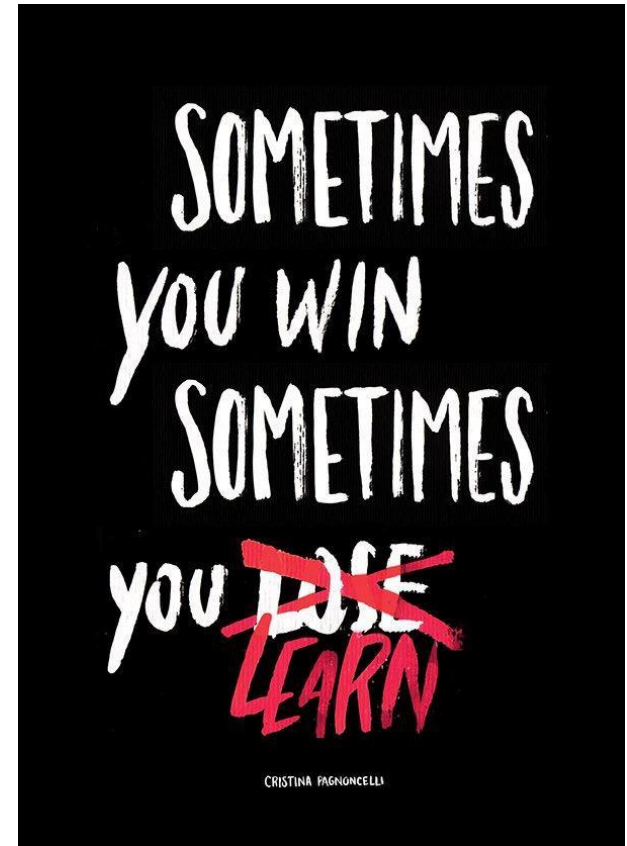
What to do when you succeed

- TELL PEOPLE!
 - If no one knows then it's not really a success
- Figure out why it worked and how you can replicate the success
- Always, always, always acknowledge everyone who helped you
 - Staff
 - Stakeholders
 - Volunteers



What to do when you don't

- Take responsibility
- Figure out what went wrong
 - Wrong time?
 - Wrong thing?
 - Wrong people?
- Is the failure something you need to try to correct or is it just something you didn't need to do in the first place?



10. Whether you like it or not... the library is a reflection of YOU



What do you see when you look in the mirror?

- Articulate a clear vision. Be able to state it to anyone who asks. State it every time you talk about the library.
 - Can you articulate it now?
- Remember wherever you go in your community you are seen as the face of the library.
 - This probably means no Jell-O shots for you at the bar on Friday night if you live in a small town
 - But it also means you have amazing opportunities to take the library to the community
- Have fun with it! This is the BEST part of being a library director!!



Questions and takeaways

- What is one thing you heard today that you want to work on right away?
- Did you hear anything you disagree with? Why?
- What would you add to this list?

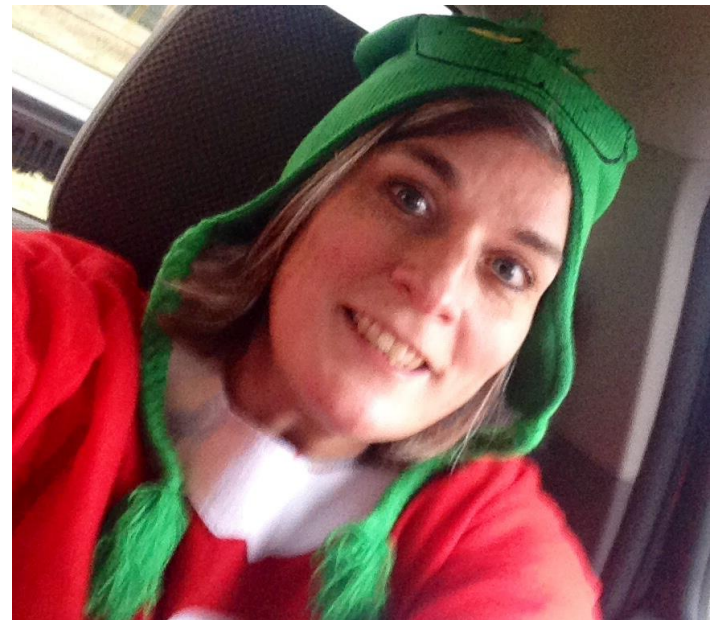


If you have questions or suggestions for me— you can hit me up at:

mcmlib@bellsouth.net

931-359-3335

jennifer.pearson71369 on
Skype





ARSL

The Association for Rural & Small Libraries

Become an ARSL Member Today!

Join us for more ARSL webinars

Receive quarterly member e-newsletter

Connect via member's only Listserv

Get discount on Annual Conference

October 26-29, 2016

Fargo, North Dakota

arsl.info