The Value of Military Libraries

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SLA Military Libraries Division
You are a Special Librarian!
I'm sorry
Context for Value?

Few libraries exist in a vacuum, accountable only to themselves. There is always a larger context for assessing library quality, that is, what and how well does the library contribute to achieving the overall goals of the parent constituencies?

(S. Pritchard 1996)
What and how well does the library contribute to achieving the overall goals of the parent constituencies?

What exactly are the goals of your organization?
Data, Evidence, & Proof

Not only do stakeholders count on organizations to achieve their goals, they also require them to demonstrate evidence that they have achieved them.

The same is true for libraries; they too can provide evidence of their value.
The “Wrong” Kind of Proof?

- Inputs (resource counts)
- Outputs (use counts)
- Satisfaction
- Service quality
- Librarian time & effort
It’s all about outcomes.

What difference do you make for the user?
What difference do you make for the user?

Who is your user?
What difference do you make for the organization?
Value

- Use
- Competing Alternatives
- Library Impact
- Commodity
- Return-on-Investment

(p 20)
This is not business as usual.

This is a *national reframing* of library value.
Library Contributions in the form of Resources & Services

Reflection & Continuous Improvement

Documented Impact

Reflection & Continuous Improvement

Library Assessment & Record Keeping

Impact!

Military Needs, Goals, & Outcomes

Military Users

- Active/deployed/returning/retired service members
- Families & family support groups
- Civilian counterparts
- Public
Goals, Needs, Outcomes
Morale, Recreation

http://www.herebebooks.com/booksForTroops.html

http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/-images/2011/03/28/103361/
Yongsan Library

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Photo by Pfc. Lee Min-hwi (USAG-Yongsan)
WHETHER YOU
THINK YOU CAN,
OR THINK YOU CAN’T,
YOU’RE RIGHT.

(HENRY FORD)
Preparing for & Understanding Adjustment, Specific Post-Deployment Conditions

http://www.dvidshub.net/video/25180/around-air-force-jun-14
Understanding & Claiming Benefits
Course & Distance Learning Support
Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to rid this house of the parrot, the hoover and the dog, by whatever means. As always, should you be caught, the Secretary will disavow any knowledge of your actions. This tape will self-destruct in five seconds.
Protection of National Security & Classified Information
Study, Research, & Publication within specific scientific constituencies
Study, Research, & Publication
which often lead to funding!
Archives & Special Collections
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Goals, Needs, &amp; Outcomes</th>
<th>Reference/Consultations</th>
<th>Library Classes/Workshops</th>
<th>Special Programs</th>
<th>General Interest Collections</th>
<th>Technical/Research Collections</th>
<th>Computer Access</th>
<th>Facilities/Spaces</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User Succeeds in Current Job Tasks, Prep's for New Tasks</td>
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<td>User Becomes More Self-Reliant, Better Problem Solver</td>
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<td>User Experiences Social Inclusion, Community Building</td>
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<td>Operations Planning is Efficient, Effective</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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**Y** = Yes, there is impact.

**N** = No, there is no impact.

**CB** = There could be impact if we did something different or better.
Rethinking the Focus

Joint Forces Staff College library mission:
• acquire materials relevant to curriculum and research requirements;
• catalog these materials for the permanent collection;
• maintain and update the online library catalogs;
• give reference and research assistance to JFSC students, staff, and faculty;
• prepare bibliographic resources to aid teaching, research, and professional development;
• search electronic report and literature databases;
• develop and conduct programs of library instruction for faculty and students;
• offer interlibrary loan service for research and professional development requirements;
• organize and circulate reserve materials;
• prepare targeted reading lists; and
• make available a balanced, accessible, and current collection of books, documents, periodicals, electronic resources and media.
So what?

What do you enable the user to do?
Rethinking the Focus

Defense Technical Information Center's Mission Statement:
• To provide essential, technical research, development, testing and evaluation (RDT&E) information rapidly, accurately and reliably to support our DoD customers' needs.

We accomplish our mission by:
• Providing centralized operation of scientific, technical and related defense information services, databases, systems, or networks for the acquisition, organization, retrieval, and dissemination of information to support the Defense Community
• Developing and improving DoD Scientific and Technical Information (STI) and Defense Information systems through the continuous application of advanced, innovative processes, techniques and technologies for information discovery, analysis and dissemination
• Assuring information security and integrity while improving customer access through the enhancement and application of the latest guidance and technologies for system security, user authentication, access control and single sign on
• Managing the DoD Information Analysis Centers program
• Performing outstanding Customer Service including extensive user training and outreach programs
So what?

What do you enable the user to do?
What Organizational Goals Do Library Services & Resources Impact?

Selected Reference Questions Received by the Joint Forces Staff College

- How do you measure success in the global war on terrorism?
- What are the causes of noncombatant casualties in Operation Iraqi Freedom and how can we reduce them?
- What initiatives are the services taking to increase the number of graduates with foreign language proficiency?
- How is the National Guard being transformed to meet national security needs?
- I’m looking for a cartoon on the human rights record in Uzbekistan. Would you fax it to me? —reported by Gail Nicula, director, JFSC library

So what?

What does answering these questions enable the user to do?
Recommendations
Define outcomes.
Investigate outcomes!
Determine what libraries enable service members, leaders, families, & others to do.
The question is not, “How good is the library?”

The question is, “How much good does the library do?”

- Time saved
- Reduced costs
- Faster work
- Improved quality of work
- Quicker response to threats
- Money saved over alternative information sources
- Risk of irrelevant or inappropriate information decreased

(p 86)
For example, medical libraries produce results that…

• Help physicians handle their cases
  – Diagnosis
  – Choice of tests
  – Choice of drugs
  – Length of hospital stay
  – Advice given to patients

• Avoid hospital admissions, hospital-acquired infections, surgeries

• Save physicians time, save general health care expenditures

• Avoid patient mortality
K-12 focus? Demonstrate and develop library impact on student learning.
Develop systems to collect data on individual library user behavior, while maintaining privacy.
Appoint librarians to support senior leadership as appropriate…
It just makes sense.

I can help! I am a librarian and an expert in finding the information you need to make decisions!
Record and share library contributions to overall organizational success.
The Library’s budget for last year was $5 million. We have ten employees who are very busy, and we’d like to add three more to help with workload and turnaround times, so we need more money for added headcount. During last year, the Library performed 500 research projects. We updated intranet content 50 times each on four portal sites. The Library managed a collection of 230 periodicals, and 225 new books were bought and processed. Seven hundred items were circulated from the Library’s collection. All this work is very time-consuming, but the Library staff works very hard and at 100% capacity, so we’re happy to say we managed all this last year with only 10 on staff.
The Library budget for last year was $5 million, an investment for which the Company received a $7.5 million return. Ten Library employees generated this $2.5 million profit, and we believe adding three more employees will increase that margin. Last year, the Library performed 500 research projects. Library users tell us that the Library’s participation on those projects saved them an average of 14 hours per project, which translates to $168,000; that we saved them on average $2,500 in direct costs per project ($1,250,000); and that, on 50 of the projects, we found information that led to an average sale or increased sale of $85,000 ($4,250,000). Intranet site content, which the Library pays for and posts, resulted in 14 known new sales, each valued on average at $131,000 ($1,834,000).
Discuss

• What are the next steps we could take to integrate libraries into organizational mission/impact/value conversations?
• What skills & strategies would we need to learn?
• How might we go about learning these skills & strategies?
Fortune favors the bold.
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