Bright Spots study

What's working and how can we do more of it?

A study to find the high performing libraries in the province.

A study to look at statistics to try and find if we can discover high performing libraries. Not to determine winners but rather to discover best practices
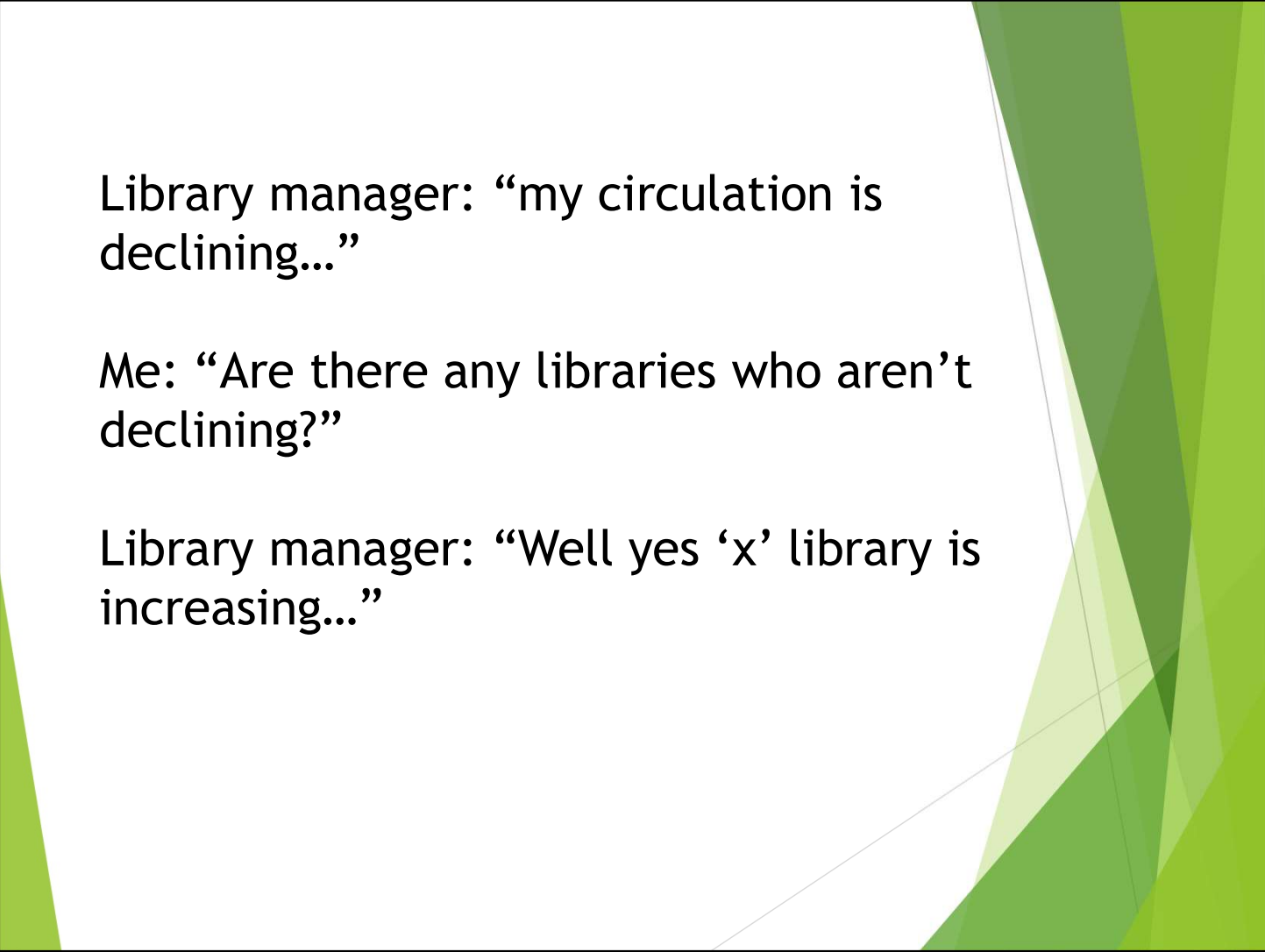
10 years ago, my wife was back at work and I was at home looking after our son. I would walk to the centennial library downtown and I discovered their graphic novel collection. I went back every few days and got more books. It was the first time I ever felt like the library catered to me, and was instamental in my decision to move back to Australia and go to library school. Apologies to Danielle Pilon, any resemblance is purely coincidental…
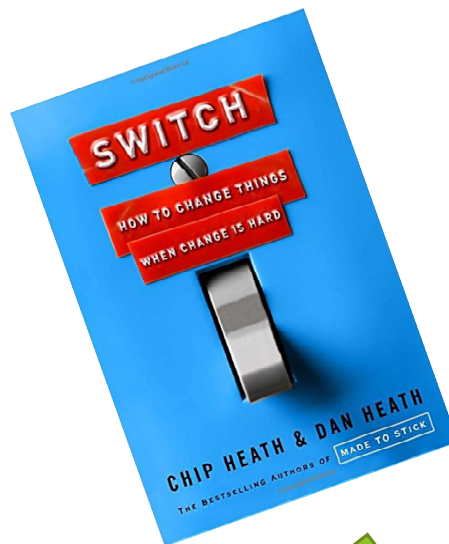
Library manager: "my circulation is declining…"

Me: "Are there any libraries who aren't declining?"

Library manager: "Well yes 'x' library is increasing…"

While I was out on a consultation with a library in 2015. They voiced concern about declining statistics.

Switch

Dan & Chip Heath

The Power of Positive Deviance

Richard Pascale Jerry Sternin, Monique Sternin

The idea to look at who was undertaking successful practice sin MB came from these books. Switch used the term 'bright spots', although the original idea was from the book 'the power of positive deviance'. Positive deviance (or as switch calls it: bright spots) can be summed up as when everyone is facing a challenging issue, with the same resources, there are usually some people in that community who have already solved the problem. Sometimes you just need to find those examples and share with the group,

I.E, **what's working and how can we do more of it...**

Manitoba Public Library Statistics : Ready Reports

In each report you may click on the Bar graph icon to convert to bar graph format, or the Excel icon to convert to spreadsheet. Library personnel have access to additional report formats and date ranges via account. Libraries input their statistics annually by January 31.

2016

Library systems outside of Winnipeg

Income Expenditures Collection Circulation Membership Personnel Facility Technology Other Activity Hours Open

All library systems including Winnipeg

Income Expenditures Collection Circulation Membership Personnel Facility Technology Other Activity Hours Open

Note: 'Expenditure' reports are currently not available, as the data has yet to been entered.

Social Media

Library contacts 2017

2015

Library systems outside of Winnipeg

Income Expenditures Collection Circulation Membership Personnel Facility Technology eBook Circulation Other Activity Hours Open

All library systems including Winnipeg

Income Expenditures Collection Circulation Membership Personnel Facility Technology eBook Circulation Other Activity Hours Open

Any one can access the statistics in Manitoba's Counting opinions website.
https://mb.countingopinions.com/index.php?page_id=4

Look at the available statistics...equalise by population

Using these metrics:

1. Visits per capita
2. Circulation per capita
3. Turnover of collection

There are many metrics we could have looked at, however, we decided to focus on these three as we could get consistent data across libraries. They are not the whole story of a libraries activity but they do paint a basic picture of activity and furthermore the potential quality of service.

Initially I was hoping to find one guiding principle that would tie together what top performing libraries were doing differently than others. I had no such luck and soon discovered the obvious, that success was more complex and nuanced, there was no silver bullet.

Main findings...

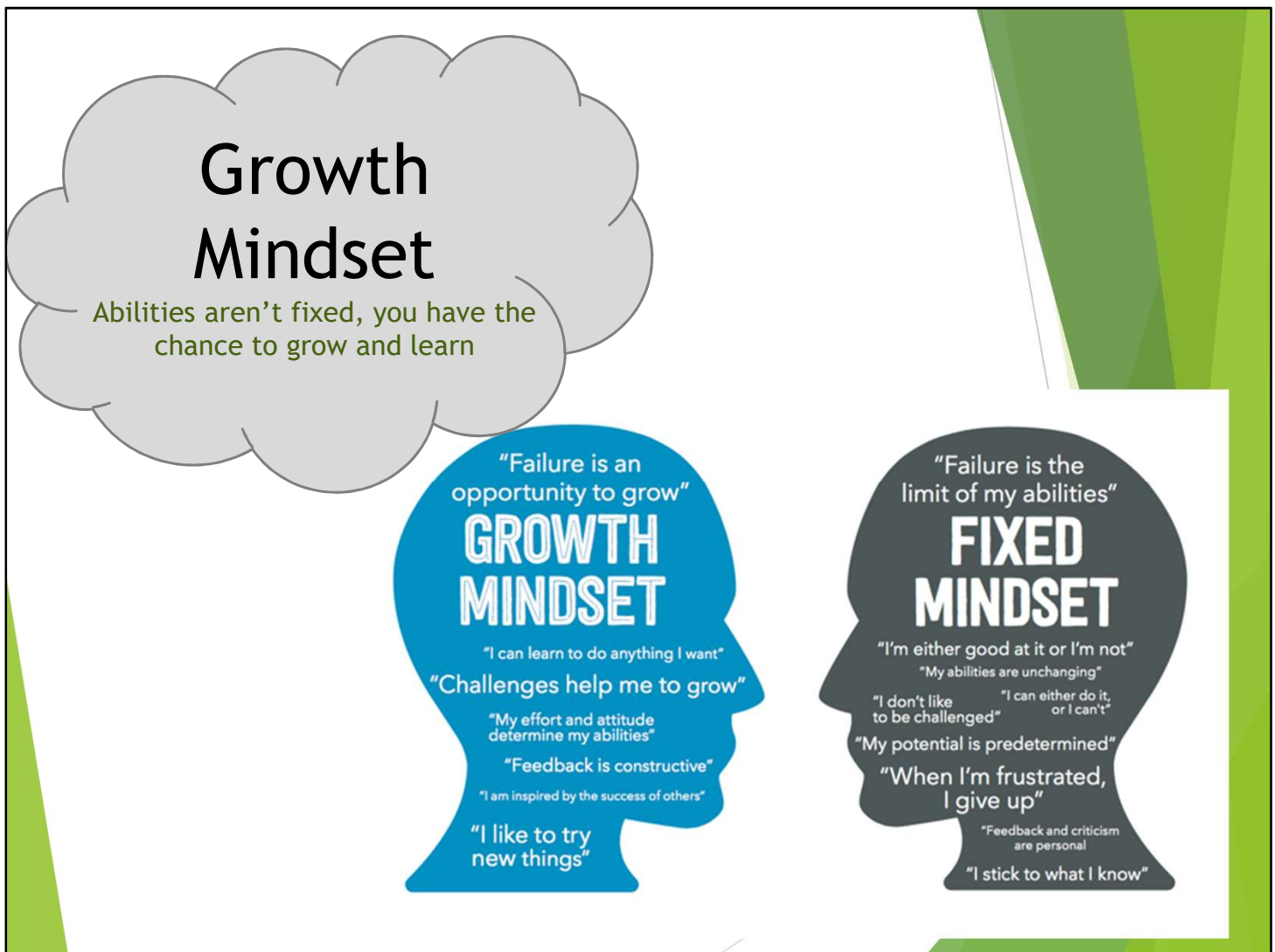## Growth Mindset

1.Building & Space	2.Community Buy In
3.Welcoming & Barrier Free	4.Responsive Collection

It was hard to explain some of thee good practices I saw tied together, but I decided upon diving the good practices into four key areas. I also tied each area together by acknowledging that the head library manager has a large effect on overall practices. I found that the head librarian demonstrated a '**growth mindset**'. This mindset in turn led them to enable best practices in four key areas

1. Building & Space
2. Community buy in
3. Welcoming & Barrier free
4. Responsive Collection

Before we move onto the four key areas, I wanted to cover what a growth mindset is and why it's important.

People with this mindset are more comfortable taking on challenges, to make mistakes, learn and move on for the better. People with the opposing 'fixed' mindset believe that abilities are fixed and trying to improve only risks failure and opens up room for criticism. With a fixed mindset there are very limited opportunities for change and growth.

In a growth mindset, challenges are exciting rather than threatening. So rather than thinking, oh, I'm going to reveal my weaknesses, you say, wow, here's a chance to grow.

— *Carol S. Dweck* —
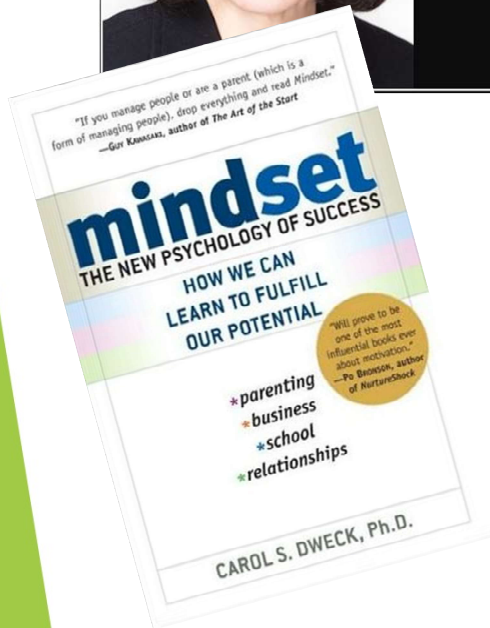
TED talk

This quote from Dweck, explains it nicely

You can check out her book or watch her TED talk to find out more…

The four areas…

1.Building & Space

A place to visit, spend time and return

- A library building needs to be highly recognizable and easy to access by all members of the community. It has to be both relaxing and exciting.
- Purpose built; preferably relatively new or new looking
- Ample parking, specifically for the library directly outside the building
- Next to a green space and/or recreation space
- Clear signage outside indicating it's a library
- Ample natural light inside
- Space to spend time and relax
- Tidy and well organized
- Extensive and consistent opening hours (+45 per week on average)

2.Community Buy In

Get the public aware
and in the door

Get people aware and in the door! Library has close and ongoing ties with local community groups and business. They participate in cross promotion; the cooperative marketing by two or more organisations of one another's products.

- Requests specific sponsorships or donations from public, community groups, or businesses
- Community displays within library
    - Art displays
    - Local museum
    - Local businesses
- Regular ongoing visits
    - Child care and preschool groups
    - Literacy groups
    - Book clubs

- School groups
- Large annual events
- A good and ongoing relationship with local newspaper, radio station, or relevant local media for promotion
    - Regular contact, articles, weekly reviews, highlighting

3.Welcoming & Barrier Free

Patrons aren't turned away

- Recognizes what barriers may keep people from the library and actively tries to remove those barriers.
- Customer service is paramount
- Easy to sign up and renew card, e.g, no formal ID required
- Flexible and community tailored fine policies, e.g, small fines do not prevent borrowing, fines can be waived or ignored if for small amounts (3 libraries had no fines at all)
- Minimal and friendly signage (helpful not intimidating)
- Helpful staff who never turn people away

- (later the Cake story…)

4.Responsive Collection

Addresses community
needs

Maintains a responsive collection through:
- Frequent and extensive weeding; sometimes helped in part by large annual book sales
- Extremely Responsive to patron requests
    - New purchases
    - fILL & eLM
- Smart and quick purchasing/acquisitions
    - Variety of sources
    - Public feedback
    - Purchasing committees
    - New donations
- Accessible and relevant collection
    - Not crowded
    - Visibly current

- Face out displays throughout
- Meets the needs of the community

An important part to note is that there is a hierarchy of importance in these four categories...[click through for animation]

1. If the **'Building & Space'** is not a desirable place to visit, then there is little to no **'Community buy in & Partnerships'**.
2. Without **'Community buy in & Partnerships'**, people are not aware of the library or are not reminded of its importance.
3. Even if patrons are aware and enjoy using libraries, they will soon be discouraged from the lack of '**Welcoming & Barrier Free'** policies.
4. For a patron to enjoy a '**Responsive Collection'**, they have to first pass through the previous barriers.

Finishing remarks

When in doubt...Sell the cake!

A friend tried to buy cake for his wife's birthday. Yet the store only sold them by the slice. He asked if he could buy all the slices, the store said no, as then they would be out of cake...

When in doubt...Sell the cake!!

I think this nicely fits into area 3 welcoming and barrier free. Removing the rules and barriers the stop people from using your service...

Next steps?

Here are some highlights of potential areas for future study:

- Study the range of fine policies across the province and how it affects circulation, late items, lost items etc
- Examine the location and influence of Hutterite, Mennonite and other similar immigrant/religious populations across the province; As libraries have pointed to these groups as high users of their specific libraries
- Look at libraries who meet some of the above criteria but still have low statistics as potential red flags or further study
- Further statistical comparisons to look for differences between high and lower performing libraries to determine true causation
- Devise more ways for all libraries to share best practices
- Investigate what further statistical input may be needed and what cleanup of the counting

opinions database is needed

I think this tweet from Lankes sums it up succinctly...[read tweet]

It also matches what we found in our study, yes the collection is still important but it is only one aspect, and in fact reaching your community through the building, through partnerships and by removing barriers allows people to then utilise your excellent collection.

Thank you.

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Questions? Contact details

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