TURNING OUTWARD:
WHAT DOES YOUR COMMUNITY REALLY WANT?

A Single 90-Minute Webinar: An Adapted Excerpt Based on the Harwood Institute's 2014 Report in Conjunction with the American Library Association

1. What do you think of when you think of the term, "turning outward" as it relates to your library and the community you serve?

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2. What are you currently doing to "turn outward"? Please be specific.

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3. How did you decide **what** you should do to turn outward?

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4. What are some words and phrases that might help you "turn outward"?

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5. What might **hinder** you from becoming more focused on turning outward?

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6. Who else might need to be on board with becoming more focused on turning outward?

_____

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7. When deciding on steps to turn outward, choose the _____, then recognize

   the _____ you might face in addressing that focus.

   - One focus for my library might be on_____

     _____

   - One challenge of trying to address that focus might be_____

     _____

8.   Sometimes it might be appropriate to speak to _____ ; other times, it will be helpful to gather a group of people.

9.   When gathering a group, some potential sites for the gathering might be:

_____

_____

_____

10.   When talking to individuals one-on-one, who might you talk to?

_____

_____

11.   When talking to individuals, what kinds of questions might you ask?

_____

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12.   When talking to community organizations/social services or groups gathered to help you, who might you invite?

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13.   When talking to community organizations/social services/groups, what kinds of questions might you ask?

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Once you've gotten some thoughtful answers, see if you can develop a "theme" of what your library might be able to do to "turn in that direction":

a) People want_____(aspirations).

b) But they're concerned that_____(main concerns).

c) As people talk more about those concerns, they talk about_____

_____(specific issues).

d) They say that we need to focus on_____(actions).

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e) And if _____ (groups) played a part in those actions, folks would be more likely to trust the effort and step forward.

14. How can we get staff on board? _____

How? _____

_____

_____

_____

15. When trying to turn outward, be aware of focusing on _____, rather than innovation.

16. Also, be aware of _____.

17. Has your library ever had a negative experience when trying to turn outward? What happened?

_____

_____

In what ways might that experience hinder progress on a new effort?

_____

_____

18. What are two ways your library can become more outwardly focused?

a) _____

b) _____

19. What will be your first step? _____

_____

20. By when? _____

21. What do you anticipate the outcome being? _____

_____

_____

22. Based on that potential outcome, what should your next step be to keep "turning outward"?

_____

_____

23. Once you've done your research, you'll need to _____ the results, _____

_____, _____ with a thank you and _____ report.

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Other questions you might ask as you turn outward:

- ☐ What would you like to see/experience at our library that is not currently offered?

- ☐ How can our library help you achieve your life goals?

- ☐ What are your concerns about our community that our library might be able to help address?

- ☐ What do you think our library does really well?

- ☐ Specifically, what could our library do better?

- ☐ What are the gaps between what our community members want and/or need and what is currently being provided by any group in our community?

- ☐ Why do you think those gaps exist?

- ☐ How do those gaps affect our community?

- ☐ How do those gaps affect you?

- ☐ With limited budgets and human resources, what do you think our library should focus on?

- ☐ What is one thing our library could be doing for your members? (for organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Owners, etc.)

- ☐ What are the top three issues in our community that aren't being addressed?

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As you consider turning outward, what community partners might be able to help in your efforts once you've decided on what "turning outward" looks like?

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