

Defined by change – from facing changes to leading changes, journey of Turku University Library

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Turku University Library is undergoing a chain of changes. On one hand the first torrent of changes started in 2010 when University of Turku and Turku School of Economics were merged. At that point of time also the libraries of these two universities were merged, new organizational structure for the library was defined and new library director was nominated. Even though this change was announced and realized 4 years ago it caused changes and implementation of changes for years to come. On the other hand the current torrent of changes started during 2013 when Rector appointed a steering group with the task to examine how the administrative and support services of the University of Turku could be lightened in a controlled manner. At the same time there were other triggers for change, both external and internal. With all this, we recognized the need to change and decided to make the most of the situation by taking the change to our own hands. We created a vision 2016 for the library, where we, the library, define our goals and changes needed to reach the goals.

Turku University Library Vision 2016 covers almost everything: library premises, library organization, supply of services, skills needs and personnel structure as well as internal operational processes and the changes needed in those areas. Designing all this was, and still is, a challenging exercise. We needed to keep in mind our key principle: we are here for the customers. We want to build a customer-centered wholeness to deliver the best possible outcomes focusing on the value and impact of library services on student outcomes and research quality. We also see that change is an ongoing thing and constantly present in our operational environment. Therefore we wanted to design an organization, which is agile, flexible and supports well our university.

Change has been a permanent quest in our library for some years and now almost everything is in change. It also means that the staff has to process the changes continuously and learn how to live with it. The usual way how people react to changes goes from blocking, irritation and depression to acceptance, looking ahead and new motivation. Communication in this kind of situation is always a challenge. Different ways to communicate can be applied in different phases in change acceptance process. As reaction to changes happens in individual level it's demanding to plan how to communicate with individuals and groups of people in various organizational levels.

Still another challenge is motivation and involvement of personnel. Library management team has created vision 2016 for our library. It has been shared with the personnel in various

situations and ways. All personnel participate in realization of the vision by planning things in a more detailed level: we have organized development days and workshops and there have been possibilities to comment on different outputs. Making changes happen takes a lot of time, but sufficient time needs to be reserved to listening as well. To make changes happen library management has to understand and recognize all the issues brought up by the personnel in all levels of the organization and find ways to respond to those.

Turku University Library is in change process. At the same time we've tried to make our change process a learning process as well. We didn't want just to go with the flow; instead we designed a ship, defined where to navigate and ensured we can do this. This presentation will describe our journey, requirements and triggers, our planning and actions as well as some reactions and lessons learnt.