

What makes a great library?

In order for a business to compete effectively in today's economy, they must be prepared to meet the challenges of tomorrow and truly aspire to greatness. Mediocrity will not survive in this new world in which we find ourselves. So, I asked sixty-five of my nearest and dearest how they define a great library. This is what they told me.



A great library:

- Is all about the people. You may have the newest, coolest "stuff" and the best building ever, but if the staff are crabby or dispassionate, it's all for naught.
- It's not the books, the databases, the movies or the CD's. A great library gives you the feeling of empowerment, knowing there are people who will help you in your quest for information and enlightenment.
- Is created by using the past as a tool for the future. Great libraries incorporate what people love about yesterday's library into a vision for tomorrow's library. Libraries are all about hope and the future!
- Knows the community they serve, anticipates their needs, provides great customer service, and is aware of the future. Walking on water is optional.
- Strives to serve readers, regardless of how the reading experience evolves from the printed word to the digital image. Great libraries evolve; they are grounded in a clear community vision and serve their readers well.
- Is fundamental to the democratic experience.
- Positions itself as the very heart and soul of the community with an active role in improving the community it serves.
- A smorgasbord, where one is free to graze or sate oneself with learning and fun!
- Fills my heart and soul with one word: home.

What makes a library great? For me, it's all the passionate folks who answered my email and those in library land who read "*On a + note*" week after week. For this humble scribe, it's all about the community of people who buy into this glorious vision: that's what makes libraries great!!