

Transforming Our Image, Building The Education Advantage Our Brand



Those in the library profession have the power to permanently dispel all misperceptions about libraries, and be fully valued for what they do. How? By simply adopting this new approach that applies carefully selected words to enhance their perceived value, and to position libraries as the provider of what the world values most: education.

While there is no question that what librarians and library professionals do is critically important, the ways in which these roles and responsibilities are described can mean the difference between being valued as essential to the community or considered optional. Something as simple as a choice of words can determine what is valued—and consequently what gets funded, and what gets canceled.

Transforming Our Image, Building Our Brand: The Education Advantage examines how the “Three Pillars” approach harnesses the power of language to enhance respect, generate increased perceived value, and garner funding. The power stems from positioning all that library professionals do under three, easy-to-remember “pillars,” and replacing typical library terms and phrases with bold, value-enhanced terminology that commands value—language that people outside of the field can immediately understand. This book is essential reading for public library staff members at all levels of the organization, especially those in leadership roles; and its root concepts are applicable for all other library types as well.

Valerie J. Gross, MM, MLS, JD, has served as president and CEO of Howard County Library System (HCLS) in Maryland since 2001. A passionate promoter of libraries, Gross has led the repositioning of HCLS as a major component of education, which has heightened respect, increased funding, and driven significant increases in annual usage statistics. She is recipient of the 2012 and 2010 *Public Libraries* Feature Article Contest award and was honored as a *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker in 2004. Gross holds master’s degrees in music and library science as well as a doctorate of jurisprudence. Her published works include several articles in *Public Libraries* and *Children & Libraries: The Journal of the ALSC*.

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