Tech talk in the archives: how can we redefine our processes & priorities in the digital age?

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What we talk about when we talk about tech

- Panacea for problematic workflows
- Data clean-up & translation
- Infrastructure needs (networking, hardware, and software)
- Pathways for digital content
  - Donor → Archives → Preservation system

- Raymond Carver, *The Phone Booth*

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How does our tech talk align with our archive-speak?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archive</th>
<th>Tech</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Physical focus</td>
<td>• Digital focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ongoing/operational work</td>
<td>• Project-based work</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Execution via established work tracks</td>
<td>• Dependency analysis required</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prioritization of work based on perceived access &amp; use</td>
<td>prior to execution</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Prioritization grid</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Preservation needs</td>
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<td>• Access &amp; use</td>
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<td>• Impact to larger repository goals</td>
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Get to know your:

- Digital holdings
  - On servers & disks in boxes
- Digital infrastructure
  - Storage & IT partners
- Pain points in the workflows
- Capabilities for acquiring, processing & preserving digital holdings
- Gaps in all of the above
- Staff’s training needs

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Getting from as-is to-be processes

- Momentum/resources needed
  - “building the ship while flying” syndrome

- Bringing in a Business Analyst
  - SME/outsider perspective

- Dependency management
  - How and when to change processes

- Iterate as we grow/mature
  - Factor in time for review & reflection

- Further integration between archive and tech staff
  - Role clarity/shift
Avoiding “Birdman”

State the larger goal...now document it

Break it down into executable chunks

Engage stakeholders/educate leadership

Talk to colleagues outside your workplace

Curiosity & tinkering encouraged

Give your team a break & recognition

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Thank you

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