

More Meaningful Community Partnerships



Super Mario by Nintendo

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Shameless Self-Promotion

- Key Experiences:
 - Strategy for engaging the business and tech community
 - Year-long community assessment process
 - Librarian for adults, teens & kids; manager for adult, mobile & community engagement



"Adults Just Wanna Have Fun" by ALA Editions

Topics

- Why partnerships?
- What is a partnership?
- Examples
- Challenges and solutions
- Do it anyway



"Buddy the Elf" from memegenerator

Why partnerships?



"I eat socks - I supply the socks" from me.me

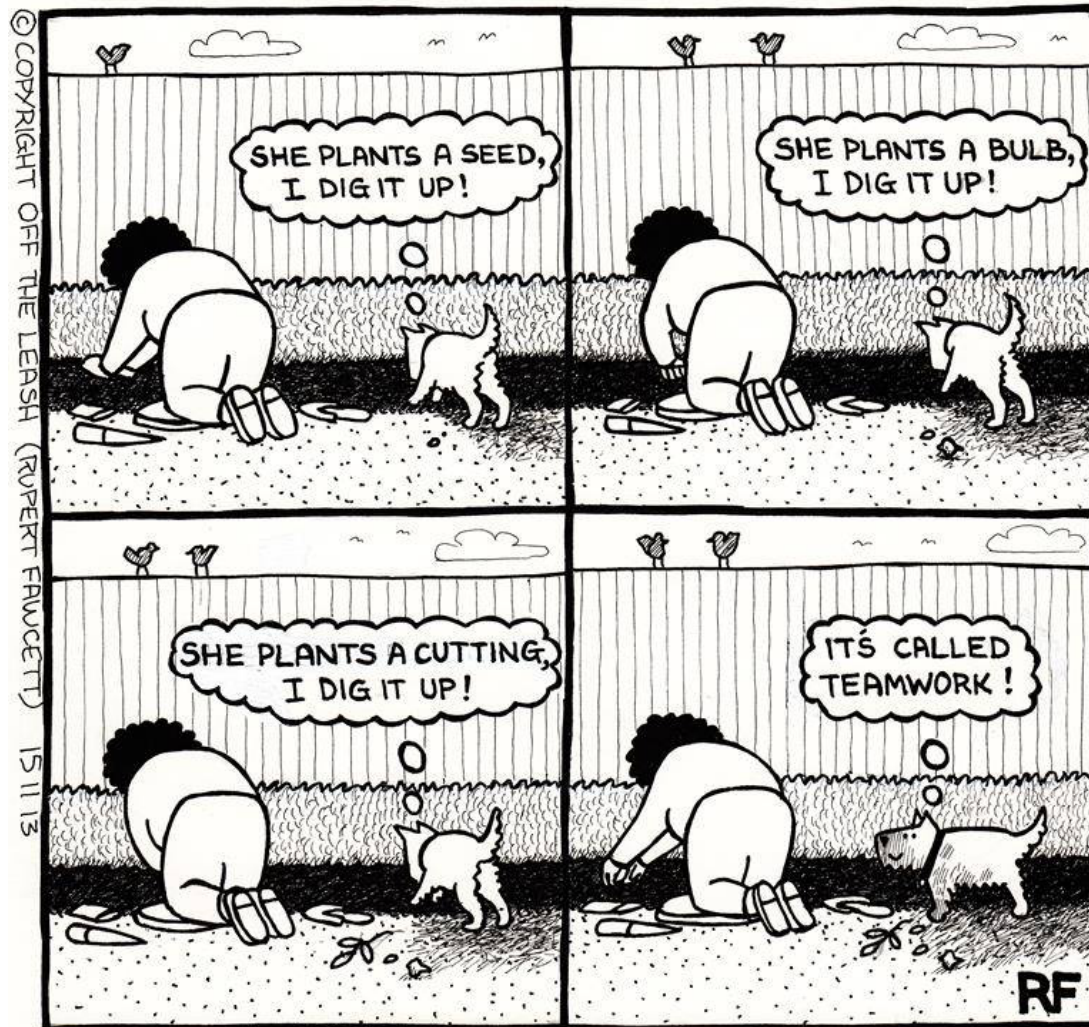
Why partnerships?

- Explicit alignment with community goals = relevance
- Our core values: Equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Align with your library's mission
- Sharing and extending resources
- On the menu --> at the table --> be the table (library as platform)



"Libraries are for Everyone" by Hafuboti, Creative Commons Attribute/Share Alike

What makes a partnership?



What makes a partnership?

- Mutual benefit
- Mutual contribution
- Shared goals
- Shared power
- Aligned values
- Clear roles



"My Little Pony" by Hasbro

What isn't a partnership?

- Exchanging \$ doesn't create a partnership; it creates a transaction
- Partnerships can include money; they just can't be only money



"DuckTales" by Disney

What isn't a partnership?

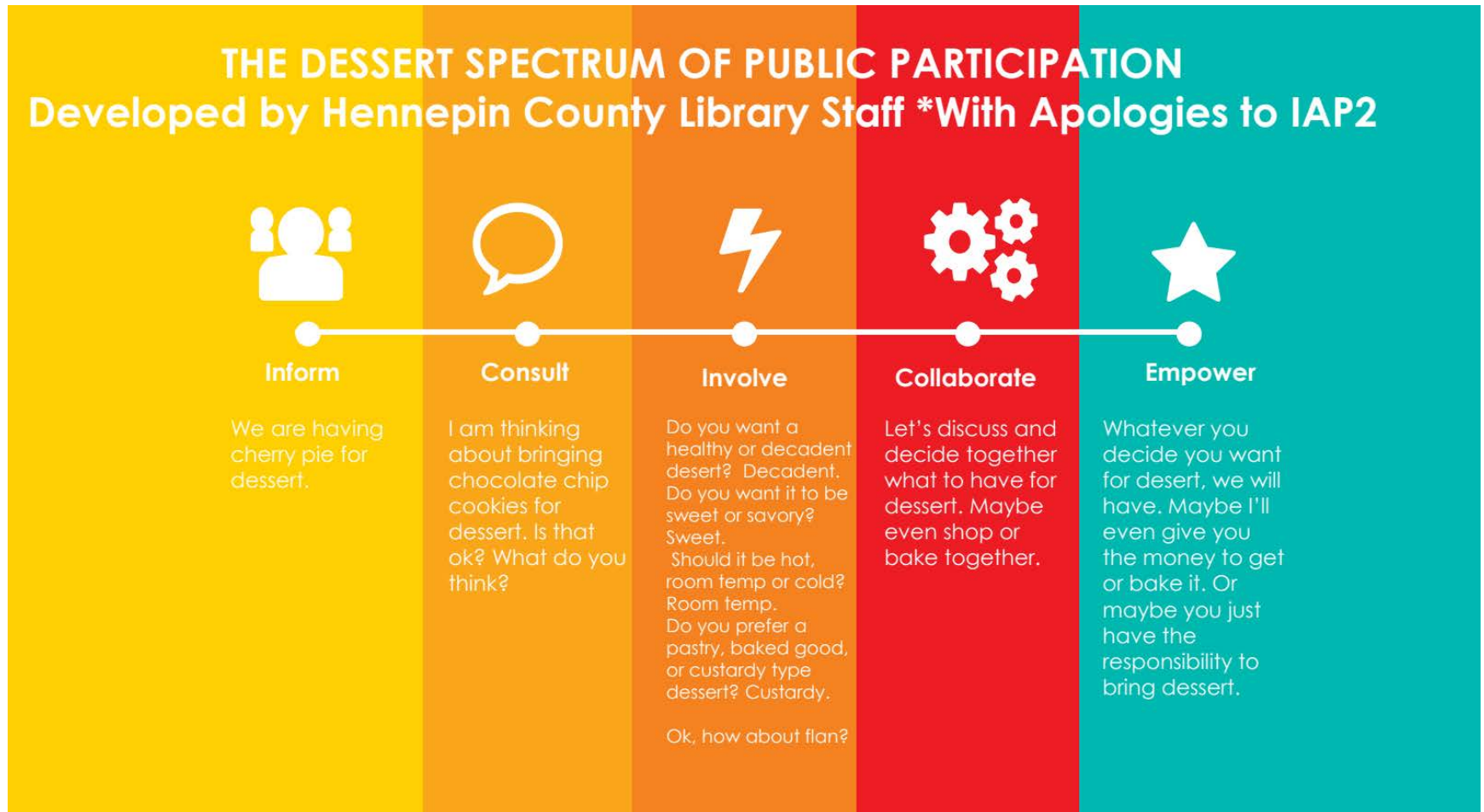
Promotion



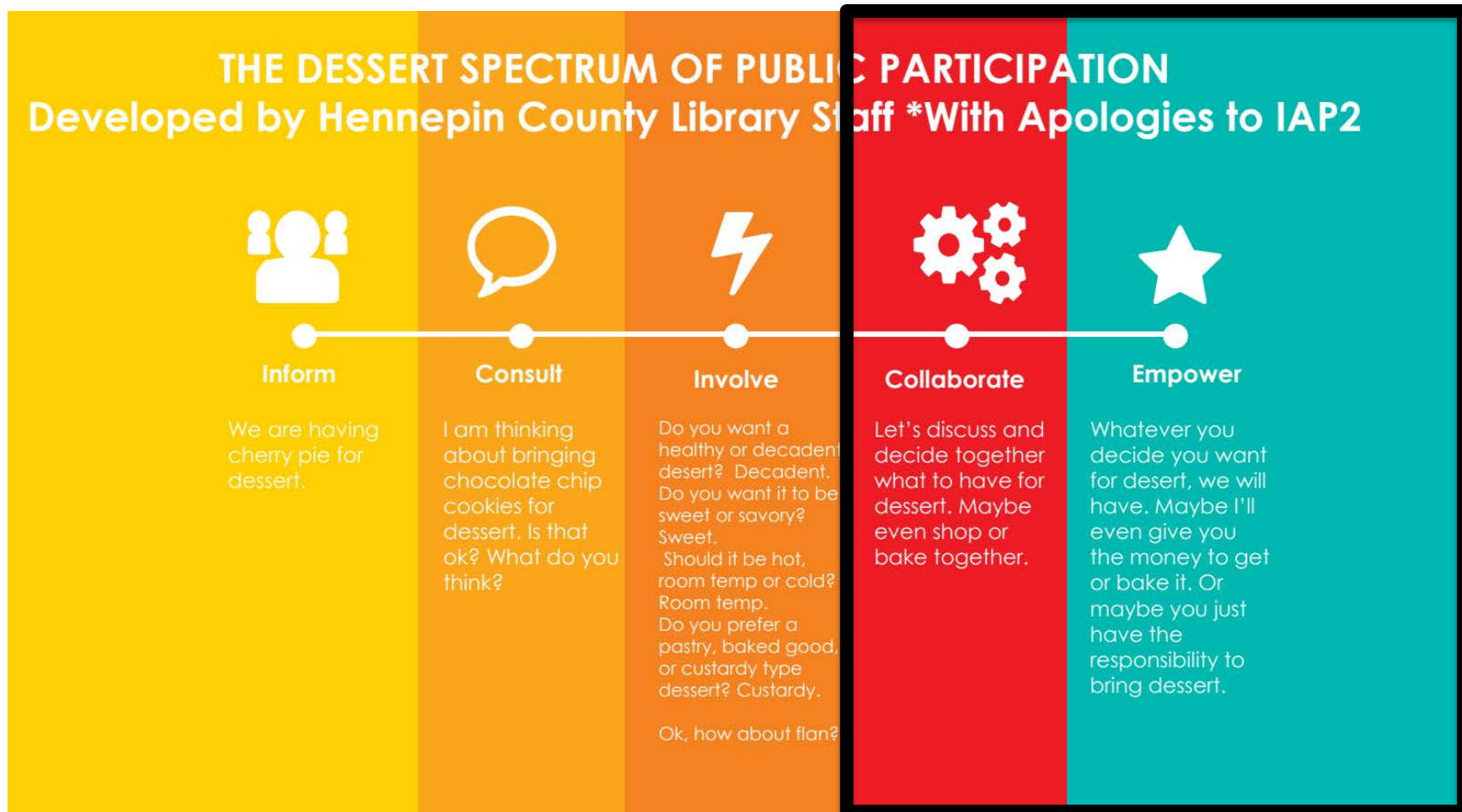
Engagement



Levels of engagement



Levels of engagement

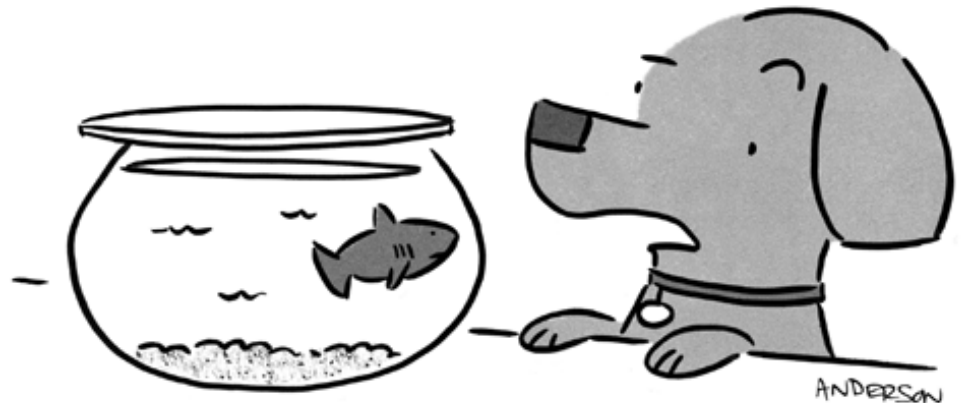


How do you build them?

Partnerships grow from relationships!

A few tools include:

- Community assessment
- Asset mapping
- Embedding
- Just showing up and listening



"You make a good point; we both hate the cat.
I'm just not sure what it is you'd bring to a partnership."

How do you build them?

- Begin at the end
 - Identify shared vision and goals
 - SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
- Identify structure, roles, milestones
 - Collective impact
 - OBPE and Theory of Change
 - Many others
- Communication plan
- Don't assume!
- **Put it in writing**



Ferry Tales

- Started with a program idea initiated by library
- Between consult and collaborate
- Began simply; grew & snowballed
 - Book group
 - Author and publisher events
 - Cookbook club offshoot
 - eBookshelf
- Drew local and national attention



Reflecting on lessons learned

- Partnerships amplify our ideas and our reach
- Starting with an idea is harder than starting with a relationship
- Know your partner's priorities and speak their language
- Be open and flexible, share power and control



Platteville Public Library (WI)

WorkSource Connection Sites

- Co-Design: Planned together completely
- Based on shared audience and goal
- Serendipitous opportunity
- Shaped by grant requirements
- Primary and secondary partners
- Benefit regardless of grant results



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Reflecting on lessons learned

- Show up
- Talk about your values
- Know what you have to offer
- Lean in to ambiguity
- Know your priorities so you can move quickly
- Involve others



Platteville Public Library (WI)

Asset Building Coalition

- Embedding
- Library as convener for outside efforts
- Complementary resources, expertise
- Shared goal unites gov, nonprofit, for-profit
- Multiple, ongoing results
 - Super Saturday/ Financial Friday
 - Financial Education series
 - Access to space, resources
 - Referrals, warm hand-offs
 - What's next?



Asset Building Coalition of Kitsap



Reflecting on lessons learned

- Show up! Be a regular presence, keep the conversation going
- Participate in broader community initiatives
- Figure out the library's role supporting in community priorities
- Make things **WITH**, not **FOR** or **AT** people



Platteville Public Library (WI)

It's not always easy.



NOAA Celebrating 200 Years, Image courtesy of Zurich U.S.

It's not always easy

- Time-consuming
- You're not in charge!
- Communication
- Money
- Disparities in resources, timelines
- Differences in expectations, culture, direction
- Service providers aren't the people they serve

It's not you, it's me
finally realizing you're
terrible for me.



Solutions



Rick and Morty, Cartoon Network

Solutions

- Prioritize spending time on partnering
- Be proactive – partnerships take work
- Communicate clearly, often, and early
- Know your goals and values; stick to them and be flexible about everything else
- Know when to stop, or better yet, when not to start



Star Trek: The Next Generation, Paramount Domestic Television, CBS

Failure isn't fatal!



"Food? Where!?" by Unknown, from I Can Haz Cheezburger?

Partnerships are worth it!

- Your library's mission in action
- Collaboration leads to innovation
- Extend resources (yours and others) to fill gaps and meet essential community needs
- Amplify what's already great in your community by empowering the people doing it
 - Especially marginalized voices
 - Especially because librarianship is heavily white
- Knock people's socks off



Libraries Rock by CSLP

Questions?



"Question Everything Why" from 99Covers.com

