

Advocacy: Reason, Responsibility and Rhetoric



Karen Bonanno

Director

PO Box 290

Zillmere QLD 4034

Australia

E-mail: karen@kb.com.au

KB Enterprises (Aust) Pty Ltd



What is advocacy?

“Advocacy is a planned, deliberate, sustained effort to raise awareness of an issue. It’s an ongoing process in which support and understanding are built incrementally over an extended period of time and using a wide variety of marketing and public relations tools.”

[Canadian Association of Public Libraries 2001.]



Mixed messages

- Promotion & Public relations
 - Who you are, what you do, for whom, when & how
- Marketing
 - Mini-surveys, market research, needs assessment, questionnaires, focus groups, demographics



Advocacy

- Uses promotion, public relations & marketing
 - Indicates what is currently offered
 - Influences perceptions by *connecting*
 - Builds effective partnerships, influential relationships, interactive decision-making & collaborative activity



Reason: Attributes of IL community

[Bonanno 2004; Cooper & Boyd n.d.; Henri 1999; Hough 2004; McKenzie 1998]

- School-based decision making
- Creative, integrated curriculum
- Range of pedagogical practices
- Models of lifelong learning
- IL competency awareness



Reason: Attributes of IL community

[Bonanno 2004; Cooper & Boyd n.d.; Henri 1999; Hough 2004; McKenzie 1998]

- Engagement in inquiry learning
- Commitment to knowledge creation
- Collaborative environment
- Knowledge professionals / navigators / tutors
- Adaptive, living & organic



Reason: Uncertain times

“It is one of the paradoxes of success that the things and the ways which got you where you are, are seldom the things that keep you there.”

[Handy, C 1994 *The empty raincoat: making sense of the future*, Random House, London, p. 50.]



Reason: Coherence & connectedness

- Sense of moral purpose
- Continuous communication
- Intense interaction
- Flexible vision
- Creative leadership



Responsibility

Is it someone else's job?

- Teacher / Teacher Librarian
- Education community
- Decision makers
- Students
- Business community
- Community leaders



Principal support

[Henri, J., Hay, L., & Oberg, D. 2002 'An international study on principal influence and information services in schools: Synergy in themes and methods', *School Libraries Worldwide*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 49-70.]

- Encouraging and facilitating the professional development of staff
- Supporting the development of a resource collection that is current and relevant to the curriculum needs of the school
- Advocating and facilitating the development of an information literate school community



Principal evaluation

1. Observation as prime source
 1. Physical facilities
 2. Conversations
 3. Behaviour
 4. Student's use
 5. Commentary of others
2. Word-of-mouth
3. Formal observations

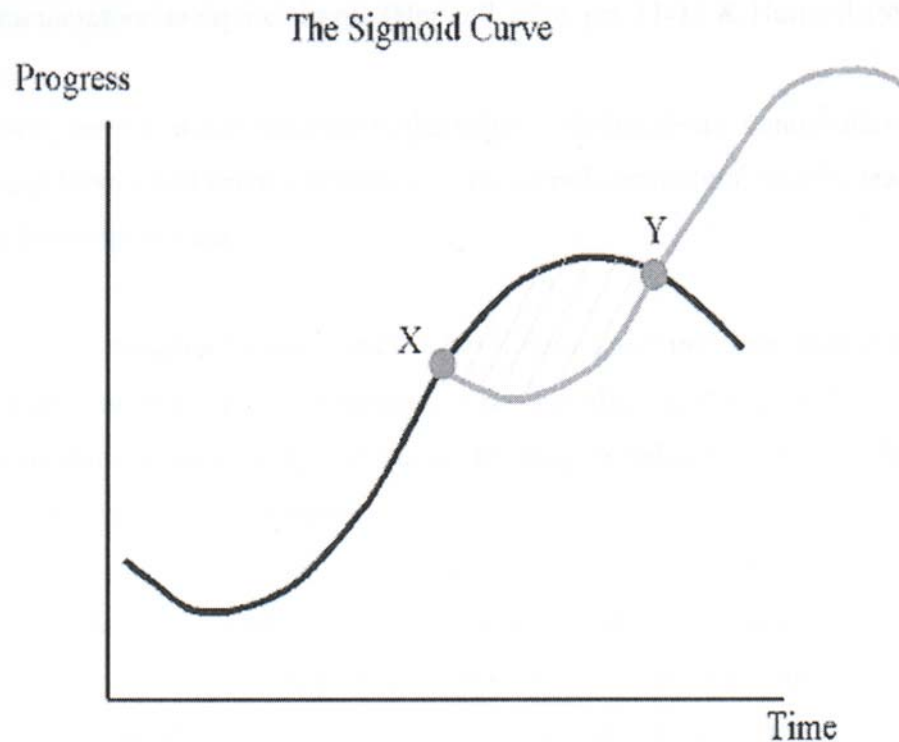
[Everhart, N 2006 'Principals evaluation of school libraries: A study of strategic and nonstrategic evidence-based approaches', *School Libraries Worldwide*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 38-50.]



Responsibility: Steps to success

- Identify potential partners
- Promote a sense of ownership
- Create a shared vision
- Respect difference of opinion
- Plan and assign
- Run 'good' meetings
- Maintain regular communication
- Keep community informed
- Express appreciation
- Evaluate your efforts

Responsibility: Sigmoid Curve



[Handy, C 1994, *The empty raincoat: Making sense of the future*]



Rhetoric: Creating the message

- Curriculum / Syllabus documents
- Education standards
- Government published documents
- Education 'jargon' / terminology
- Professional reading
- Professional learning



Rhetoric: Multi-sensory

- What do we want them to SEE?
- What do we want them to HEAR?
- What do we want them to FEEL?
- What do we want them to SAY?
- What do we want them to THINK?

Change perceptions



What can WE do?

- Be 'visible' in the learning places/spaces
- Leverage Web 2.0 capabilities
- Tell a 'learning' story – from user point of view
- Address forums outside the profession
- Avoid the *victim mentality*
- Act courageously



Synergy

“Combined strategies which capitalize on the center’s strengths (to provide perspective, direction, incentives, networking, and retrospective monitoring) and the local capacity (to learn, create, respond to, and feed into the overall direction) are more likely to achieve greater overall coherence.”

[Fullan, M 1994 'Conclusions', *System reforms: Perspectives on personalizing education*, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EdReformStudies/SysReforms/fullan5.html>]