

How to Create Your Own Because Statement

American Library Association: Libraries Transform®

1. Determine your goals

Start out with a clear sense of what you're trying to accomplish with your custom Because statement. Consider the overarching goals of your library or library group, as well as how public awareness and advocacy tactics like Because statements might help you advance that mission. What kind of outcomes would you expect to see from a successful Because statement?

Examples:

- Possible goals for your Because statements might include...
 - Marketing your collections
 - Promoting a program
 - Appealing for funding
 - Advocating for legislation
 - Recruiting volunteers
 - Boosting morale and staff appreciation



2. Consider your audience

The goal you select will help you write, research, and promote the most effective Because statement for your organization. Be sure to consider what audience you'll need to target in order to meet these public awareness and advocacy goals: whose attention are you hoping to capture? What kinds of messaging will most resonate with that particular group?

Examples:

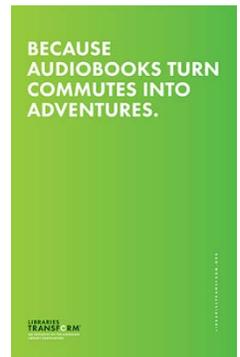
- If you're hoping to use Because statements to market programs and services, you'll likely be writing for the general public, or perhaps subgroups thereof (e.g. you might target new parents when advertising early literacy resources).
- If your statements will be more oriented toward fundraising or legislative advocacy, you might have donors or policymakers in mind instead.



3. Develop a fact-based argument

Once you have a goal and an audience in mind, you can formulate the argument at the core of your Because statement. Aim for a provable claim about how libraries add value or solve a problem for the communities they serve. Make sure this claim resonates with what your target audience cares about and will persuade them to help you meet your predetermined goal.

As you create your argument, make sure you'll have supporting evidence available to strengthen your claim: the strongest Because statements are backed by compelling data that make the case for how libraries transform.



Examples:

- One approach is to work with general data about a particular issue—e.g. “X% of local households don’t have an internet connection” or “studies show early literacy programs prepare kids for school.”
- You can also draw on data about your particular library or libraries in general—e.g. “X Library hosts Y free programs a year” or “X% of people agree libraries transform lives.”

4. Craft your statement

Once you’ve come up with an evidence-backed idea about why libraries transform, it’s time to craft an impactful wording that will resonate with your audience and advance your goals. Keep it concise and catchy; alliteration, rhyme, and wordplay can help make a statement memorable.

See if you can make your point without necessarily including the words “libraries” and “librarians,” which can make the statement feel overly self-reflexive.

Examples:

- Consider the snappy wording of the popular Because statement “Because access equals opportunity,” compared to this alternative phrasing: “Because libraries make sure everyone can access information.”
- Similarly, “Because hands-on learning builds stronger brains” packs a stronger punch than “Because librarians give kids a chance to learn hands-on.”



5. Plan your roll-out

Consider all the places you can use your new statement, keeping in mind the goal you’re hoping to achieve and the audience you’re trying to reach. Because statement graphic templates will soon be available for a variety of print and digital formats, including posters, postcards, bookmarks, and social media images.

Examples:

- The possibilities are endless! Just a few places to share Because statements include...
 - Social media
 - Library website
 - Newsletters
 - Displays highlighting library collections
 - Posters, banners, and billboards around the community
 - T-shirts for staff and volunteers
 - Postcards for a letter-writing campaign to local legislators
 - Print and online advertisements
 - Library cards

