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## *Creating Public Value through Intentional Practice*

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### Introduction

Intentional practice in museums, as a concept, belief and action, is fundamental to creating public value. The notion of thinking about museums in the context of public value is not necessarily new, as 100 years ago, in Newark, New Jersey, on the east coast of the United States, John Cotton Dana, who founded the Newark Museum, said 'a museum is good only insofar as it is of use' (Peniston 1999). While this quotation is often recited by many museum professionals, presently it is receiving considerable attention as museums are beginning to hear the wisdom of its meaning in a new way.

The museum world is under increasing stress. Public and private funds for museums are shrinking as the pool of museums continues to grow. Funders have raised the accountability bar and now want to see evidence that their support is delivering what museums intend and the public's expectations for a fulfilling museum experience have evolved with individuals looking to museums to broaden as well as deepen the human experience.

Creating public value is no longer an option. It is required by many who comprise the authorizing environment (Moore and Moore 2005) and many museums realize they must start paying attention and change how they think about and pursue their work. This chapter presents a theory of practice for creating public value called intentional practice.

### Context

With challenges from the external environment mounting, intentional practice offers a sustainable path into the future because it negotiates with and accounts for everyone's requirements – those of the museum, the funders and the public. It is a unified, well-planned organizational strategy that aligns practices and resources to support intended results, evaluates achievement and reflects on results to learn what can be improved.

Intentional practice works best when it is an endeavour guided by a strong leader who can inspire and rally staff to work collaboratively towards a common purpose, meaning that all staff, from across and up and down the museum, work together to articulate their museum's purpose and the public value they hope to create (Korn 2007). When a museum director leads an entire organization to create public value using carefully



deliberated strategies, s/he is operating with holistic<sup>1</sup> intentionality. While the latter describes an ideal scenario for implementing intentional practice, any staff member who is cognizant of the complex set of relationships amongst participants in the authorizing environment and between the museum, the public and the authorizing environment can take initiative and work within his or her sphere of influence and begin transforming how the institution approaches its work.

Intentional practice is a planning model similar to strategic planning, yet it differs significantly in a few important ways. Strategic planning is typically mission driven, focusing on what a museum does, while intentional planning is mission *and impact* driven, focusing on the *end result* of a museum's work. Strategic planning focuses on organizational performance and outputs such as completing projects and initiatives, while intentional practice focuses on creating public value outside the museum in the form of outcomes and impact. With input from the authorizing environment, the museum applies laser-focused attention on creating very specific results. The process begins with articulating a clear vision of the end result.

## Introduction to Intentionality

Intentionality derives 'from the Latin word *intentio*, which in turn derives from the verb *intendere*, which means being directed towards some goal or thing' (Siewert 2011). Intentionality, or being intentional in one's work, is an essential concept because it highlights the importance of working towards a particular goal or being directed towards a particular goal. The result of such a goal is sometimes called an 'impact'.

'The very things that make a museum good are its intent to make a positive difference in people's lives', a phrase that museum scholar Stephen Weil introduced (2002, 73) to explain impact – is similar to the phrase that Harvard scholar Mark Moore uses to describe public value: 'to make a positive difference in the individual and collective lives of citizens' (Moore and Moore 2005, 17). Intentional practice is an organizational process where everyone's efforts focus on delivering results using a deliberate, collaborative process where the entire museum pursues the goal of making a demonstrable difference in people's lives.

Intentionality presupposes an interest in pursuing a well-articulated end-result around which all work will be organized. Intentional practice requires that the museum negotiate a vision of public value between the organization's unique assets and capacity *and* what stakeholders and the public deem as valuable. Inside the museum, staff skills are considered, as are organizational resources (for example, time and money).

The museum, however, is not an island working in isolation. Outside the museum is the authorizing environment – all those who 'hold the formal power to supply or withhold public money and authority and/or to place conditions on the distributions of these resources' (Moore and Moore 2005, 37). All of these stakeholders have varying ideas about what constitutes public value and collectively wield considerable power. For example, in the United Kingdom, the National Museum Director's Conference commissioned a study to 'take stock of the UK's national museums and galleries ... to assess their place within

<sup>1</sup> Holistic is used here to explain the belief that the parts of something, such as an organization, are interconnected and strongest when functioning as one entity with a common belief and purpose.

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the wider social and economic framework of society' (Travers and Glaister 2004, 4). To that end, Travers and Glaister demonstrated how museums and galleries contribute to the economy, to civic engagement in communities and to creativity and innovation amongst individuals. The study suggests there is an opportunity for museums to refocus their efforts, explore their relationship with stakeholders and communities and rethink what they have the capacity to deliver and what public value they hope to create. Intentional practice is an organizational strategy for pursuing this public value-driven work.

## The Cycle of Intentional Practice and Public Value

Intentionality is an approach and intentional practice is a strategic way of working. Together they provide a viable planning approach for creating public value. Given that public value is emerging as the necessary work of an organization, museums need a holistic organizational approach for doing this work. While museums can create public value through other kinds of organizational strategies, the chance of making a positive difference in the collective lives of a community is greater if an organization is intentional in its pursuit. The clarity with which an organization describes the public value it hopes to create is important, as a clear statement of its intentions suggests a roadmap for moving forward the organization's work. Clarity of intentions is a vital component of intentional planning.

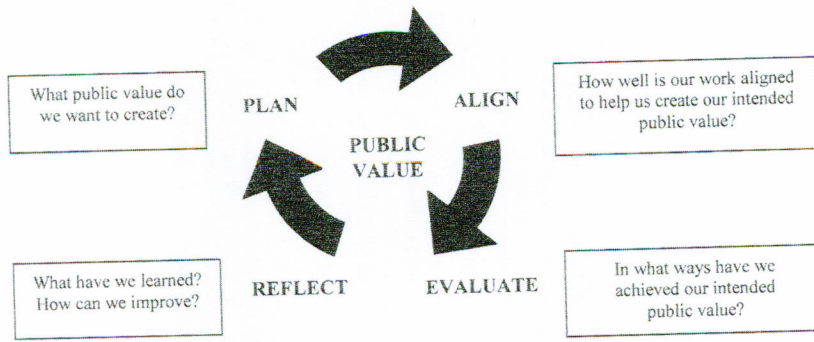
There are distinct steps or actions that comprise intentional practice illustrated in the cycle shown in Figure 3.1 and explained in the rest of this chapter. The cycle is defined by four actions and corresponding questions. It offers a strategic approach to working by focusing on:

- clarity: museums need to clarify what public value they want to create;
- alignment: bringing practices and resources into line with planning intentions is essential;
- evaluation: deciding how to measure intended impact helps the organization focus on what public value will look like;
- reflection: evaluation results are not final; they are used to deepen learning about practice and achievement.

Fundamental to intentional practice is inquiry. It is the overarching method for facilitating organizational work. Inquiry is not a new idea to museums – many museums use it as a teaching strategy in their galleries (Villeneuve and Love 2007). Evaluations have shown that inquiry develops self-esteem, builds confidence to share personal ideas and ways of knowing, and models open-mindedness among visitors (Gutwill and Allen 2010). The same results emerge when inquiry is used as an organizational development strategy among professionals (Preskill and Torres 1999). When inquiry is used to investigate how staff members think, it fosters an understanding amongst all staff while building the collective mind of the museum. In fact, deep inquiry allows all staff to learn about their museum together and discover their shared passions and reconceive their organizational drive.

A leader who supports and models systematic inquiry in the workplace creates a civil, collaborative environment where questions are freely asked and opinions are shared and





**Figure 3.1** Cycle of intentional practice (Korn 2007)

respected (Korn 2007). Using inquiry while practising intentionality builds and reinforces a culture of professional and personal learning where everyone pursues the work of their museum together without fear of judgment or failure (Axelrod 2007; Hammond and Mayfield 2004; Preskill and Torres 1999; Hammond 1996). The ultimate benefit of a culture of inquiry is learning. A culture of inquiry challenges participants to investigate their own thinking and practice (Preskill and Torres 1999) when clarifying with their colleagues the public value they would like to create. Question-asking, whether during planning or evaluation, upholds a spirit of enduring inquiry – a benefit and characteristic of intentionality (Korn 2007).

### Planning for Public Value

Public value is in the centre of the cycle because it is the driving force behind a museum's work. The planning aspect seeks clarity about the purpose of a museum's work so that all staff can focus to that end. The question in the 'Plan' quadrant of the cycle asks a bold question, 'What public value do we want to create?' The clarity with which a museum can describe its intention is paramount.

Conceptualizing the public value a museum strives to achieve is a relatively new idea. At the turn of this century, the notion of public value was hardly mentioned; now one hears and sees it frequently. A new awareness is emerging about museums' responsibilities beyond their walls (Gurian 2010; Goodale 2009; Koster 2006). Yet few museums can describe the positive difference that they want to make in the public sphere.

Similarly, museums are also realizing that a mission statement, by definition, may fall short in describing these emerging concepts. While in some countries, overarching results may be part of the mission statement, the United States has adopted a more functional approach, often using the mission statement to describe the collecting, preserving and educating work of a museum. In such cases, a public value statement complements the mission statement by describing the results of the museum's work. A public value statement can also be used to highlight the unique features of a museum and to address the vital 'To what end?' question. Most would agree that museums are educational organizations, but how might a museum describe the result of its education work among those who experience the museum?

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Crafting a public value statement, like crafting a mission statement, takes time and thought. It is best done in a collaborative environment with a diverse group of stakeholders including staff from across the museum, board members and community representatives. Dialogue around the following three questions can provide the raw material for crafting a public value statement.

1. What are staff members' deepest passions for their work?
2. What are the unique characteristics of the museum, including its intrinsic value?
3. What is relevant to whom?

#### WHAT ARE STAFF MEMBERS' DEEPEST PASSIONS FOR THEIR WORK?

Personal passion and professional commitment are essential ingredients for intentional practice and planning. Most museum professionals exude passion for their work and their passion pushes them to do their best every day. Personal passion for one's work leads to and builds professional commitment and responsibility – not just to the museum but to the profession (Korn 2007). Personal passion and professional commitment, though to a degree intangible, are necessary ingredients to achieve public value and determining factors for success (Pink 2011; Collins 2001). Museum professionals know that passion plays a vital role in producing excellent exhibitions and programmes. Likewise, as noted by Scott, these intangible assets build organizational capacity to create value (Scott 2011, 2).

A museum can explore staff passions by asking 'five why' questions. This is a strategy that business author, Jim Collins, presents in his book *Built to Last* (1994). Collins used the 'five whys' to help companies 'frame their work in a more meaningful way' (1994, 227). The exercise drills down to underlying reasons for passion using a simple series of 'why' questions:

1. What about your work is most meaningful to you? And, after hearing the response;
2. And why is *that* important? And, upon hearing that response, asking again;
3. And why is *that* important?

Until the deepest layer of meaning is uncovered.

When museum staff talk about their passions, patterns emerges. Staff express their passion for personal learning and growth, teaching others, science, art or history – depending on the museum type – or in the case of administrators, a passion for organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Collectively, if all staff respond to the 'why' question a few times, a common, uniting passion or series of passions will likely surface.

#### WHAT ARE THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MUSEUM, INCLUDING ITS INTRINSIC VALUE?

Understanding a museum's unique characteristics, qualities and strengths are other important elements that can contribute to the content of a public values statement. What makes this museum different from other museums in its surrounding community, region, state or country?



If a museum concentrates on creating programmes that deliver and accentuate its distinct qualities, there is a greater chance that it will be able to create public value. For example, some museums are most known for their specific collections or exhibition programmes, others are most known for their educational programmes and some others are most known for their research. Identifying the single one area of work where the museum is most poised to make a difference can help staff determine the unique public value their museum can create.

This is a challenging exercise. A museum may have a very difficult time identifying only one area of work as its distinct quality or its primary strength. And while many museums may excel in multiple areas, prioritizing does not mean that other areas are ignored or negated. It simply means that all staff recognize the museum is *best* in this one area. Indeed, it is possible to infuse more than one distinct quality into the crafting of a public value statement, as will be evident in the examples that are provided below. However, reflecting on a museum's greatest and most unique asset is both clarifying and empowering.

These two ideas – passion and unique value – are similar to two of the three elements identified by Jim Collins in something he calls his Hedgehog Concept (2001). When working with businesses, Collins uses the Hedgehog Concept to explore three vital ideas:

1. what are you passionate about;
2. what are you the best at; and
3. what drives your economic engine.

The Hedgehog Concept's first two ideas are embodied in the first two guiding questions of intentional planning described above. The third idea in the Hedgehog Concept (what drives your economic engine?) is about resources and is vitally important to consider as museums carry out their work towards creating public value in a challenging economic climate.

In Collins' words, 'The essence of the Hedgehog Concept<sup>2</sup> is to attain piercing clarity about how to produce the best long-term results, and then exercise the relentless discipline to say, *No thank you* to opportunities that fail the hedgehog test' (2005, 17). While Collins' publications have focused on business in the private sector in *Good to Great* (2001) and on not-for-profits in *Good to Great for the Social Sectors* (2005), there are similarities between the elements of the Hedgehog Concept, intentional practice and crafting public value statements. Like Collins' requirement for 'piercing clarity', a public value statement must be clear about the value a museum wants to create for its constituents. Similarly, in the cycle of intentional practice, alignment requires a museum to determine how to effectively use the resources at its disposal to achieve the public value it would like to create.

<sup>2</sup> A hedgehog is a nocturnal mammal with a spiny coat and short legs, which is able to roll itself into a ball for protection. The Hedgehog Concept was named from a story about a fox and a hedgehog. The fox was always trying to attack the hedgehog and he was consistently met with the hedgehog's simple defence of rolling into a ball of spikes. Collins compares thriving companies to the little hedgehog – they always focus on their most consistent method of success. The simplicity of the hedgehog's response to the fox relates to the three vital ideas (purpose, uniqueness and feasibility) that successful companies (and museums) should take into account when planning and undertaking their work.

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Collins argues that an organization must have deep knowledge of all three of these ideas to be a great organization. Passion is not enough. The same is true for a museum – all three guiding questions are explored, understood and articulated so they can become part of a statement that describes the public value a museum intends to create. Like the Hedgehog Concept, a statement of public value can be a single organizing idea that powers the organization to move forward with focus. Without passion and focused attention on what an organization does best – playing to its strengths – the museum's impact risks being subdued and difficult to measure.

### WHAT IS RELEVANT TO WHOM?

Relevance is a powerful idea – one that museums discuss but sometimes struggle to apply to their strategic and daily work. *The Oxford Dictionary* defines relevance (2012) as issues *connected to the matters at hand*. Relevance is a vital part of the public value equation and necessary to consider for any museum that desires to achieve measurable results (Korn 2010). It is also the most complex element of planning because there may be differences in perceptions of what is relevant and of value between two groups external to the museum – the public and the authorizing environment. If those who live in the surrounding community find the museum's work pertinent and meaningful, they will value the museum. However, if the authorizing environment of government, education and other funding stakeholders have different ideas of what is relevant, there is likely to be tension and conflict. Moore (1995) has recognized that leaders need to negotiate among and between these different constituencies in addition to determining what their staff have the capacity to deliver. Thus, there are four significant challenges facing museum leadership in the context of relevance:

1. Identifying and learning about all the 'actors' in the authorizing environment (Moore and Moore 2005) and how they perceive or describe public value.
2. Identifying specific target groups among the public to whom the museum might focus its work without disenfranchising other audiences.
3. Leveraging the museum's collections, research and programmes.
4. Balancing the three components of (a) the intended public value results; (b) the museum's operational capacity; and (c) the museum's unique qualities and distinct identity.

One of these issues is audience prioritization. Targeting public value to audiences where there is a real need is both applying the principle of relevance and enabling museums to make difficult decisions about resource allocation. As much as museums would like to be all things to all people *and* achieve discernible results for everyone, achieving value across all public sectors at any one time may not be a realistic result in terms of a museum's limited capacity and resources. When considering to whom the museum is relevant, staff could start by identifying an audience with the greatest chance of experiencing the public value of the museum and explore what is relevant for that audience (Korn 2010). Simultaneously, a museum might study existing demographic data from its community and realize that a segment of the population may be able to find value in the museum's assets and consider exploring relevance with that population as well. Several years later, after achieving some success with specific population segments,



the museum could decide to identify additional audiences on which it would like to focus. Thus, a museum can focus on varying audience segments over the course of a decade and ultimately create public value amongst all of them. Just as the notion of relevance is not static, neither should be a museum's selection of publics on which it will focus its work.

While museums need to learn about and accommodate their audiences' needs, they also need to simultaneously maintain their sense of self, identity and unique value (Korn 2004). Balancing these two forces – the museum and the audience – requires staff knowing the museum's institutional self, being sensitive towards and curious about those who comprise the public, having a strong desire to create and achieve public value and letting go of ways of working that do not support this ultimate aim. Infusing knowledge about audiences and relevance into a museum's ideas can spur new thinking about the museum's work and what it can deliver.

## Statements of Public Value

A statement of public value is a relatively new concept for museums. Its inclusive development process and the final product are distinguishing characteristics of intentional practice.

Mission and vision statements reflect what the museum does and what it aspires to do. A statement about the public value the museum would like to create and achieve describes the *result* of the museum on the audiences it serves. A statement of public value is written from the perspective of what a community may experience, think about, or do as a result of having an engaging relationship with the museum over time.

Preparing a public value statement requires participation among staff, key board members and community stakeholders. While a public value statement can be used alone as a declaration of the difference a museum hopes to make in people's lives, it is best understood when it is in the overall context of a mission statement. Knowing that a public value statement is a companion to a mission statement will help staff members see the distinction between the purpose of a museum (mission) and the results of the museum's work on those served (public value). Having to craft a public value statement challenges the museum to think beyond its walls to consider how its work can potentially affect people.

A statement of public value can also serve as a guidepost for evaluation planning and implementation. When a museum is preparing to evaluate the ways in which it has achieved public value, the statement can become the platform for articulating specific outcomes, writing rubrics based on the outcomes, identifying target populations for the evaluation, designing appropriate qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments and analysing results (RK&A 2011). Planning and evaluation are inextricably linked. Data are examined according to the intended results and its associated outcomes and measures to conclude the extent to which the museum has achieved its intentions. It is the lens through which decisions are made, the engine for driving work, and the gauge for success. Below are a few examples of public value statements that museums have articulated.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> These statements were initially crafted as impact statements; for this publication they are referred to as public value statements.

1. Natural history museum: *act accordingly*
2. Art museum: *programme, visitor experiences, and*
3. Science museum: *around them a*
4. Natural history museum: *culturally diverse*

## Aligning Work with Public Value

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1. Natural history and culture museum: *people will value their connection to all life – and act accordingly.*<sup>4</sup>
2. Art museum: *inspired by meaningful encounters with the museum's collection and artistic programme, visitors will expand their creative thinking, deepen their understanding of human experiences, and value the museum as a place for personal learning and civic engagement.*
3. Science museum: *inspired by discovery, visitors are encouraged to investigate the world around them and realize science impacts everyone and everything.*
4. Natural history museum: *the museum inspires people to value our biologically and culturally diverse world and to make a difference in its future.*

## Aligning Work and Resources to Support Public Value Intentions

Alignment is a second feature of intentional practice and one that is particularly relevant in these challenging economic times. To create public value, museums need to align practices, resources and programmes in sustainable and feasible ways if their intentions are to be achieved.

The notion of aligning practices and resources to achieve public value is similar to an idea that Stephen Weil wrote about in his article 'A Success/Failure Matrix for Museums'. He noted that, 'Once a purpose has been established, the museum is still unable to move forward either until (a) all of the necessary resources can be identified and secured, or (b) the purpose has been scaled back to match the available resources' (2005, 36). Alignment is a no-nonsense, disciplined approach to resource management, and it is the part of the cycle that museum leaders may need to apply in difficult *as well as* good economic times.

Aligning practices and resources is important if a museum wants to live within its means. Alignment requires decisions to be taken and priorities to be determined. A public value statement provides guidance for alignment because activities that do not reflect the intentions behind the public value statement may be eliminated or reduced to lesser priorities. Taking away what is no longer germane to the museum's pursuit of public value is an important management strategy for achieving results. It requires discipline to say 'no' to programmes or initiatives that do not contribute or are not relevant to the public value that the museum envisions. In the context of intentional practice, alignment is about a museum rethinking what it does, how much it costs in terms of staff time and other resources and for whom it is doing what it does – the recipients of the museum's work. The goal is to be more deliberate with decision-making, thereby increasing the museum's chances of achieving intended results.

This perspective is reflected by the UK Museums Association: 'Museums have to work within the resources available to them. The sustainable answer may be to do less, but do it better ... Museums need to be clear about their purpose and ensure that their most important activities are sustained' (Davies and Wilkinson 2008, 7).

There are several ways to begin exploring the idea of alignment. For example, one might consider only doing work that is relevant to the museum's community and stop doing work that is not. A museum might need to re-examine its mission and its community to determine which programmes are no longer *relevant* and, likewise, which programmes

<sup>4</sup> This statement is the museum's vision statement.



do not contribute to the museum's public value and its greatest strength. Though this may seem reductionist, doing away with some programmes can free up resources and time for programmes that *can add value*. By examining all the activities a museum engages in, staff might be able to identify activities that are more relevant to the museum's community in the twenty-first century. Such consideration involves knowing what the community and the authorizing environment will endorse. If relevance and public value become the lenses through which to explore alignment, decisions will become more deliberate and intentional, thereby strengthening the museum and readying it to create and achieve public value in its community.

This does not mean that other challenges do not remain. Even though prudent decision-making and resource management in pursuit of a clearly articulated purpose makes sense, governments often send another message. 'More is better' is not a position which supports strong fiscal and resource management but it is an expectation held by many policy-makers and funders (Holden 2004) and one which has to be negotiated with the authorizing environment. It is made easier when an organization has a clear sense of its own purpose, why it wants to make a particular difference and for whom.

## Evaluating Results in Pursuit of Public Value<sup>5</sup>

The third part of the cycle focuses on evaluation. Evaluation, specifically summative evaluation, measures results and examines them against intentions. However, a public value statement is not an adequate evaluative platform from which to design a reliable and valid study. The evaluator and staff will need to work together to deconstruct the public value statement and develop concrete, measurable outcomes against audience segments. In intentional practice work, evaluating the public value of a museum also provides a great opportunity to begin thinking about measuring value in quantitative and qualitative terms.

Success in museums is often discussed quantitatively. Governments may note the economic benefit of museums and museums might fuel the quantitative perspective by celebrating high visitation. Neither 'measure' expresses museums' intrinsic social values (Lagendijk 2011). At some point, someone might ask a museum director or chairman of the board to discuss the difference the museum made in the quality of people's lives (Weil 2002). Conversations about dollars and attendance fail to describe a museum's public value, intrinsic value and distinctiveness.

From the perspective of intentional practice, achieving public value is associated with quality rather than quantity. That is not to say, however, that quantity is unimportant. Numerical measures are an indication of one type of value as when museums have created quality programmes that also attracted high numbers of people. Outputs and outcomes have a place and purpose, and undoubtedly the value of 'how many' is important when evidence indicates increased dollars raised, increased number of community partnerships, increased number of memberships (Chesebrough 2010). However, numbers become much more meaningful when museums also explore, describe and communicate to policy-makers at both the local and national levels the *qualitative* value of museums to people and communities.

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<sup>5</sup> Chapter 4 is about evaluation practice; this section discusses evaluation from an intentional practice perspective.



As noted earlier, public value statements are constructed from a museum's distinctive characteristics. Describing how these characteristics are experienced by the public is a powerful endorsement of their value. Though challenging, each museum owes it to itself and its publics to define its *uniqueness* and embed that uniqueness in its public value statement – this can begin the process of thinking about success qualitatively.

If a museum expresses its measurable outcomes qualitatively as well as quantitatively, then the evaluation design will need to respond accordingly and include instruments and investigative strategies that support collecting and analysing numerical data and descriptive data. Planning an evaluation that studies how public value has been experienced by audiences offers evaluators a chance to innovate and experiment with qualitative data collection tools to support the unique experiences that museums afford.

## Reflecting on Intentional Practice and Public Value

The fourth and final reflect quadrant follows the evaluation in the cycle (even though one can engage in reflective practice at any time) because evaluative information is an important component when determining whether intentions have been achieved, to what degree and with what impact.

Reflective practice, a formal approach for learning through inquiry (Schön 1983), requires taking the time to learn from evaluation results and one's daily work. Reflective practice is a process of periodically thinking about the museum's work and questioning how it supports the mission and the public value the museum wants to create. For leaders who are pursuing intentional practice through deliberate inquiry, reflection becomes a means to fulfil professional and organizational learning (Korn 2007). Given that there is a strong relationship between *taking the time to think about one's work* and *learning from one's work* (Korn 2008), *making time* becomes a relevant issue.

Schön (1983) identifies two types of reflective practice – reflection-in-action, which is when people share gut reactions the moment they have them and reflection-on-action, which is when people look back on their work. Both have value in professional and organizational learning.

The placement of the reflect quadrant, after the evaluate quadrant, does not necessarily assume that staff are reflecting only on evaluation data; in the absence of data, staff can share insights about their practice and the work of their colleagues. Evaluation data, however, provides the extra benefit of learning about the public in the context of public value. The focus of reflective practice sessions can vary, and a museum can orchestrate them according to needs, questions and challenges. The question in the cycle of intentional practice accentuates reflection-on-action, yet reflection time can be used for either type of reflection. When museum staff critique a newly installed exhibition, they may be reflecting-in-action, and when they discuss data from a programme evaluation or public value study, they may be reflecting-on-action.

There are five skills associated with reflective practice: being, speaking, disclosing, testing and probing (Raelin 2002). 'Being' is the skill most vital to the theory of intentional practice. Being signifies 'presence' (for example, being wholly present) which assumes vulnerability, curiosity, honesty, defencelessness, deep listening to understand, and letting go of old identities and perceptions (Raelin 2002; Senge et al. 2004).

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Just as inquiry is used to explore staff members' passions and the organization's unique qualities, it also supports reflective practice. Asking questions is one way to explore ideas and build meanings individually and collectively. And perhaps the most important benefit of reflective practice is the collective learning that takes place as all staff begin to understand the work of their museum in the context of the public value they aspire to create.

## Conclusion

In intentional practice, staff engage in the four actions that constitute the cycle, and their central focus becomes creating public value. Intentional practice invites everyone in the organization to discuss, debate and ultimately identify and support the museum's core purpose. Working intentionally demonstrates the entire organization's enthusiasm for and belief in their museum's purpose, unique value and desire to make a difference in people's lives. Museums that continually clarify their public value in the context of what is relevant to both the authorizing environment and the museum's audiences and which realign practices and resources to create that value are also working in an organization that is evolving. Intentional practice requires continuous work but the reward is being valuable, being valued and being sustainable.

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