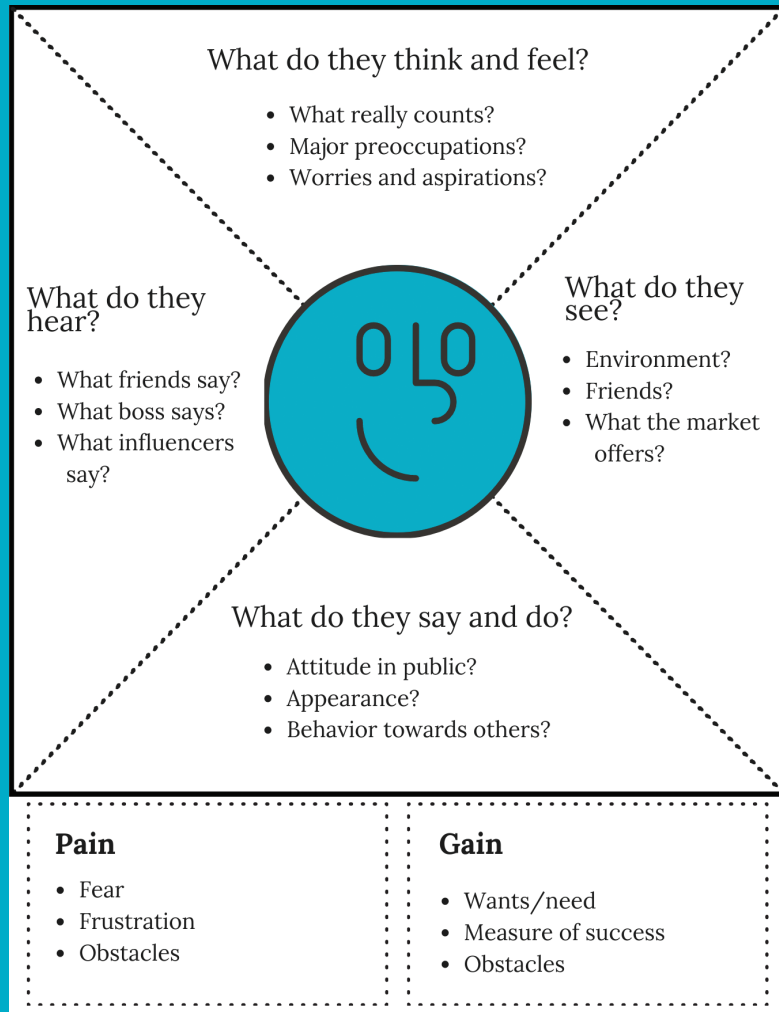# HOW TO TALK ABOUT PRIVACY

If you are reading this guide you know privacy is an important topic for libraries, and you also know that others might not necessarily share the same history, professional principles, understanding, or interest as you. Finding ways to communicate the importance of privacy and why libraries should care is a critical way to make needed changes, leading to safer environments for library users, library staff, and our communities. This guide is meant to help you consider the best way to communicate about privacy by thinking about the people you are trying to reach. It will also provide you with suggestions on the best messaging to use with various constituencies and stakeholders.

Empathy Map

What do they think and feel?

- What really counts?
- Major preoccupations?
- Worries and aspirations?

What do they hear?

- What friends say?
- What boss says?
- What influencers say?

What do they see?

- Environment?
- Friends?
- What the market offers?

What do they say and do?

- Attitude in public?
- Appearance?
- Behavior towards others?

Pain

- Fear
- Frustration
- Obstacles

Gain

- Wants/need
- Measure of success
- Obstacles

This is a sample empahty map. Use it to help you better understand the motivations of those you're trying to reach.

Who Are You Trying To Reach?

When speaking about privacy concerns, you need to understand the motivations and interests of the group or individual you are communicating with. Possessing this understanding will make the conversation easier and more successful. Knowing your audience will help you talk about privacy in a way that is meaningful for them, not just for you. You will be adjusting your talking points and tactics once you understand who you are talking to, what they may already know, and what they care about.

One quick way to understand who you are talking to is by using an empathy map. An empathy map is a tool to better understand where someone or a group is coming from and how they see a particular issue, like privacy. While empathy maps are often derived from interviews with an individual, you may be able to learn more by filling in what you know and what you can learn about a person or group.

EXERCISE

Think of a stakeholder (an individual, group, community member, trustee, etc.) you need to talk to about a privacy-related concern. Fill out an empathy map. Templates are easily available online or draw your own based on the image in this guide. Think about what might motivate them, what might they already know, and why they would care about privacy.

EXERCISE

Once you fill out your Empathy Map, answer:

Who are you trying to talk to?

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What motivates them regarding privacy?

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What message could create a hook to interest them or to influence their view of privacy?

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General Talking Points

Now that you have a good idea of the "who," below are high level messages and conversation starters. It's helpful to have some talking points that have already been gathered by and for the library community. Consider these as you think about the empathy map exercise you just did.

- Privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought and free association.
- Privacy is a human right.
- Lack of privacy and confidentiality discourages individuals' choices about what they read or view, thereby suppressing access to ideas and how they learn in the world.
- Libraries are a cornerstone of democracy and help ensure Americans are able to read, research, and think freely.
- The possibility of surveillance, whether direct or through access to records of speech, research and exploration, undermines a democratic society.
- Systems reflect the biases of their creators and biases the ways data is collected and used.
- The library community recognizes that children and youth have the same rights to privacy as adults.
- Most states have statutes declaring library records as confidential documents. The two remaining states, Hawaii and Kentucky, have opinions issued by their attorneys general finding library records to be confidential documents.
- Librarians have a responsibility to protect the privacy of our users while responding to national security concerns within the framework of the law.
- It's an equity issue -- individuals should have the ability to give consent to be surveilled or not. This type of permission should not be held by only the privileged few.

Getting Your Privacy Point Across

Sometimes we only have a few minutes (or less) to create enough interest for the conversation to continue. Creating a succinct elevator speech can go a long way in getting and keeping attention while quickly summarizing the idea or argument you are trying to convey. It should be interesting and concise. Ideally, it should also be memorable so your message is not forgotten. Here's a quick way to create an elevator speech:

- Determine your goal. What is the end goal of this brief conversation?
- Consider including a talking point (like those listed in the previous section) that will grab their attention.
- Summarize your argument or the point you are trying to make in as short a way as possible
- End with what you believe to be the solution and possibly how you can help them get there.
- You may also want to include a "next step" so there's a clear next action.

EXAMPLE

Let's say you're looking to get in front of a board or campus assessment committee making a decision on a new analytics tool. You have just a few minutes with one of the members of the board or committee. Your goal is to convince this person that you have privacy concerns and would like to address the larger group to further the discussion on this product. You might say, "I know you and the board are deciding on product X for the library. There's some privacy concerns for our users with that product. Did you know research shows being tracked makes people self-censor? Libraries are one of the few places left where we allow freedom of thought, uncensored. In fact, it's part of the American Library Association's Bill of Rights that we advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information. I know this is a complex issue and I would love to present this perspective to the board/committee for consideration."

EXERCISE

Use the talking points provided, or create your own, to write an elevator speech for your targeted group or individual.

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Creating Persuasive Arguments

"I don't have anything to hide."
"Privacy is dead."
"I care about my privacy but it's too late to do anything about it."
"Why do libraries care about my privacy?"
"We don't have the budget for privacy initiatives."

These are just a few of the reactions you might get when you start to engage library users, library staff, administration, stakeholders, or even your neighbors on topics related to privacy. Awareness of the value of privacy has become more mainstream as we hear about data breaches and tech companies' use of our data. But awareness does not necessarily mean understanding or comprehension of the true scope of the threat to one's privacy; indeed users may not yet understand that there are a myriad of small things we can do to protect our own or our community's privacy.

If your elevator speech led to further conversation or you are jumping right in to talking about privacy with a group or individual, being able to make a persuasive argument is key. Consider strategies that could be used based on who you are addressing and what you learned about them in your empathy map.

- Be well-informed. Do the research to argue your point(s) so you can provide facts to back up your claims and concerns.
- Be specific. What are you looking for your audience to do?
- Be authentic. Explain why you care about this issue.
- Use metaphors.
- Find commonalities.
- Tell a story. Storytelling can help people visualize the impacts of their decision.
- Use repetition to remind people of your point/argument.

Library Privacy Advocacy

Maybe talking with others about privacy concerns has you feeling like you would like to do more at your library, or even be part of a broader set of advocacy work on privacy-related issues. Below are ways to be a library privacy advocate:

- Talk about privacy. This goes a long way in normalizing privacy as something to think about and discuss.
- Say something when you see something.
- Push back against non-privacy conventions.
- Build and use the collective voice. Find like-minded people or organizations where you can find others in support of privacy values.
- Educate and teach others. This could even be sharing an article with co-workers.
- Point people to advocacy work already being done.

EXERCISE

Imagine you get pushback during your privacy conversations. Build a persuasive argument.

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Looking for way a to work with other who are advocates in the library field? Here's a few to check out: ALA's Privacy Subcommittee, Library Freedom Project, American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Digital Library Federation's Privacy and Ethics in Technology.

Case Studies

Below are example scenarios that could use library advocates. These are based on real world examples and represent public, academic, and school libraries.

1. At a public library, the Library Foundation wants access to user data in ILS records. They want to send mailers to all library users and have asked library staff to provide them with all the PII from the Library's ILS.

2. A caregiver or teacher asks a library worker about gaining access to a child's library use records. The caregiver explains that their child is a minor and so therefore they should be allowed to see their records. Or, the teacher is seeing a child fall behind and wants to make sure they are using the library to do the work they say they are doing.

3. A university wants the library to use proctoring software that uses facial recognition for testing students. At the same time, the American Library Association passed a resolution in opposition to facial recognition software in libraries. How do you persuade governing bodies to not use this software?

4. The Library Board is over the moon about a particular vendor. They love their latest products and know many users would use it. The vendor does not meet the library's privacy requirements, but the Board insists that "no one cares about privacy."

Pick a scenario #1-4. Use this guide to figure out how you would talk about, and advocate for, privacy in one of these scenarios.

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Talking About Privacy

It must be noted that organizational culture plays a big role in your ability to have privacy discussions. Where you are within your organization and its culture will greatly impact your ability to start or continue privacy conversations. If the culture does not allow for front-line staff or lower management to have much say in operational matters, there may be other ways to have influence. Perhaps you can identify and engage with potential allies who have more status in the organization and share similar perspectives as you.

While this guide mostly focuses on how to start privacy conversations, remember continuing the conversation and building relationships is important, especially if you're hoping for long-term and sustainable privacy practices. You're looking for commonalities and ways to build a relationship that will keep these conversations going into the future. Finding ways to communicate the importance of privacy and why libraries should care is a critical way to make needed changes, leading to safer environments for library users, library staff, and our communities.

Make Your Plan! Now you have the tools. Take some time and use this guide to make a plan.

PRIVACY ADVOCACY GUIDES

Privacy is a core value of librarianship, yet it often feels like an overwhelming and onerous undertaking. Use these Privacy Field Guides to start addressing privacy issues at your library. Each guide provides hands-on exercises for libraries. Check out all the available guides at **bit.ly/PrivacyFieldGuides.**