

Strategies for Advancing Hidden Collections Webinar 6
Closing the loop: Project Assessment and Leveraging Goals for Future Planning
Speaker: Ellen Ryan
February 15, 2017

Notes and Chat History, Project Roadblocks

Notes

What, if any, roadblocks have you encountered when working on projects? How did you deal with them? How do you deal with change?

Staff changes which affect project timelines - try to build in, talk to grant agencies about extensions

Team leader leaving in the middle of the project - communication broke down, and continuing the project was difficult

When timeline was affected, being sure to communicate

Insufficient training for staff involved in the project

Unexpected copyright issues

Exploding fee structures for licensing materials

Changing institutional policies about social media prohibited fulfillment of grant requirements

Dealing with change

- Having a person in your professional network who is good at overcoming roadblocks and can offer advice
- Dedicating time each week that is exclusively for the project, no matter what
- Keep lines of communication open, at all times with all parties, concerning any roadblocks that come up. Don't wait to communicate.
- Be purposeful about changes that may come up. Take the time to pause, regroup, replan, and then move forward
- Anticipate the unanticipated - build it into your project timeline
- Remember to laugh and move forward :-)

Chat History

Ellen Ryan:What, if any, roadblocks have you encountered when working on projects? How did you deal with them? How do you deal with change?

Amanda Strobel Wise | Rock County Historical Society:We have staff changes, which can change project timelines. Ideally, we have anticipated them in the project planning, but I will meet with my project sponsor/supervisor to change either the deadlines or the parameters of the project/and its deliverables.

Naomi Steinberger:we had staff who quit in the middle of the project. we needed to regroup and hire new staff. Because we were running behind schedule, we added additional staff to the project to keep on track.

Sachiko Iwabuchi:Just like the example like Ellen shared with us, I encountered a challenge when the project team leader was absent and after 3 months, she left the institution.

Unfortunately, the communication was poor among us, and it was very difficult to continue the project.

Robin Grunwald:Someone in my network usually has a great solution to roadblocks, it helps me to discuss with peers

Allison Young:Carved out specific days of the week to dedicate to the project. No matter what happened that week, we knew as long as we were there, we would spend at least one day continuing to work on it.

Sachiko Iwabuchi:I asked the Australia-Japan Foundation to change the agreement (on grant) because my institution found that we would not acquire them in time.

Naomi Steinberger:We have asked for grant extensions when we had staff issues. Grantors are usually very amenable as long as we are in touch and communicate properly.

Sachiko Iwabuchi:Yes

Purdue Archives:A staff member with specific skills left, causing a major restructuring of project expectations. A component of the project needs to be rethought.

Jaime:When changes happen, try to group and replan. May take a little time, but better than guessing

Katharine Rapkin:Copyright restrictions (unanticipated) and exploding fee structures for licensed materials...

Sachiko Iwabuchi:Training among the staff who worked on the project was insufficient.

Naomi Steinberger:When our institution told us that we could not post on social media sites, which was a requirement for the grant, we communicated with the grantor. There was little we could do about this.

Christine Walde:Had to meet fiscal deadline - threw more financial and human resources at the project as needed

Jessica Shaykett:We simply weren't able to finish a digitization project in the allotted time. We dealt with this by being honest with our funder and asking for an extension. The grantor was much more amenable to this than we anticipated, and by being honest about our inability to finish on time it relieved a lot of stress for project staff.

Naomi Steinberger:Yes. The communications department wants to control "the message". Good idea regarding posting on the grantor social media site. Would have loved a work-around.

Naomi Steinberger:They wanted to post their press release and not hear from us.

Robin Grunwald:I had several grant projects as a Tech, then promoted to Supervisor, had to ask for extensions on all of them. All agreed. Now a busy bee...

Purdue Archives: We've tried to build plenty of extra time in our work timelines to enable us to adjust for the unexpected.

Allison Young: Remember to laugh :)