



LEADING  
THE  
CHARGE  
IN  
YOUR  
COMMUNITY

**Raymond Santiago**  
*2017 Annual Florida  
Public Library Directors  
Meeting*  
October 19, 2017

# TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

1. Director's role in professional engagement at the local, state and national level.
2. Discuss the political milieu in which your job exists and offer tools to help you survive and thrive.

# ENGAGEMENT



# 2017 LIBRARY LEGISLATIVE DAY

- Federal Funding Zero \$\$\$
- IMLS impacts Florida
- All 50 States impacted
- Trickle down effect

Change the way we tell our story.

**IMLS restored with a \$4 million increase.**

## *Business Community Stepped In*



- *Assigned a \$\$ value to library service.*
- *Aligned with workforce numbers.*
- *Demonstrated economic impact.*
- *Customized story for **each** congressional member.*
- *Did not tug at heartstrings.*

*Just the facts...*

# LESSONS LEARNED

More than ever, your voice is needed.

- Engagement at all levels. (Local, State, Federal)
- Investing in your professional engagement.
- Investing in building your staff's professional engagement.



# YOUR PLACE IN A POLITICAL WORLD

*Political scientist Harold Lasswell defined politics as  
“who gets what, when and how.”*

PUBLIC  
LIBRARY?



# LIBRARY DIRECTOR REALITY

- Libraries function and exist in a political environment.
- Every library service, program or activity is a political action.

## *What is your job?*

- Educate elected officials and funders on library value.
- Sustain your library's programs and services.
- Secure a budget.



# FIRST IMPRESSIONS

**You may only get ONE shot!**

- Library jargon is foreign to city leaders.
- Numbers have many interpretations.
- Decisions are made with feelings.
- Visually appealing one sheet.
- Focus on alignment to the city/county plan.





# RAYMOND'S RULES OF SURVIVAL

- Develop a healthy ego– exude confidence.
- Know your competitors... and your allies.
- Develop first name relationships with elected officials, boards, etc.
- Know the staff for all officials– they are your entrance card.
- Keep a regular flow of information to all officials– short and to the point.
- Invite them to everything– not just prior to a budget hearing.
- Plan events at the library with officials in mind... does someone like dogs? Invite them to a summer program at the local shelter.
- Photos are essential– feed their social media sites with library events.
- Thank them for *everything*.



# SURVIVAL CONTINUES

- **Never** say “We can’t do that...”  
Instead say “let me get back to you.”
- **Never** ask for money...SELL THE SERVICE
- Pick your battles.
- Realize the consequences of taking a stand.
- **Never** promise what you cannot deliver (and on time).
- **Never** lie.
- Be ethical 24/7.



# CLOSING

- Lead by example
- Try new things
- Embrace your staff and your community
- Think big

Thank you all!

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