



BEST PRACTICES IN THE MODERN LIBRARY

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Abstract:

In the modern library, whose shelves could be wooden, metal, or electronic we need to school or college ourselves in the best practices to ensure that we efficiently access the best material from these shelves. We do this by overcoming the attitude that the library is a foreign country, by rapidly understanding distinctions among resources and by using library resources, services, facilities and search engines effectively.

Keywords: *Library, Best practice, Modern technology.*

Definition of Best Practices:

ODLIS (Reitz, 2004) defined term 'best practices' as follows: "In the application of theory to real-life situations, procedures that, when properly, applied consistently yield superior results and are therefore used as reference points in evaluation of the effectiveness of alternative methods of accomplishing the same task. Best practices are identified by examining empirical evidence of success."

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary describes best practices as quality of high standard, excellence, highly improved, outstanding, par excellence service. It mean way of doing something that is usual or expected way in a particular organization or situation, guidelines for good practices. In this process of developing best practices we take action rather than good ideas and we improve our skills.

While assessing the quality of Higher Education in the country, NAAC has providing the useful guidelines to

improve the overall quality of Library & Information Centre and services offered by these centres. In order to effectively meet the challenges posed by the global changes of technology and to satisfy the multidimensional information needs of the library end users. NAAC has developed the following set of best practicesfor college libraries.

- Computerization of library with standard software.
- Inclusion of sufficient information about the library in the college prospectus.
- Compiling student / teacher statistics.
- Displaying newspaper clippings and a clipping file maintained periodically.
- Career/ employment information services.
- Internet facility to different user groups.
- Information literacy programmes.
- Suggestion Box.
- Displaying New Arrivals.

- Conduct book exhibition on different occasions.
- Organizing book talks.
- Instituting Annual Best Use Award for students.
- Organizing competitions annually.
- Conduct user survey periodically.

S. D. Vyas (Vyas, 2009) add some best library practices in his article, these are:

- Making of a Path Finder to the library.
- Keeping the library premises neat and clean.
- Compiling a list of Current Serials/ catalogue of journals.
- Updating and maintaining library website.

- Maintaining useful statistics regarding the use of the library and displaying them on the library walls.
- Compiling checklists on different subject/topics as a part of documentation service.
- Library Committee formation.
- Distribution of useful handouts.

In order to be able to provide best services to the users, the library adopts processes and practices that are not only considered to be the best but are comparable with the best in the market. The best practices are classified into Traditional, ICT Based, Extension and General as follows.

Traditional	ICT Based	Extension	General
1. Book Exhibition	1. Computerized Library with standard Software	1. 1.External Membership Facility	1. Library Advisory Committee Meeting.
2. Library Hour	2. Library Webpage	2. Inter Library Loan (ILL)	2. Binding of books & periodical Volumes.
3. Orientation Programme	3. Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	3. Document Delivery Service (DDS)	3. Inclusive of Library Information in prospects & College Websites.
4. New Arrivals	4. Electronic Document Delivery Services	4. Earn and Learn Scheme	4. Intercom facility for easy communication among various departments.
5. Library Brochure	5. CAS & SDI Services	5. Reprography	5. Pasting of barcode and stamping in a definite place on the books.
6. Book Reviews	6. Electronic Mail (E-mail)	6. Suggestion Box	6. Question Paper sets of previous examinations.
7. Readers Club	7. Electronic Resources	7. Newspaper clipping service	7. Library Calendar of Activity & Events.
8. Library short Term course	8. Institutional Repository	8. Career Notification	8. Use of pesticides for keeping away book worm & damage of books.
9. Training to use E-Resources	9. Online Full Text Service	9. Feedback register	9. Display of various library charts.
10. Indexing & Abstracting Services	10. Online Readers Advisory Services	10. Library Help Desk	10. Keeping the library premises neat & clean
11. Staff User Meet		11. Library Security	
12. Best Library user Award			
13. Carrier Guidance Cell			

Strategy for Application of Best Practices:

There is must and necessary of best practices strategy, if we want implement and improve best practice accepted by the library. The successful application of the best practices can be achieved by adopting the following five-stage strategy.

1. Identification of best practices.
2. Implementation of best practices.
3. Institutionalization of best practices.
4. Internalization of best practices.
5. Dissemination of best practices.

Implementation of Best Practices:

However, difficult it may be, all of us have some understanding of what the best practices are. The implementation is really the challenge. There may be some genuine limitations in the application of best practices, but many are imaginary. Instead of finding solutions to problems, sometimes our 'professionalism' may lead us to find problems in every solution. The implementation strategies shall include **planning, resource mobilization, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation**. The implementation approach focuses more on performance than on promises.

Factors considered for Best Practices

Getting to Know Your Library:

Students use the library computer to track down perfect information resources, find all the bibliographic information they need about it online, and then have no idea how to find it on a particular shelf and give up without actually ever tracking it down. The problem here is not in the electronic cataloguing system, which must be comprehensive to be useful but in the individual user's initiative. Put simply to

become a good researcher, there is no substitute for being physically present in the library and learning its layout.

Take a tour: Whether self-guided, human-led, or virtual, a tour curbs the fundamental confusion about where you are within a library which can make all the difference when you are chasing down a particular source in a hurry. A simple tour will also expose you to the different forms and locations of library resources, such as help desks, shelves for current periodicals, reference shelves, stacks for less recent resources and microfilm.

Plan ahead: Especially when working on a sizeable project, it is unrealistic to expect that all the resources you need will be immediately available. You must give yourself time to physically track down resources, recall material that is checked out, request archived material or deal with the inevitable limitations of resources that you find.

Recognize how libraries work together: Especially at a large university you encounter multiple, specialized libraries within one system and you have access to interlibrary loan (allowing you to borrow books from other libraries). No library is or even tries to be a "one-stop shop."

View the library webpages as a time-saving device: Beyond their obvious aid as a research tool, library webpages are typically set up to save you time. You can usually do such things as reserve books online, renew books online and even suggest books for purchase or e-mail specific questions to a librarian.

When you find a hard copy of a resource, browse the nearby shelves: Frequently, while standing among the library shelves, I have discovered some of the best resources simply by looking through the related books near the one I

was originally seeking. Such serendipitous, productive discovery is a lot more likely to happen at the library shelves than online.

Do not fear the human: When in doubt, ask a real person who is paid to help you.

Discerning Distinctions Among Resources: When choosing the best resources for a particular task, you improve and narrow your search by assessing source quality and establishing a good fit between the level of source information required and the circumstances for which you are writing. A good starting point is determining whether a resource is scholarly or popular, whether its material is more anecdotal or research-based and whether the author's tone is subjective or factual.

Discerning which sources best fit the task at hand, keep in mind these guidelines:

You can rapidly determine the quality and usefulness of a source without fully reading it. Consider such issues as its level of language use, its context (whether published as a single work or as part of a collection) and the sources that it cites. Popular material is often short, not technically oriented and topical. Scholarly work tends to be longer and more structured, more technical and concerned with adding to a body of academic work rather than just standing alone.

The best academic resources are usually journals that are "peer-reviewed" or "refereed" (the two terms are used almost interchangeably). This means that the journal editor has had other authorities critique and approve articles that the journal publishes. Practices vary about how this review takes place, but such review affords a level of quality that other resources might not possess. If the journal is online, you can try to determine if it is

peer-reviewed by reading its root pages, but the surest way is to find a print version of the journal and look at its "Information for Authors" page, typically appearing in the back or front of the journal.

When seeking print journal articles, narrow your search by using abstracts and indexes available on your library shelves. This helps you find resources across disciplines and abstracts and indexes provide a form of quality control by listing established journals.

If a source is online, see if it is also available in print, and favour the print version.

Understanding Search Engines

Happily, the web is a good teacher of itself, so rather than provide lengthy material here on search engines. There are available some URLs for further information. A few oft overlooked fundamentals of search engines are useful to find or search information.

For a comprehensive search, do not rely on a single search engine, and understand that different search engines work differently. Some, for instance, first yield sites that are attempting to sell books, while others first yield sites of academic journals online.

Learn to do advanced searches by clicking on a link such as "Search Tips" near the search box within a particular engine. Such tips tend to be transferable among search engines.

Most search engines employ "Boolean logic" (for an excellent primer on Boolean logic, see ["Basic Search Tips and Advanced Boolean Explained"](#)(link is external) from Berkeley University) which means that you can use operators (such as "or," "not," "and," and the "+" and "-" sign) to narrow your search. Further, you can usually use quotation marks around a key phrase to

indicate that you wish to view pages that include those words in that order.

Conclusion:

Best practice in simple term known as the practices which enhances the existing function and activities of any system. Use of technology in the marketing of information products and services is always made good results. All higher education institutions are now in the process of digitization in all their services and sections like admission of students, examination etc. Disseminating information through library website in a networked environment is made possible due to technology and this has to be adopted in our academic libraries. The networked environment enables the libraries to reach any users at remote locations. So best practices using information communication technology are playing major role in the development of any library system

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