

Interview Protocol with Prompts
(For Interviews with University Librarians)

1. Briefly introduce yourself in terms of your background, experience, and management philosophy.
 - a. *A basic question: do you think that innovation is important or critical for the success of the continuing success of the academic library?*
 - b. *How has your philosophy been supportive of innovation?*
2. How would you describe the management culture in your library?
 - a. *Is there a specific innovation management strategy that you have observed as successful?*
 - b. *Another indicator relates to the strict adherence to predefined roles? Do you see impediments to flexibly defining roles? What are these impediments?*
 - c. *How is the library changing with respect to formality and centralization/decentralization?*
3. How does your library differ from other similar libraries and what are the unique characteristics of your library? *(I don't expect you to be an expert . . .)*
4. How would you characterize or describe innovation?
5. *(Looking around at other libraries and your own library . . .)* What are projects, either current or historic, within an academic library that you consider innovative? What are the characteristics that make these projects innovative?
 - a. *Can you comment on the pace of innovation?*
 - b. *Is innovation radical or incremental?*
6. Can you think of potentially innovative projects within the academic library that have been unsuccessful?
 - a. *What are the barriers to innovation?*
 - b. *What are the professional and external forces that might be accelerating or inhibiting innovation?*
7. Please describe policies and practices within your academic library that have facilitated innovation. *How can a creative, unorthodox idea – the germ of an innovation – be supported?*
8. Based on these observations, what do you consider to be important innovation behaviors? *(Some have observed that many library innovations do not originate in the library.)* Can you

think of innovations that have been wholly conceived with an academic library? What groups have innovated?

9. Innovations are typically relevant for specific social groups. What are the relevant social groups (users) for academic libraries and how are these groups changing?

Can you comment on whether there are entirely new groups emerging in the university?

10. The following quotations, covering a period of over 40 years, convey certain assumptions about libraries and librarians. What is your response to these quotations?

- a. Librarians are cast as “reluctant followers who have failed to see the deeper meaning of what they do and have thus been unable to raise their activities to the level of a true profession”. (Shera, 1965)
- b. “To succeed – and indeed to thrive – in this new environment, academic libraries must immediately initiate a self-examination. Every assumption, task, activity, relationship, and/or structure has to be challenged.” (Stoffle, C., Renaud, R. & Veldof, J., 1996).
- c. Librarians need to “. . . create a range of services unthinkable in the twentieth century, but mandatory in the twenty-first century, if we are to provide society with the value added services it will need from its professionals.” (Martell, 2000)

11. Summing up, what do you view as the major threat or threats to the continued success of the academic library?

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