

# Welcome!

## Hands-On: Frontline Advocacy

WALE Conference,  
Lake Chelan  
October 29, 2013

Adrienne Doman Calkins



# Unofficial goal



# The research

- ALA Advocacy University
- PLA / Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Turning the Page training
- OCLC's *From Awareness to Funding* report

# Official goal #1

- know the impact of frontline advocacy and how it is different from customer service



# Official goal #2

- develop easy sound bites to incorporate advocacy messages into everyday interactions at your library

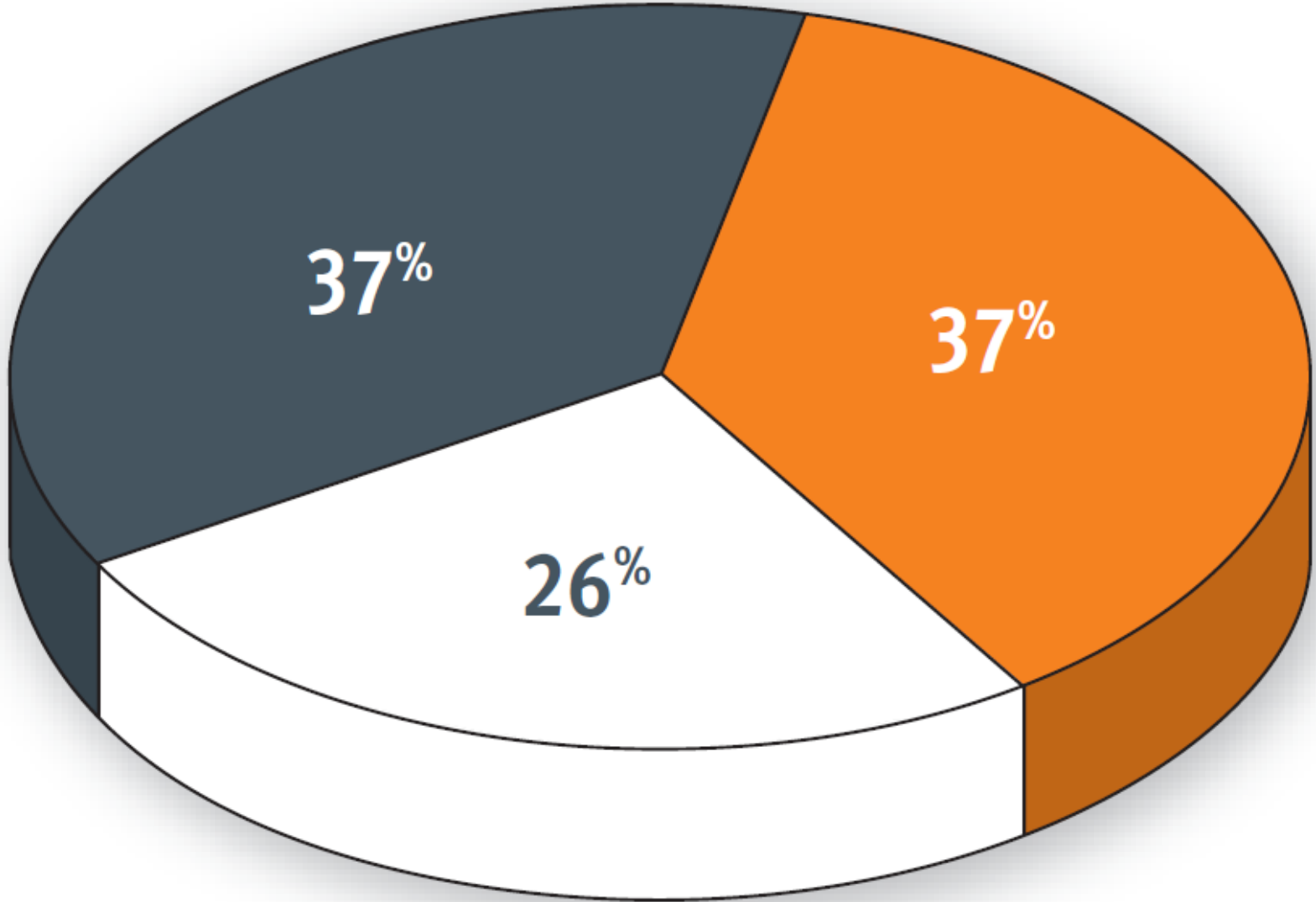


# Official goal #3

- have an outline to follow for sharing even more frontline advocacy training with your colleagues

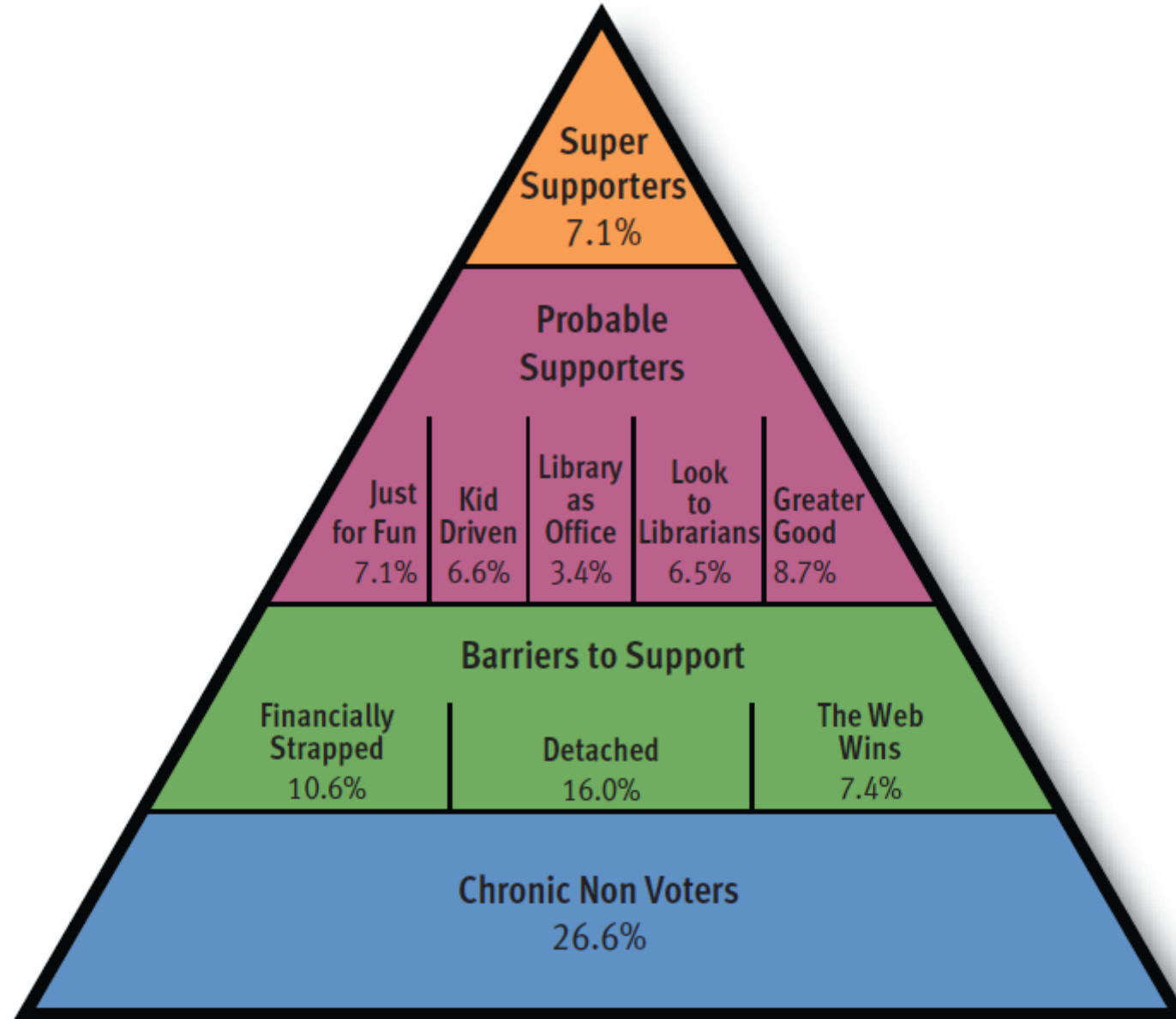


- Definitely vote yes
- Probably vote yes
- Definitely vote no, probably vote no, or may vote either way

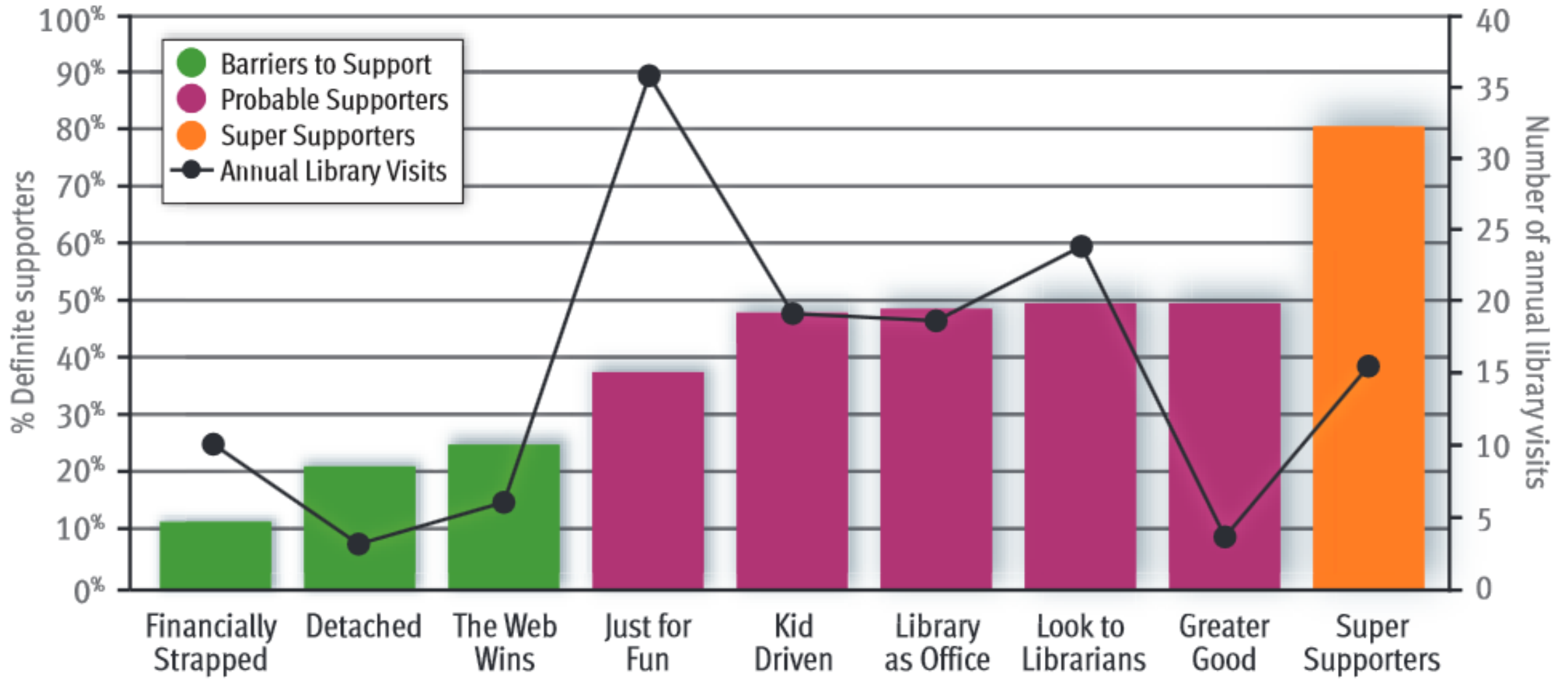


# Library Supporter Segmentation Pyramid

*Total Respondents*







# Source

De Rosa, C., & Johnson, J. (2008).  
*From awareness to funding: A study of library support in America : a report to the OCLC membership*. Dublin, Ohio: OCLC. Retrieved from  
<http://www.oclc.org/reports/funding.en.html>

# Soundbite Lab

Expand patron's view of library

Repeatable

Accurate

Relevant

Positive



# Thank you!

Questions?

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# Hands-on: *Frontline Library Advocacy*



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## \_\_\_\_\_’s Workbook

October 29, 2013

WALE Conference | Lake Chelan, Washington

Adrienne Doman Calkins | [adomancalkins@outlook.com](mailto:adomancalkins@outlook.com)

By the end of this training you will:

- know the impact of frontline advocacy and how it is different from customer service,
- develop easy sound bites to incorporate advocacy messages into everyday interactions at your library, and
- have an outline to follow for sharing even more frontline advocacy training with your colleagues

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## What I want to learn about Frontline Library Advocacy:

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## Setting the stage: Advocacy isn't just good customer service.

**Customer service example:** smiling, helpful, answer the question.



What's a good customer service answer?

Patron: "What happens with these donated books?"

You: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Advocacy example:** smiling, helpful, answer the question AND expand the patron's view of what the library does. Show the patron we're about more than just books. Be passionate.



What's a good advocacy answer?

Patron: "What happens with these donated books?"

You: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## A measure of library support: Voting for the library

There are many ways to be a library supporter. One definition of a library supporter is someone who would:

*“Definitely vote yes for a library referendum, ballot initiative or bond measure for your local public library.”*

How many people vote yes? OCLC research\* gives us the answer:

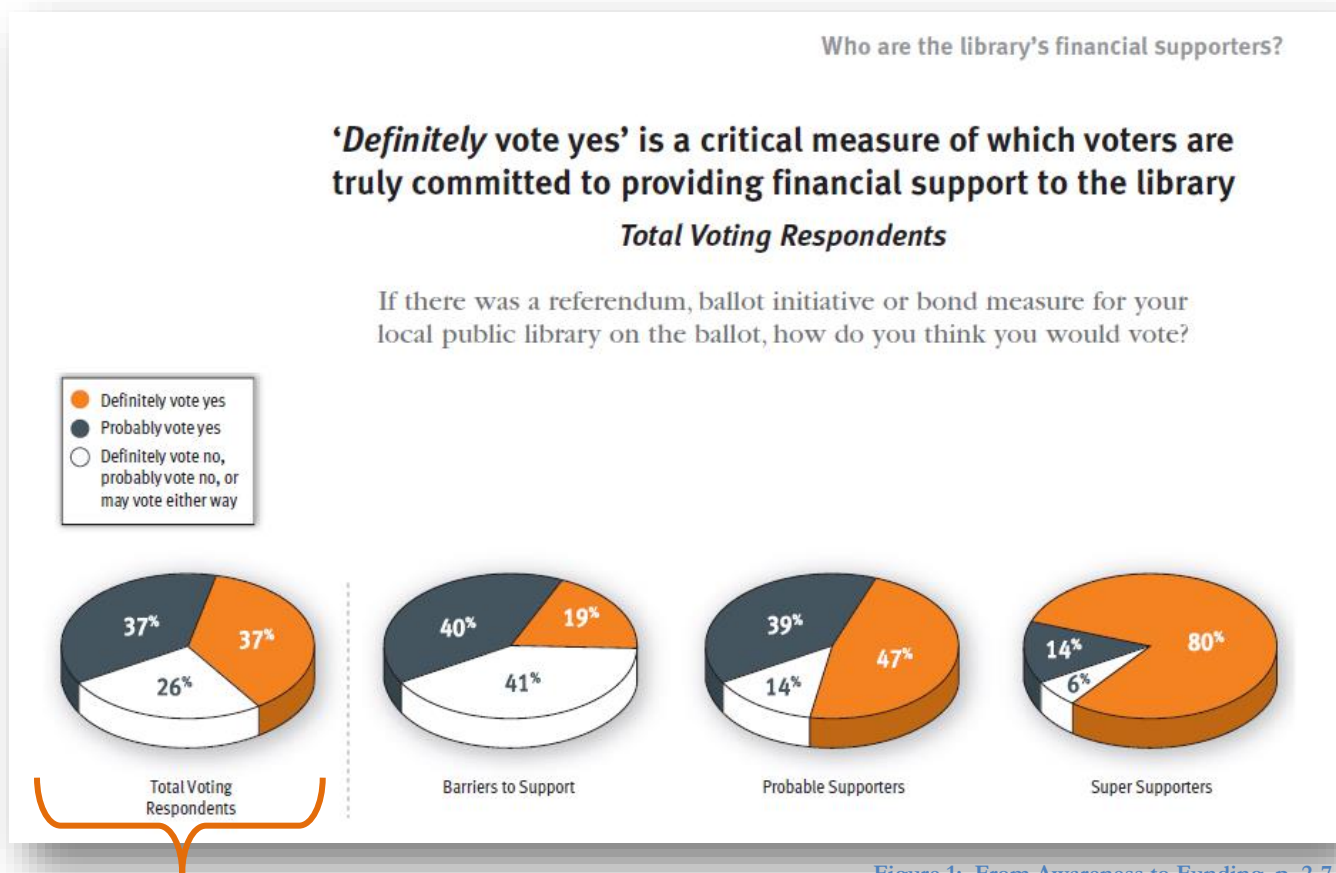


Figure 1: From Awareness to Funding, p. 2-7

\*OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) report [From Awareness to Funding: a study of library support in America](#), 2008.

Now, you need a majority of yes votes. Where are those votes going to come from?

# Aren't we just preaching to the choir? Or, Who is a library supporter?

Who *are* these definitely vote yes and probably vote yes people?

Again, based on the OCLC research, we can get to know our definitely & probably vote yes supporters.

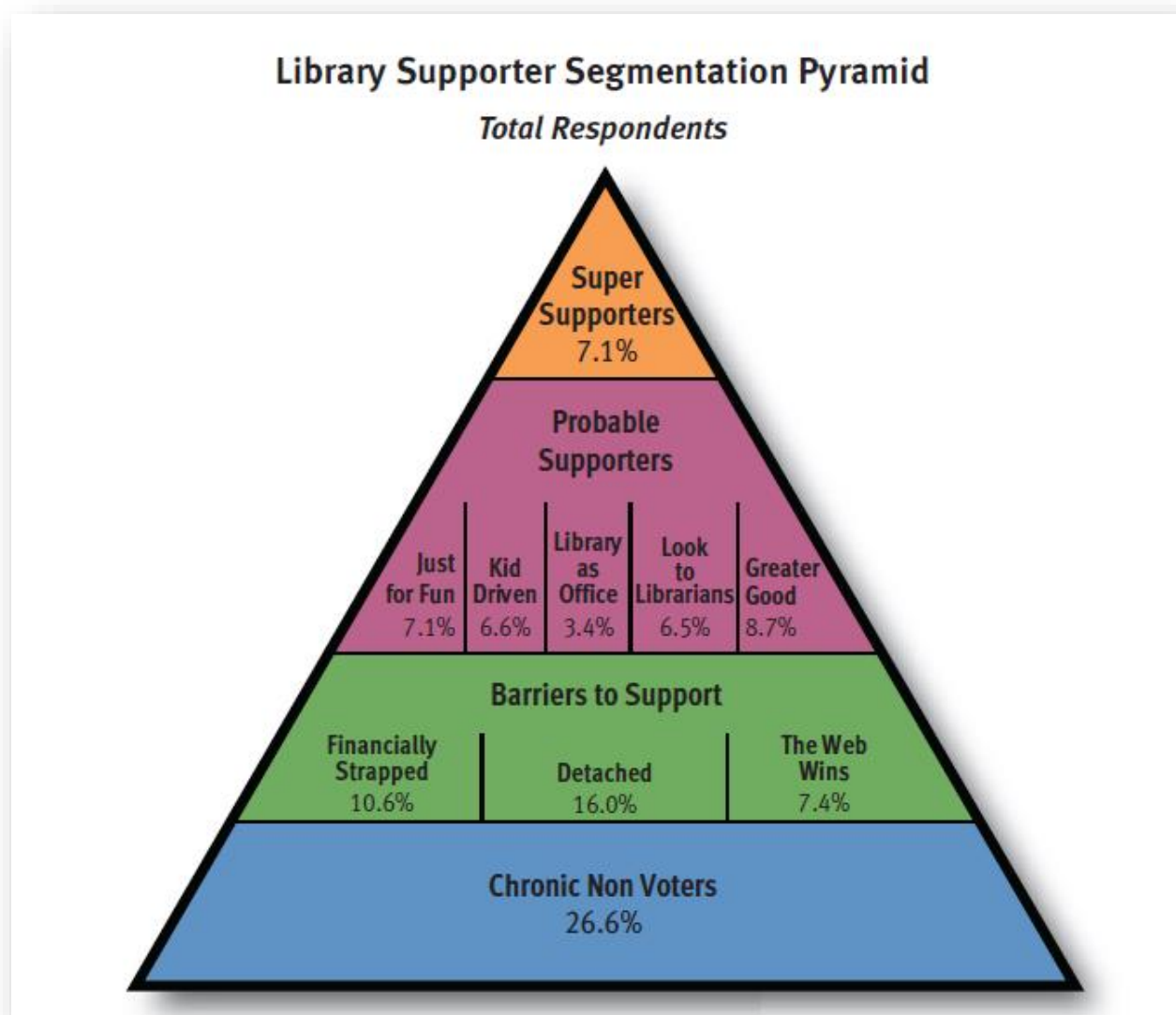
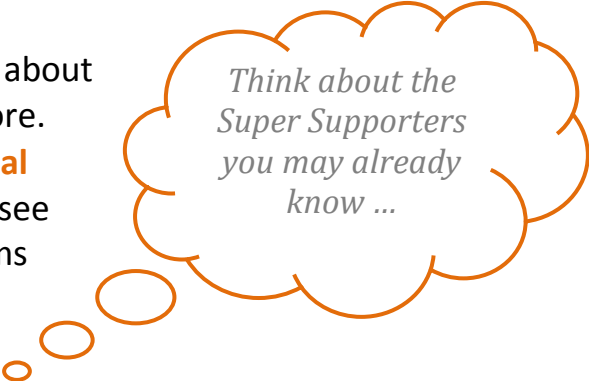


Figure 2: From Awareness to Funding, p. 2-9



### “Super Supporters”:

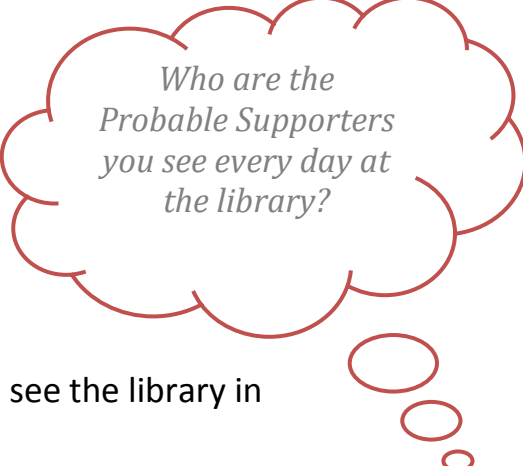
- Super Supporters are **only sometimes regular patrons**.
- They are avid readers.
- The library was important to them as a child.
- They **believe in what we do**.
- They may **not** even use our services at all, but they vote yes.
- Some even donate money. These are the people the Library Foundation connects with.
- This is a small percentage of the population—only 7.1% and only **12%** of total voters. **80% would definitely vote yes** and 14% would probably vote yes.
- They tell their friends & colleagues about us. We love them and we want more.
- Super Supporters have an **emotional connection with the library**. They see the library as a place that transforms peoples’ lives.



*Think about the Super Supporters you may already know ...*

### Then there are “Probable Supporters”:

- These are the supporters who use the library most often, whether for entertainment, family resources, as an office, or research assistance.
- Some support the library because we contribute to the greater good of the community.
- Probable Supporters are more likely to see the library in **practical**, less transformational terms.
- Probable Supporters are the largest percentage of the population—32.3% and **45% of total voters**.
- Of those, **47% of this group will definitely vote yes**. That’s pretty good, right? **But 39% would probably vote yes. Probably isn’t very reassuring, is it?**
- **What can we do?**

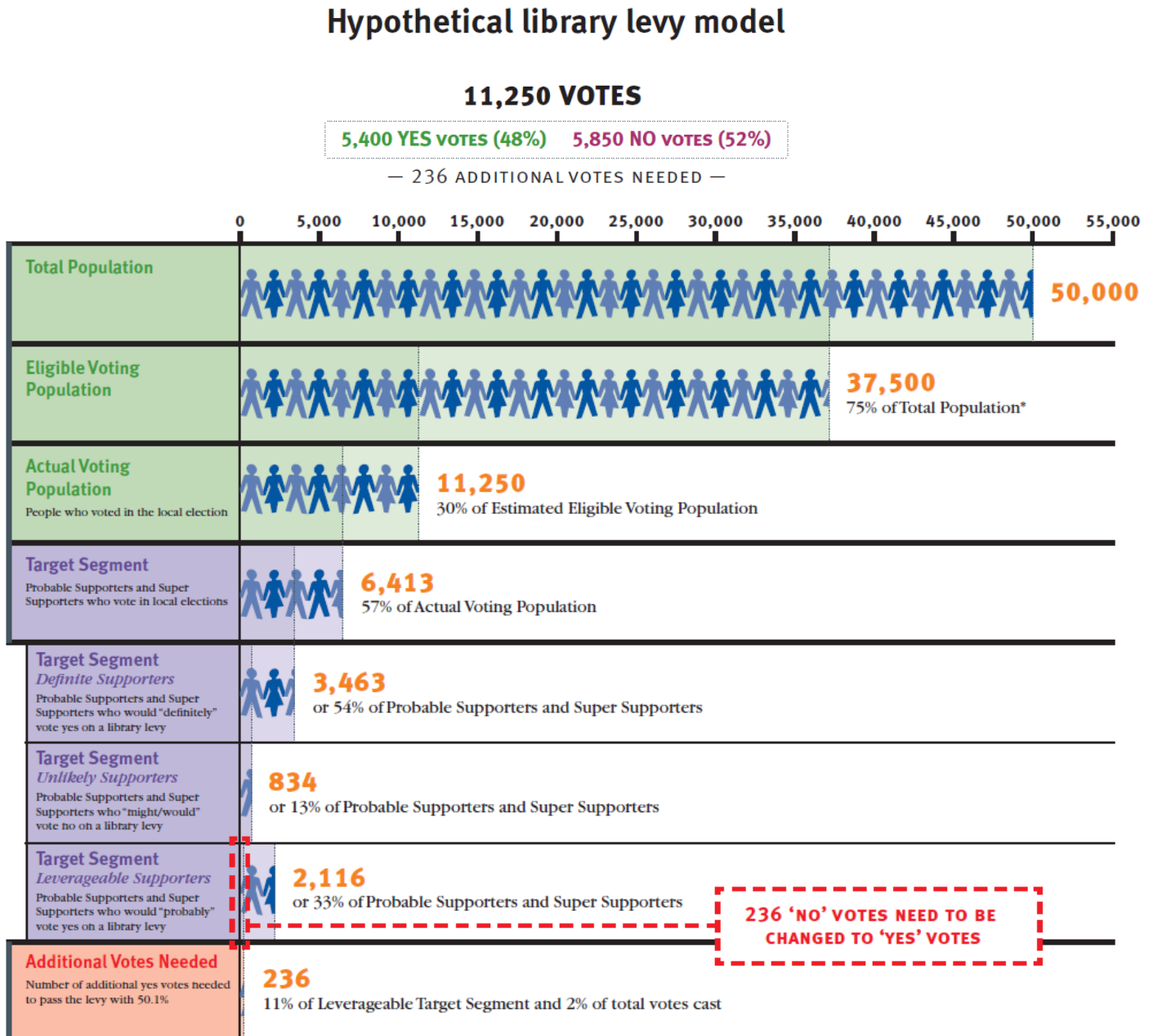


*Who are the Probable Supporters you see every day at the library?*

# How many votes does it really take?

Here you can see a city population of 50,000 might mean only 236 “swing votes” that could make or break the library’s initiative.

*How many voters do you think you could affect?*



\*Based on national average as calculated from the U.S. Census Bureau's annual American Community Survey

Figure 2: From Awareness to Funding, p. 6-17

## Let's Advocate to patrons who do use the library!

We can make a difference with our probable supporters by using Frontline Library Advocacy!

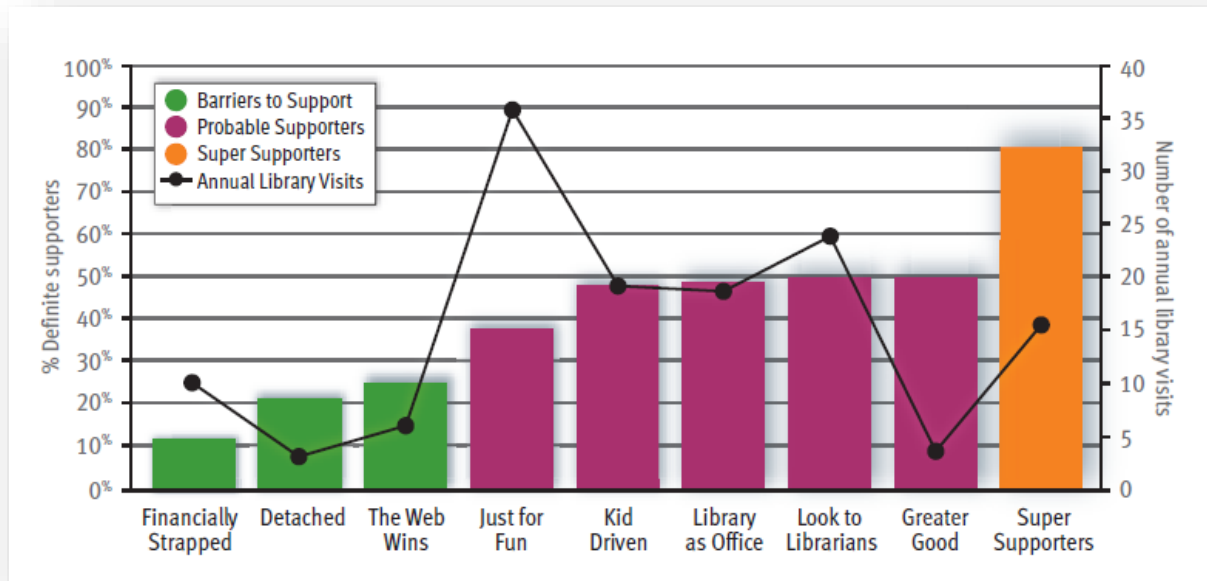


Figure 3: From Awareness to Funding, p. 4-5

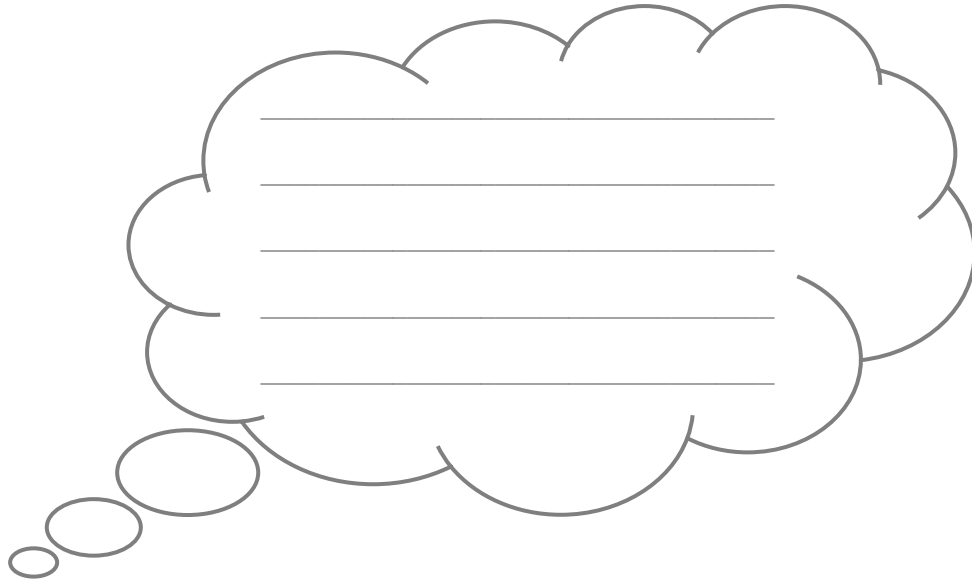
### Consider:

- People think highly of libraries, but are unaware of funding challenges. They don't know where our funding comes from or what we do with it.
- People don't know how much our services are worth, or what value library services provide to the community.
- Many people are unaware of the breadth of services we provide. They think the library is only about books and who needs books when everything is online?
- Library support is linked to emotional connections with the library. Most super supporters had positive experiences in libraries as a child.
- Public perceptions of the librarian as passionate are related to support (and let's just use the popular perception that "everyone here is a librarian" view).

What can we do? Advocate!

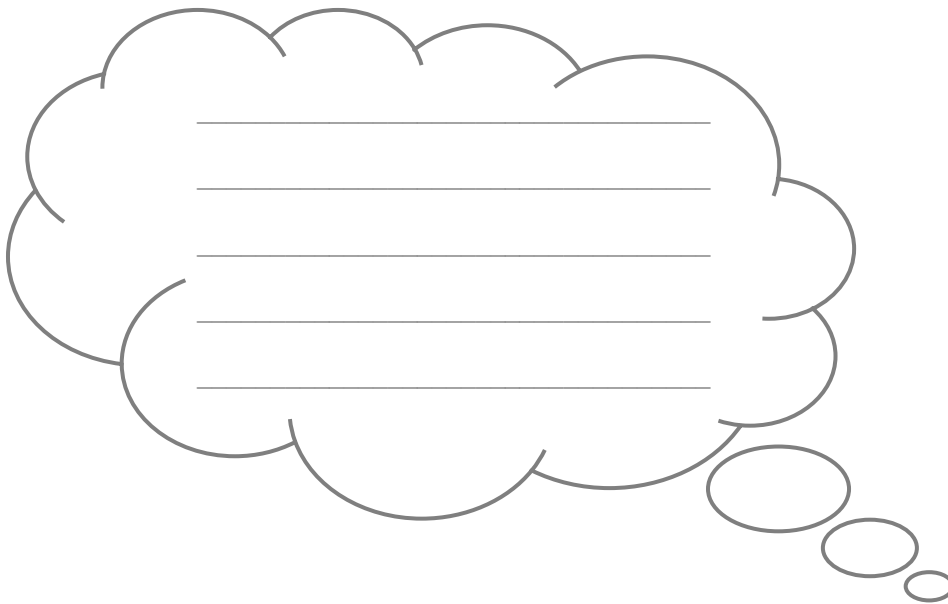
## What else do we gain from being library advocates?

You've already been using advocacy in your day-to-day work. What kind of difference does that make in how you feel about working in a library?



A large, cloud-shaped thought bubble with a scalloped border. Inside the bubble are five horizontal lines for writing. To the bottom-left of the main bubble are three smaller circles of increasing size, connected by a thin line, representing the 'tail' of the thought bubble.

How has that changed your interactions with patrons? With staff?  
How has that changed your awareness of the big picture?



A large, cloud-shaped thought bubble with a scalloped border. Inside the bubble are five horizontal lines for writing. To the bottom-right of the main bubble are three smaller circles of increasing size, connected by a thin line, representing the 'tail' of the thought bubble.

## Finding the soundbites

Sometimes we're too busy for long advocacy conversations. What to do? What "soundbites" can you use in short advocacy opportunities? Try this:

In groups of two, discuss common questions you get from patrons about the library. The questions can be about services, the facility, hours, security, staffing levels, or the collection.

Write down a question here:

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What is a short (1-minute or less) answer you can give that is positive and expands the patron's view of the library?

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## What defines a good soundbite?

- **Repeatable** (easy to remember—for you, AND for the patron!)
- **Accurate**
- **Relevant** to the person in front of you (specific, applicable)
- **Positive** (You feel excited about sharing the information!)

## How does this sound?

Look back at your soundbite answer from the last exercise. Is it repeatable? Accurate? Relevant? Positive?

What are some other soundbites you could use for that same question?

## Soundbite Lab

(There is always more than one right answer!)

*What can you say when a patron says...?*

- 1) **“Why would anyone want to use the library when they can look everything up online?”**
  - Advocacy soundbite: “Libraries are more important than ever to provide quality information. Think of the last time you did a Google search for something really important. How many hits did you get? What quality were the results? Librarians can help get you to quality information when it really matters. With your library card, you have free access to paid databases, research and staff to help you locate exactly what you need when you need it.”
  - Even more! “The truth is, not everyone has internet access. Libraries provide high-speed internet access to everyone, so whether your internet is down, a printer isn’t working, or cost is a factor, the library

is a place for everyone to stay informed and be able to participate in our communities.

- Even more! “Libraries are the communities’ living room. A true ‘third place’ away from work and from home, libraries are a place for people to come together, exchange ideas, learn something new, attend a cultural event, and meet their potential.”

2) **“I just loved this book! I’ve read everything by this author and I can’t wait for her next book to come out next year.”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “That’s great to hear! Did you know we can look up books that are ‘read alike’? You can even try Novelist, a database we subscribe to, in order to find similar authors while you wait for that new book.”

3) **“I love to use Netflix!”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Did you know the library has thousands of feature films on DVD that you can place on hold? We have popular comedies, dramas, action, and more. We even have collections of independent, international and classic films, as well as downloadable videos. Would you like to learn how to search for these on our website?”

4) **“You sure don’t seem to have very many good movies here!”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Our feature films are very popular! We share a large collection of movies with all 27 Timberland Library branches. You can place holds on any of them if you don’t see exactly what you want.”

5) **“I heard I can get books to listen to in my car here. Is that true?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Yes! We have talking books on CD and downloadable audiobooks through our website. You can place holds on talking books from any library in our 5 counties, or get started today with the downloadables.

6) **“I always wanted to learn another language.”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “We have lots of resources to help you learn another language! We have two online language-learning programs: Mango & Muzzy. You can learn Spanish, French, Japanese, German, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Russian, Korean, American Sign Language and more! Both are on our website. We pay the subscriptions so you can use them for free with your library card.”
- Even more! “Mango lets you hear and see the language and record your own voice for comparison and even has an app version. Muzzy is designed just for kids. Both will remember where you left off with your lessons.”
- Even more! “We also have instructional books & CDs, dictionaries, world language materials for kids & adults, and you can even ask about getting matched up with tutors in the community. Just ask at our Information desk or call 704-INFO.”

7) **“I just got laid off, so I thought I should come to the library since at least everything here is free.”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “You came to the right place! We have lots of resources to help search for that new job, gain new skills, get computer work done, and even look for entertainment.”
- Even more! “You can print up to 50 pages per week for free, use an hour of computer time on our internet stations—complete with all the Microsoft Office programs.”
- Even more! “And when you want to just relax, we have lots of movies, music, free events, and of course, books.”

8) **“Can you help me find the cookbooks?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Of course! I can show you where we keep cookbooks. Did you know you have access to cookbooks from all 27 Timberland Library branches? You could place items on hold and we’ll let you know when they come in.”



- Even more! “Information staff can also help you find DVDs, ebooks, magazines and articles about cooking that we have here, at other TRL locations, and on our databases.”

9) **“Does the library still have story times? I’m having my first baby in a few months. It’s been years since I’ve been to the library.”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Absolutely! We have story times for all ages from babies to adult. Here’s a brochure of this season’s schedule. You can find more at the Youth Services desk & online events calendar.”
- Even more! “We also have lots of parenting resources, family-friendly events and programs. Staff are cross-trained, so you can even ask your grown-up questions at the Youth Services desk. Welcome back!”

10) **“How is the library funded, anyway?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Timberland is funded primarily by local property taxes. We do get some funds from Timber revenue and some of the library branches are owned & maintained by the City.”
- Even more! “And then, of course, we rely on donations, bequests and support through people like you and our Friends of the Library groups to make it possible to offer the level of programming we provide.”
- Even more! “We started charging overdue fees in October, 2009. Those have helped to close the budget gap when our levy failed in 2008.”

11) **“Why aren’t you open on Sundays? When will you start opening on Sunday again?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “We reduced our open hours to maintain essential library services for our patrons while reducing our budget after the levy failed in 2008.”

- Even more! “You can use our online services 7 days a week. We have our catalog, databases, downloadables and even 24 hour chat available at [www.trl.org](http://www.trl.org).”
- Even more! “We have no plans of opening on Sundays at this time; we will analyze library hours and ask for public input if we pass a levy at some point in the future.”

12) **“Here are some donations; will people be able to check these out?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Thank you! Some donations end up as part of our collection and will be checked out to other patrons; others will be sold by the Friends of the Library to fund our wonderful library programs.”

13) **“Are the overdue fees helping the library budget?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Yes, overdue fees helped to close the budget gap from when our levy failed in 2008. We’ve been able to avoid cutting additional library hours while still growing our collection and adding new services to serve you. We are living within our budget to be good stewards of tax-payers’ dollars.”
- Even more! “What makes the biggest difference is that people return their items sooner. More of our collection is available at any one time this way.”

14) **“It’s so crowded in here; I can hardly find a place to sit!”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Yes, the library is busier than ever! We see 1,600 people per day! We’re the busiest City-owned building here in Olympia.”
- Even more! “Yes, the library is busier than ever in this economic environment! We’ve really seen an increase in all of our resources, including job hunting and free access to the internet.”
- Even more! “It’s especially busy right now. A workshop on starting your own small business just got out. I hear it was standing-room only.”

**15) “How is the library funded, anyway?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Timberland is funded primarily by local property taxes. We do get some funds from Timber Revenue and some of the library branches are owned & maintained by the City.”
- Even more! “And then, of course, we rely on donations, bequests and support through people like you and our Friends of the Library groups to make it possible to offer the level of programming we provide.”
- Even more! “We started charging overdue fees in October, 2009. Those have helped to close the budget gap when our levy failed in 2008.”

**16) “I don’t like to go to the library anymore. There are just so many homeless people there.”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “The economy has hit everyone really hard these last few years. The library is there to help everyone have access to the information and resources they need to be informed and engaged citizens.”
- Even more! “The library welcomes 1,600 people per day. We have a very diverse community and you can see that in our public libraries. There is a security guard on duty to help keep the library a safe place for everyone.”
- Even more! “Library staff value everyone’s safety and well-being. If you ever have a concern, please speak to staff immediately. They are trained to act quickly to keep the library a safe place.”

**17) “Where are all the new books? I wanted to read that bestseller, but every time I come here it’s not on the shelf.”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Did you know you can place items on hold on our website? As soon as you hear about a bestseller, just look it up on our website and you’ll get a notice when it arrives for you.”

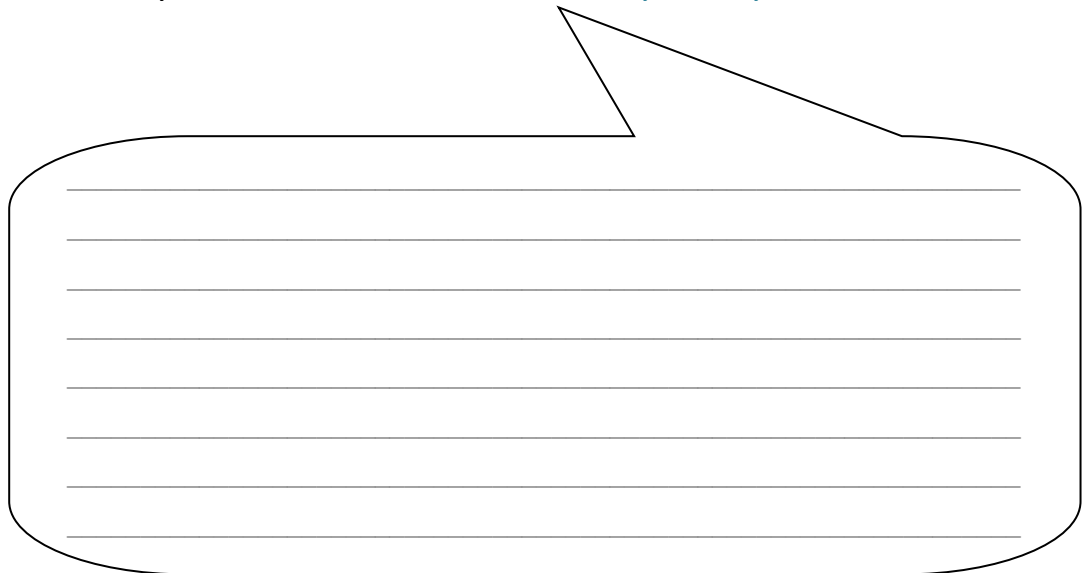
- Even more! “You can even sign up for emailed new book lists for your favorite subjects on our website so you always know what’s coming out.”
- Even more! “We have new books coming in all the time. You can browse the newest books over here and there’s even a cart of fresh returns to browse.”

18) **“I can’t believe you are in such a small building! When are you getting a new building?”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “Thank you for thinking of us! Did you know our library manager is working on offering library services on the Westside? You can help by getting involved. City Council does recognize the need for a larger building and it is in their long-term plans. Would you like me to give you our building manager’s contact information?”


19) **“Wow, you seem happy to work here!”**

- Advocacy soundbite: “I am! Let me tell you why...”

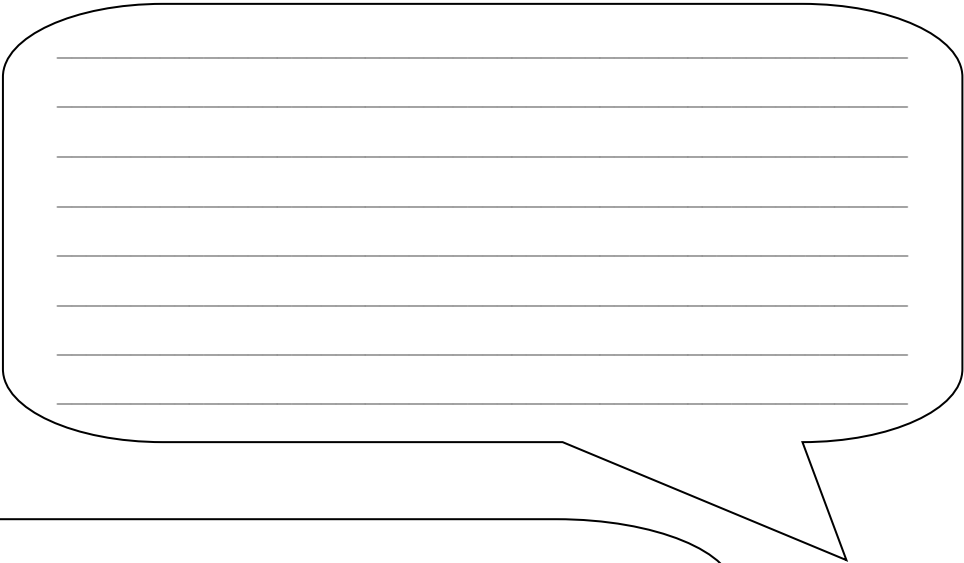


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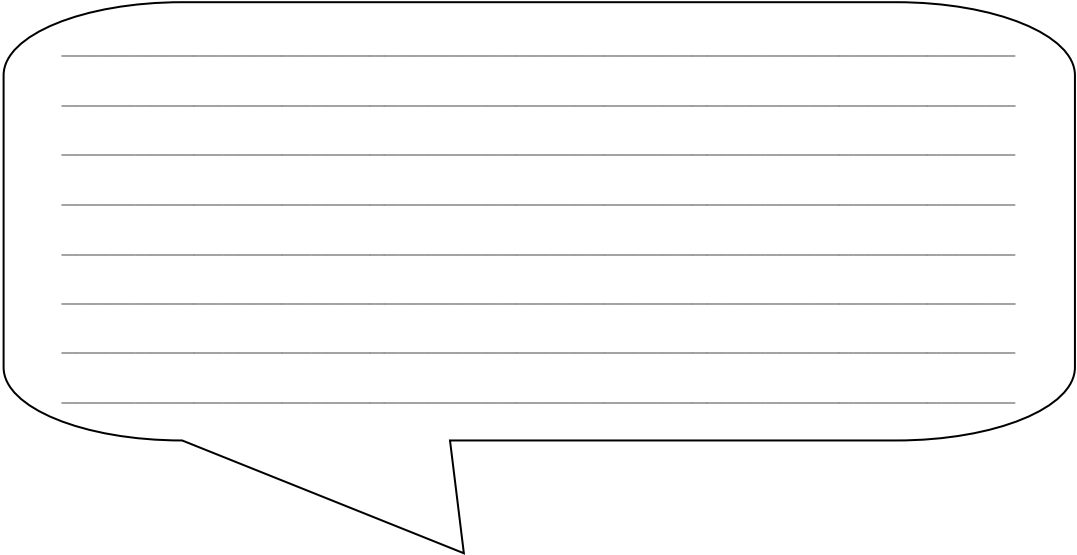
**Remember this!**  
Soundbites I want to use again.



A large speech bubble with a pointed tail pointing towards the bottom-left. The interior of the bubble is filled with ten horizontal lines, providing space for writing a soundbite.



A large speech bubble with a pointed tail pointing towards the bottom-right. The interior of the bubble is filled with ten horizontal lines, providing space for writing a soundbite.



A large speech bubble with a pointed tail pointing towards the bottom-left. The interior of the bubble is filled with ten horizontal lines, providing space for writing a soundbite.

## The wrap-up soundbite: keeping the door open for future conversations

No matter how big your library is, library workers don't always have time to tell patrons everything.

Sometimes the patron is in a hurry and doesn't have time to hear all of our information.

Sometimes we don't have the resources to answer the question.

***That's why it's important to know how to keep the door open for future conversations with a wrap-up soundbite.***

When to use the wrap-up soundbite:

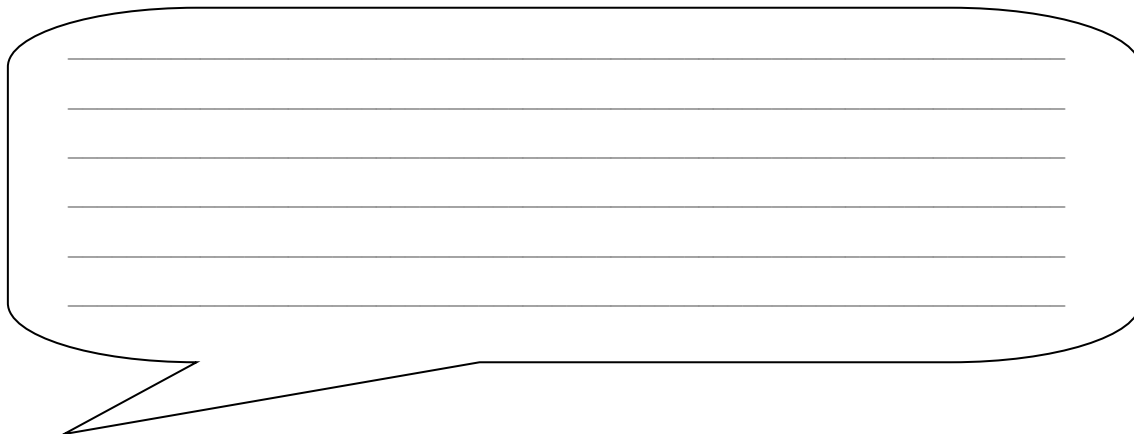
- Not enough time (yours or the patron's)
- You don't have the right resources

So, what do you do?

- Refer to the right department, or
- Ensure the patron knows whom to ask and where to look when they are ready for more information.

### Wrap-up Soundbite Exercise

Pick one of the soundbites from Soundbite Lab in your workbook and think of a wrap-up soundbite that will keep the door open for future conversations.



## What is the value of a public library?

That's a big question and the most important. Advocacy is all about sharing the answer.

- ***What value do we bring to our communities?*** We've been talking about individual conversations with patrons, but what about the ripple effect when whole communities are using our library services?

How do individuals gain access to the world of information?

How are families impacted?

How are schools affected?

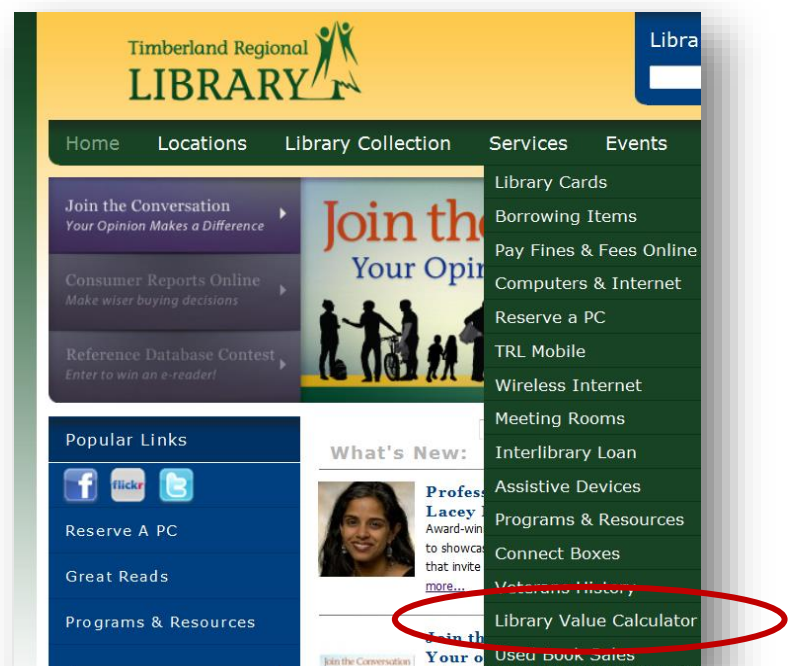
How do businesses and organizations grow stronger?

***How are lives changed?***

- ***How can tell the story of what libraries do? What are the visible services? What are the invisible services?*** Sometimes staff make it look so easy.

Holds appear magically. Books are on the shelves. Questions are answered. Internet stations are humming and databases are available 24/7. There's a lot of work behind the scenes to make all of that happen. Telling the story of library services illustrates how the library makes these resources possible (and then voters can understand if staff went away, so would the services).

- ***What value is there in a library visit?*** It's easy to think everything is free at the library, but really it's all paid for by tax-payers' dollars, donations and bequests—and patrons are getting the best deal in town. Consider for an *annual per household* tax of around \$77, that family can visit the library 6 days a week, have up to 50 items



checked out *per card*, attend programs, use the meeting room, browse current magazines and newspapers and ask for expert help. Wow. How much is that worth?

Let's look at the [Library Value Calculator](#) for a look at what library services are worth. Prices in the calculator are based on equivalent retail & rental prices for similar services in our region and will calculate as enter your input.

Here's what a family may use at the library during a month's time. Wow—

**Value of Library Services Calculator**

Input Your Use	Library Services	Value of Services
<input type="text" value="22"/>	Books Borrowed	\$ 374.00
<input type="text" value="5"/>	Paperback Borrowed	\$ 50.00
<input type="text" value="3"/>	Downloadable Books	\$ 30.00
<input type="text" value="5"/>	Magazines Borrowed	\$ 25.00
<input type="text" value="6"/>	Movies Borrowed	\$ 24.00
<input type="text" value="2"/>	Audio Books Borrowed	\$ 20.00
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Museum Passes Borrowed	\$ 20.00
<input type="text" value="4"/>	Magazine/Newspaper Use in Library	\$ 4.00
<input type="text" value="2"/>	Interlibrary Loan	\$ 50.00
<input type="text"/>	Meeting Room Use per Hour	\$ 0.00
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Adult Programs and Classes Attended	\$ 15.00
<input type="text"/>	Teen Programs Attended	\$ 0.00
<input type="text" value="4"/>	Children's Programs Attended	\$ 60.00
<input type="text" value="8"/>	Hours of Computer Use (i.e. Internet, MS Word, etc.)	\$ 96.00
<input type="text" value="6"/>	Reference Questions Asked	\$ 90.00
<input type="button" value="Calculate The Value of Your Library Use"/> <input type="button" value="Clear Form"/>		\$ 858.00

Based on the 2011 levy rate, for each \$100,000 of property value, a homeowner pays less than \$3 per month for public library services.

\$858 is a lot of value! **Now, add to that dollar amount the feeling you get by being a part of your community. That's the true value of public libraries.**

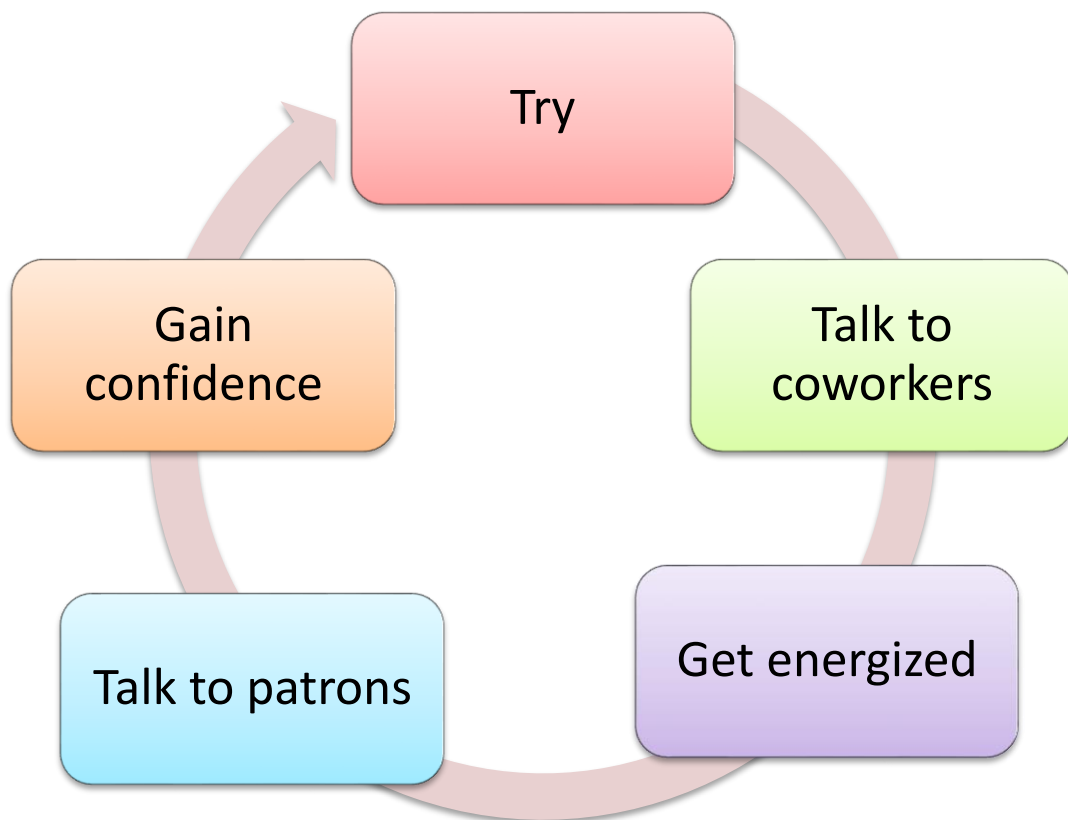


What did you learn today?

## Where do I start?

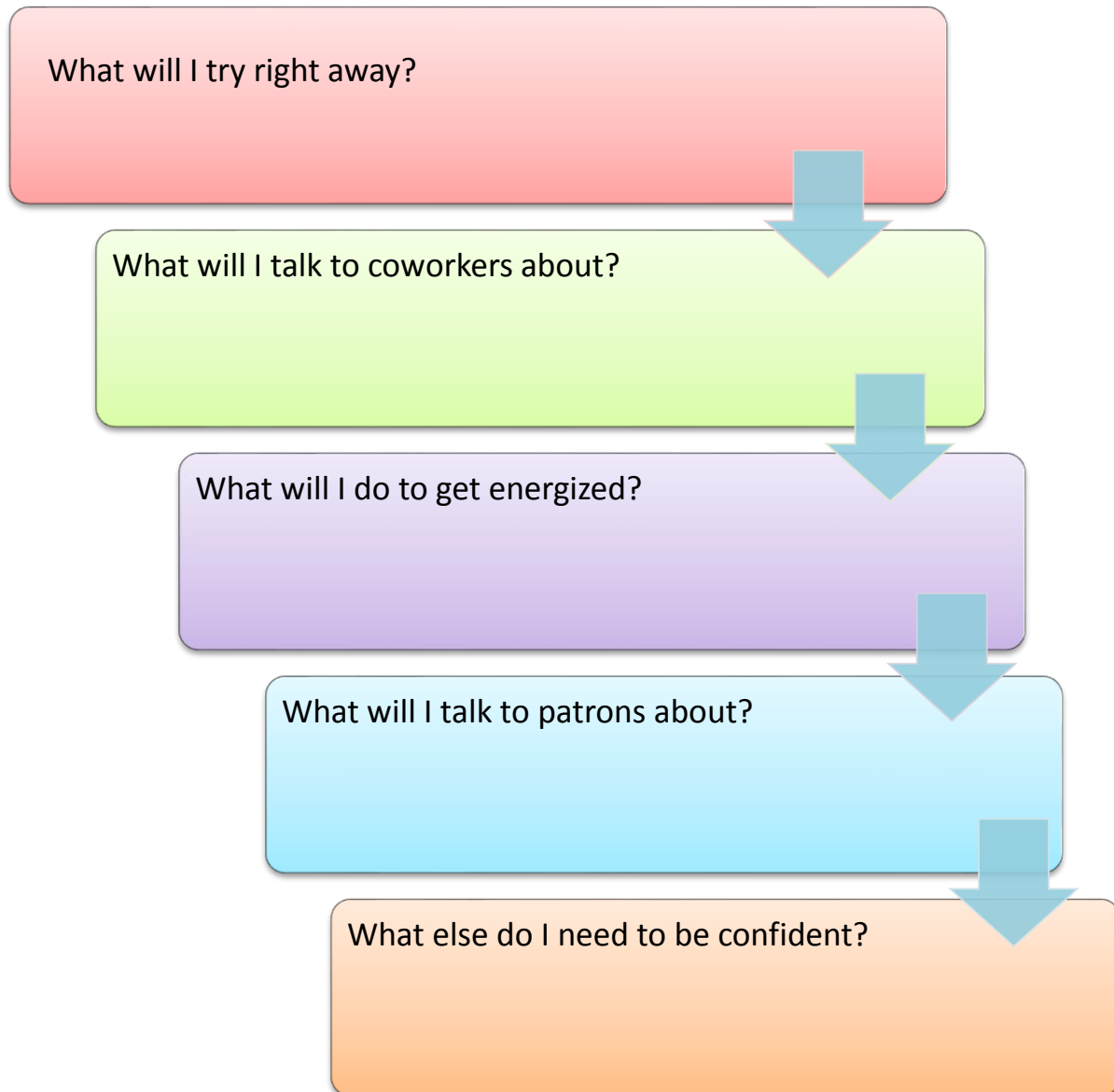
Advocacy is an attitude, not a skill. Look for opportunities.

Don't worry about using *every* opportunity—just start and you'll gain confidence as you go.



## My Plan

What are some ways *you* will start using advocacy?  
Fill in a plan that works for you! Be specific.



# Hands-on: *Frontline Library Advocacy*

**Here are ideas for how to share frontline advocacy with own library staff and patrons. Check off the ideas applicable to your library.**

- Think about frontline advocacy and how it applies to my library.
- Read the ALA Advocacy University materials.
- Review the OCLC report, "From Awareness to Funding."
- Sign-up for the PLA / Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation training, Turning the Page.
- Look for webinars, trainings and/or research on advocacy. (Hint: WebJunction and WSL's First Tuesday webinars have lots of great trainings.)
- Meet with \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss the definition of advocacy and why it is important.
- Discuss with \_\_\_\_\_ about why frontline advocacy can make a difference.
- Ask \_\_\_\_\_ what the common patron questions and complaints about library services, facilities, hours, security, staffing levels, or the collection (or anything else that seems relevant) are at the desk and on the floor.
- Work with your colleagues, managers, and administration to develop meaningful answers to the common patron questions and complaints.
- Customize the training documentation (workbook, trainer notes, etc.). Optional: email [adomancalkins@outlook.com](mailto:adomancalkins@outlook.com) for training materials and questions.
  - Include information about super-supporters and probable-supporters.
  - Include information about soundbites and wrap-up soundbites.
  - Include information about the library budget & funding sources.
- Conduct a frontline advocacy training for \_\_\_\_\_ .
- Debrief about the training.
- Consider having a Part-II training to cover additional advocacy materials.
- Share with other staff and libraries!
- Other ideas?
- 
-