Workplace Culture in Academic Libraries

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Workplace Culture in Academic Libraries

The early 21st century

EDITED BY
KELLY BLESSINGER AND PAUL HRYCAJ

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Chandos Publishing
Hexagon House
Avenue 4
Station Lane
Witney
Oxford OX28 4BN
UK
Tel: +44 (0) 1993 848726
Email: info@chandospublishing.com
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List of figures and tables

Figures

2.1 Library culture profiles 24
9.1 Openness 150
9.2 Architectural accessibility 152
9.3 Social engagement 154
11.1 The Civility Wordle 180

Tables

8.1 Percent change credentialed librarians by race/ethnicity, 1990–2000 128
8.2 Percent change credentialed librarians in higher education by race/ethnicity, 1990–2000 129
15.1 Survey respondents by status 237
15.2 Perception of working relationships among different categories of librarians 239
15.3 Perspectives on advantages and disadvantages for working relationships among librarians in having colleagues of differing status 241
15.4 Perceptions of librarians' own working relationships with others of differing status 242

About the editors

Kelly Blessinger is the Reference Assistant Coordinator at Louisiana State University (LSU) and has held this position since 2006, prior to which she was an Assistant level librarian at LSU. She served on the Library Faculty Policy Committee from 2006 to 2007 (as chair in 2006), on the Faculty Senate from 2001 to 2002, and was chair of a faculty senate standing committee from 2001 to 2003. She also served as chair of the Library Mentoring Committee. She received her Master of Library and Information Sciences from the University of South Carolina. Kelly is a frequent contributor to the professional literature on topics of bibliometrics and library management and has been active on university, state, and national committees.

Paul Hrycaj is an Instruction and Reference Librarian at Louisiana State University Libraries and has been in this position since 2003. Paul received his MLS degree and his PhD in Philosophy from Syracuse University. He has published articles on information literacy and bibliometrics in *Reference Services Review, Journal of Academic Librarianship, College & Research Libraries*, and *Library and Information Science Research*. He has served on the ALA Instruction Section Planning Committee, the LSU Library Faculty Policy Committee, and the LSU Faculty Senate.

About the contributors

Laura Blessing is the Director of Personnel Management at North Carolina State University Libraries and has held this position since 2002. She holds an MLIS from the University of Texas at Austin and a BA in Psychology from New Mexico State University. Prior to working at NCSU Libraries, she served at the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries and University of Wisconsin–Green Bay Library. In addition to her librarian background, she is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources. Laura has written previously on Human Resource-related topics such as compensation and new employee onboarding. She is currently the Chair of the LLAMA HRS Human Resources Management committee, a past Chair of the LLAMA HRS Staff Development committee, and a past co-Chair of the LLAMA Diversity Officers Discussion Group.

Sever Bordeianu is serials cataloging librarian at the University of New Mexico. He has been in this position since 2007, and he has held leadership positions in cataloging at UNM for 23 years. He is currently a contributing editor for *Against the Grain*. He is also co-author of *Outsourcing Library Operations in Academic Libraries: An Overview of Issues and Outcomes*. Sever received his MLS from the University of Texas at Austin in 1984.

Pamela S. Bradigan is the Assistant Vice President for Health Sciences and Director of the Health Sciences Library at the Ohio State University and has held this position since 2009. She is currently an Associate Professor with University Libraries and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Biomedical Informatics. She received her JD from Capital University Law School and her MS in Library Science from the University of Illinois. She is an active member of the Medical Library Association and a distinguished member of the Academy of Health Information Professionals and serves on various committees for the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries. Pamela is also the regional representative for the Greater

Midwest Region of the National Libraries of Medicine. Pam has presented on culture at national and regional meetings and has been a contributor to the professional health science library literature for over 25 years.

Diane Bruxvoort is the Associate Dean for Scholarly Resources and Research Services at the University of Florida and has held this position since 2010. Prior to UF she served at the University of Houston and various public library branches in the Houston area. She received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Texas at Austin. Diane is active in ALA/LLAMA, where she currently serves as the chair of the Buildings and Equipment Section.

Timothy V. Carstens is Head of Content Organization and Management at Hunter Library, Western Carolina University. He has been employed at Hunter Library since 1990. Prior to his service at Western Carolina University, he worked for North Carolina State University. He received his MLS from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, and his BA in philosophy/religion from Colby College, Waterville, Maine. He is an active member of the American Libraries Association and the Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA).

Lauren E. Corbett is Director of Resource Services for the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University, overseeing collection management and technical services. Lauren has over 17 years of managerial experience in academic libraries and has held her current position since 2008. Immediately prior to Wake Forest University, Lauren worked at Emory University. She has a Master of Library and Information Studies degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and received a BA in French from Davidson College in North Carolina. Lauren participated in the 2010 Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

Lyn Currie is the Head of the Education & Music Library at the University of Saskatchewan, a position she has held since 1996. Prior to this, Lyn spent most of her career as an education librarian at universities in Australia (Charles Sturt University, University of Western Sydney and Macquarie University) and Canada (University of Alberta, University of British Columbia). Lyn holds a Master of Arts degree in education from Macquarie University and a Graduate Diploma in Librarianship from the University of New South Wales. She has published on a range of topics, including ergonomics in the workplace, library instruction for the adult

learner, and organizational culture in academic libraries. She is currently serving a four-year assignment as Commitment Leader for a university-wide initiative to build collaboration between academic and non-academic units across campus.

Martin Garnar is the Reference Services Librarian at Regis University and has served in that position since 2009. He originally joined the Regis faculty in 1999. He received his Master of Library and Information Services from the University of Denver and his Master of Arts (History) from the State University of New York at Binghamton. He and his co-author, Erin McCaffrey, have previously written about generational differences in libraries in *College and Research Libraries News*. Martin is an active member of the Colorado Association of Libraries and the American Library Association.

Dr Joan Giesecke is the Dean of Libraries, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries. She joined UNL in 1987 and became dean in 1996. Prior to this, she was the Associate Dean. She has held positions at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, Prince George's County Memorial Library System, and the American Health Care Association. She received a doctorate in public administration (DPA) from George Mason University, a MLS from the University of Maryland, a master's degree in management from Central Michigan University, and a BA in economics from SUNY at Buffalo. Giesecke's research interests include leadership, organizational decision-making, and management skills, and she publishes extensively in these areas. In 2011, Giesecke received the American Library Association Equality Award for her work in promoting diversity in the library professions. Joan is active in the American Library Association and in the Association of Research Libraries.

Lynda J. Hartel is Associate Director of the Health Sciences Library and Associate Professor at the Ohio State University. Having managed collection development, acquisitions, and cataloging operations at the OSU Health Sciences Library for nearly 20 years, Lynda is now charged with leading knowledge management efforts in the library and developing strategic partnerships across the OSU Campus and Medical Center. She is an active member of the American Library Association, Medical Library Association, and the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society. Lynda holds an MLS from Emporia State University and has published in the areas of collection development, open access

publishing, and consumer health. She has participated in local programs and presented at national conferences on the topics of organizational culture and collaboration in libraries.

Peter Hepburn is Digitization Librarian and Associate Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). He has held previous positions in Reference and Circulation since his initial appointment at UIC in 2000. He received his Master of Library and Information Studies degree from McGill University. Hepburn is an active member of the American Library Association and the American Society for Information Science and Technology. He has previously written on residency programs in libraries and the formation of "hot group" work teams and co-presented the Sharon A. Hogan Management Symposium at three consecutive Association of College and Research Libraries national conferences.

Alexia Hudson joined Penn State University in 2006 as Reference and Instruction Librarian. She is based at Penn State University Abington College. Prior to Penn State, Alexia served at West Chester University and the Camden County (NJ) Public Library System. She received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a widely published author whose work has appeared in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of African-American History, Reference Services Review, College and Research Libraries News, Library Journal.com*, and *Reference Reborn: Breathing New Life Into Public Services Librarianship*. She is a member of the American Library Association and was elected to serve on its Executive Board through 2015. She is also on the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Library Association. Alexia was selected to participate in the "Emerging Leader" program of the American Library Association in 2006–2007 and was named a "Mover and Shaker" by *Library Journal* in 2008.

Eric Jennings is an Instruction and Outreach Librarian at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, a position he has held since 2011. Prior to his current position he was a Research and Instruction Librarian at UW-Eau Claire since 2008, and he started his librarianship career at Charleston Southern University in 2006. He received his MA in library and information science from the University of Iowa. Eric has previously written about and presented at various conferences on the topics of staff development and student engagement.

Peter Johnson is the Head of Access Services at Western Carolina University's Hunter Library and has held this position since 2011. Prior to this, he served as Technology Librarian for the Mountain Regional Library System in north Georgia, and before that he was Head of Circulation at the Chapel Hill Public Library in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He received his Master of Library and Information Science degree from North Carolina Central University and a Master of Linguistics degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a member of the American Library Association and the Library Leadership and Management Association (LAMA).

Mary Beth Lock is the Director of Access Services for the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University. She is responsible for overseeing operations including Circulation, Reserves, Electronic Reserves, Interlibrary Loan, Stacks Maintenance, and building operations, as well as developing protocol for managing the offsite storage facility opened in 2010. Prior to starting work at Wake Forest in 2007, she worked for Wayne State University for over 20 years in a variety of positions. Her Master of Library Science degree is from North Carolina Central University and her Bachelor of Science Degree is from Wayne State University. She has been involved in the planning and implementation of The Entrepreneurial Librarian conferences held in 2009 and 2011, and co-edited the volume *The Entrepreneurial Librarian: Essays on the Infusion of Private-business Dynamism into Professional Service*, published in 2012. She is an active member of ALA, NCLA, and LLAMA's BES Facilities Planning Discussion Group.

Michael Lorenzen has been the Associate Dean for Public Services at the Western Washington University Libraries in Bellingham, WA, since 2010. Prior to Western Washington, he worked in libraries at Ohio University, Michigan State University, and Central Michigan University. He received his MLS from Kent State University and his master's in education from Ohio University. He also has a doctorate in educational leadership from Central Michigan University. Michael is a frequent contributor to the professional literature on topics such as library management, fundraising, and information literacy.

Rebecca L. Lubas has been Director of Cataloging and Discovery Services at the University of New Mexico Libraries since 2008, where she coordinates a group of catalogers working in many formats. Before coming to New Mexico, she was at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Libraries as Head of Cataloging and Metadata Services and Special

Formats Cataloger. She was president of the Online Audiovisual Catalogers in 2005 and has been awarded State Department travel funds to train at the National and University Library in Kosovo in 2006 and 2012. She has an MA in English literature from Ball State University, an MLIS from Louisiana State University, and a BA from the University of Notre Dame.

Karen I. MacDonald is a Business Reference Librarian at Georgia State University and has held this position since 2008. Prior to GSU, she served at Texas A&M University. She received both her Master of Business Administration degree and her Master of Library and Information Science degree from Wayne State University in Detroit, MI. Karen's research interests include information literacy and the role of the subject specialist in academic libraries. Karen is an active member of the Special Libraries Association (SLA) and is currently serving as Chair-elect of the Business & Finance Division.

Patricia MacDonald is the Associate University Librarian for Administrative Services at the Albert S. Cook Library, Towson University. Prior to her employment at Towson in 2008, she was the Head of Reference and Instruction Services at the Loyola Notre Dame Library in Baltimore. Ms MacDonald received a Master of Library Science from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in English from Duke University, and she recently completed a graduate program in Information Design at the University of Baltimore. Her research interests focus on organizational development, as well as user-centered access to library services and resources. She is the outgoing Convener of the ACRL Residency Interest Group and served as the President of the Maryland Chapter of ACRL.

Erin McCaffrey is the Electronic Services Librarian at Regis University in Denver, Colorado. Previously she served as the Digital Systems Librarian and the Distance Learning Librarian at Regis University and, prior to Regis, served at DePaul University. She received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from Dominican University and her Bachelor of Arts degree from DePaul University, with a major in Psychology. She has experience in web-based library services, system administration, distance learning, and reference and instruction. She and co-author Martin Garnar have previously published on generational differences and long range planning.

Dr Jason Martin is an Associate Librarian at the University of Central Florida (UCF), where he has worked since 2003. He also served as an Assistant Librarian at Louisiana State University. Jason received his Master of Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida and his Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership, Higher Education Policy Studies from UCF. He wrote his dissertation on the organizational culture of an academic library.

Martha Mautino is the Coordinator of Organization and Staff Development at Western Washington University Libraries and has held this position since 2010. She has served at Western Libraries since 1997 as a Reference Specialist and has also been the User Experience Coordinator. She received her BA in Elementary Education from the University of North Dakota. Martha has contributed to the professional literature on topics related to academic library outreach and communication. She has been a member and attended conferences of the Usability Professionals Association (UPA) and the Washington Association of Library Employees (WALE). Martha currently chairs the Western Libraries Staff Recognition Team and the New Employee Orientation Task Force and serves on the Public Services Advisory Council.

Charlene Maxey-Harris is the Diversity Librarian and Assistant Professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries. She joined the faculty in 1999 as a reference librarian and was appointed Diversity Librarian in 2005. She received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Missouri Columbia. Prior to UNL, she held positions at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Dartmouth College. Her research focuses on diversity and multicultural issues in academic libraries and library instruction for first generation college students. In 2010, Maxey-Harris published *Diversity Plans and Programs* (SPEC Kit 319). Professor Maxey-Harris is also a fellow in the 2011–2012 ARL Leadership and Career Development Program (LCDP). Charlene is an active member of the American Libraries Association. Currently she is serving on the Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).

Rebecca K. Miller is the Information Literacy Coordinator and College Librarian for Science, Life Sciences, and Engineering at Virginia Tech. She holds an MLS from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a BA from the College of William and Mary in Virginia, and is currently working towards an MA in Instructional Design & Technology

from Virginia Tech. Previously she served as the Digital Technologies Librarian at Louisiana State University. Her research interests include professional development for librarians, information literacy, and mobile technologies. Currently, she serves on the editorial boards of three journals and holds leadership positions in both national and state level professional organizations. For more information, visit her website: www.rebeccakatemiller.com.

Anchalee Panigabutra-Roberts (Joy) is Catalog & Metadata Services Librarian, Multicultural Services Team Member, and Women's and Gender Studies Faculty/Subject Specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries and has been in these positions since 2007. Before UNL, she worked in academic libraries including University of Wisconsin-Madison, Cornell University, and St Cloud State University (Minnesota), and taught in a library science program in Canada. She earned her Master of Arts and a specialist degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is a co-author with Toni Anaya and Charlene Maxey-Harris (2010) of "Strategies for Diversity Initiatives: A Case Study at University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries" in *Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Information Professionals: Trends in Human Resources and Knowledge Management*, edited by Elisabeth Pankl, Danielle Theiss-White, and Mary C. Bushing, published by IGI Global. She has also served on the American Library Association's Diversity Council representing the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association in 2009–2011.

Leah Plocharczyk is an Assistant University Librarian and staff supervisor at Florida Atlantic University's (FAU) John D. MacArthur Campus Library in Jupiter. Leah has worked for the FAU Libraries since 2000, when she began in Access Services and then took a position as the Broward Library Services Coordinator on the downtown Ft Lauderdale campus in 2006. Since then, Leah took her position at the MacArthur Campus as the head of collection development. Leah received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of South Florida and has a Master's in Sociology from FAU. Due to her sociology background, Leah has always had an interest in how conflict affects work organizations. She has published an article on organizational conflict, continues to research the topic, and applies the conflict management techniques and tools that she learns in her supervisory work.

Carol Shepstone is University Librarian at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta. Prior to joining Mount Royal in 2008, Carol was Head

of the Murray Undergraduate Library at the University of Saskatchewan, where she also served a number of years as Head of Access Services of the system. Over the course of her career, she has worked in public library administration as well as the special library sector. Carol holds a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of British Columbia. Carol is an active member of and contributor to many professional bodies, including national and regional associations and consortia. She has presented on and published previous articles on organizational culture, and, along with this topic, her current research interests include library cooperation and library value and assessment, including impact on teaching and learning and student perceptions of the library.

Paula M. Smith is Reference and Instruction Librarian at Penn State Abington in Abington, PA. She has published in the areas of general librarianship, diversity, cultural competencies, and academic outreach. Paula's library experience includes international work in South Africa, Bangladesh, Bermuda, and Uganda. Prior to becoming a librarian, Ms Smith was an information technologist for Fortune 500 companies providing services in project management and systems assessment and design. Paula received her EdM in Global Studies in Education from University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, MS in Information Systems from Drexel University, and BS in Business Administration from LaSalle University.

Loanne Snavely is Head of Library Learning Services at Penn State University Libraries. She has a Master of Librarianship degree from Emory University, a Master of Science in Teaching degree in Ceramics/Textiles from the Rochester Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics/Art from Juniata College. Loanne recently edited the book *Student Engagement and the Academic Library*, and has published articles on information literacy, visual images and information literacy, and other aspects of teaching and learning in libraries in the *Journal of Academic Librarianship, RUSQ, portal*, and other journals as well as chapters in books. Loanne has been chair of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Instruction Section and of the Executive Committee of the Institute for Information Literacy. In 2003, she received the Miriam Dudley Instruction Librarian Award.

Mark A. Stoffan has been Head of Digital, Access, and Technology Services at Hunter Library, Western Carolina University since 2011. He previously held positions at Florida State University, the University of

Arkansas at Little Rock, the University of North Carolina at Asheville, and the Western North Carolina Library Network. He received his Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Arts in American and New England Studies from the University of Southern Maine. He is an active member of the American Library Association and the Libraries and Information Technology Association (LITA).

Rosalind Tedford is the Director for Research and Instruction at the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University. She joined the ZSR Library as a full time staff member in 1994. She earned her MLIS from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 1998. In addition to managing the research and instruction programs at Wake Forest, she teaches for-credit information literacy courses and is the liaison to both the Political Science and Communication departments. She has presented at LOEX, ACRL, ALA, and regional conferences on issues ranging from copyright to technology trends to information literacy.

Kathryn Tvaruzka is the Head of Access Services & Education Librarian at McIntyre Library at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Prior to her work in academic libraries, she spent eight years as a public librarian in both reference and youth services departments. She received her Masters of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Kathryn is a frequent contributor to the professional literature on topics related to staff morale and programming in academic libraries. She is active in the EBSS (Education and Behavioral Sciences) section of ACRL and serves the Wisconsin Library Association in leadership capacities and on several committees.

Wyoma vanDuinkerken received her MLIS in 2000 from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign and a MA in Islamic Studies in 1997 from McGill University, Canada. She joined Texas A&M University in 2004 and received tenure in 2010. She is currently the Director of the Joint Library Storage Facility but has held a number of additional roles in the Library College at Texas A&M University, including Coordinator of Cataloging Record Support, Coordinator of Acquisitions Monographs, Reference Librarian, and Administrator of Virtual Reference. Her research interests include virtual reference, project management, acquisitions, organizational change management, and library administration. She has written numerous articles and book chapters and just completed her first monograph, titled *The Challenge of*

Library Management: Leading with Emotional Engagement. She currently serves as the co-editor for the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. Ms vanDuinkerken is also an active member of the American Library Association, where she has served as a member and chaired (2010–2011) the Publication Committee for the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, Acquisitions Section.

Elizabeth J. Weisbrod joined the library faculty at Auburn University in 1990 and currently serves as the Microforms and Government Documents Librarian. She received her Master of Science in Library and Information Science degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Master of Music degree from the University of Notre Dame.

Introduction

Librarians and library staff are typically focused on serving the needs of library users, and this can lead them to lose sight of the fact that libraries are also places of work. The library literature is replete with articles about how to improve services, facilities, and systems for library users, but there are relatively few articles about how to improve libraries for library workers. Librarians and library staff should be concerned with having a good environment in which to work, and improving libraries for library workers will doubtless result in better and more productive organizations.

One of the elements that contribute to the quality of a workplace for employees, if not the most important one, is the culture of that workplace. Workplace culture is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management* as "the values, customs, rituals, attitudes, and norms shared by the members of an organization, which have to be learnt and accepted by new members of the organization . . ."[1] A positive/healthy culture, where new ideas are encouraged, and where mistakes are accepted as part of the learning process, can lead to greater success and productivity for the organization. It can also create less employee anxiety and depression, increase employee satisfaction, raise motivation, and lower absenteeism.[2]

This volume was compiled to review current workplace cultures in academic libraries and ways to improve those cultures. Basic questions this book is concerned with are: "What conditions contribute to an excellent academic library work environment? What helps to make a particular academic library a great place to work?" Unlike other works published in this area, this work is neither a "how-to" guide nor a collection of highly theoretical and speculative essays. Rather, contributions to this collection primarily discuss successful current programs pertaining to workplace culture in academic libraries and place the discussion in a scholarly context, particularly by considering similar programs and/or the history of the topic as reviewed in the library literature. It is hoped that, because this work is from the practitioner's

standpoint, each contribution will still have significant practical value by providing useful ideas and suggestions for consideration by other academic libraries. Chapters relate to the physical environment, diversity, retention of quality staff, staff morale, interaction between departments, communication/information sharing, handling of complaints, and management styles conducive to healthy workplaces.

The essays in the section "Overview of Workplace Culture" begin the book with some "meta" workplace culture issues, such as defining the concept of workplace culture, workplace culture and leadership, the creation of a "preferred" workplace culture, and a case study that took place in a large metropolitan academic library. The chapter on "Assessment" by MacDonald discusses the different tools that academic libraries have used to assess their culture and plan for improvement. Some academic libraries have used professionally-produced tools, such as ClimateQUAL®,[3] to define their culture, while other libraries have created or adapted tools of their own.

The book contains a number of chapters related to staff diversity in academic libraries. Topics include making workplaces inclusive towards co-workers from diverse backgrounds; the importance for library leaders to develop cultural competences so they can improve interaction with diverse staff; and developing cultural competencies specifically towards Asian Pacific American co-workers, a fast-rising group in academic libraries. The topic of diversity relates to more than just ethnicity, and, in their chapter, Garnar and McCaffrey analyze the commentary of focus groups of different generations of librarians in regard to their differing visions of 21st-century academic libraries. In the section on "Acclimation for New Librarians," Miller is specifically concerned with new librarians in academic libraries, and she advocates for special attention to be paid to this group. Not only do new librarians need help in being acclimated to their new profession, but their newness to the profession makes them a fertile source of fresh ideas.

The issue of communication is bound to be raised in any thorough discussion of workplace culture. There is a need for communication at all levels; communication, however, is an ongoing effort, and implementing and maintaining good communication requires concerted effort and time. The issue of interdepartmental communication is discussed by Mautino and Lorenzen, and interdepartmental collaboration through communication is addressed by Bordeianu and Lubas. Blessing focuses on the crucial aspect in a workplace culture of good communication flowing from the leadership to the staff, a characteristic of transparent leadership. The topic of workspace redesign projects is covered in two

chapters, one by vanDuinkerken and MacDonald, the other by Weisbrod. The vanDuinkerken/MacDonald chapter, on the challenges of library staff workspace redesign, states that administrators frequently tend to make the mistake of announcing the need for a change and then moving directly to implementation, without conducting staff interviews, observing staff work behavior, and engaging in inclusive planning. Tedford, Corbett, and Lock report on the improvements in the workplace culture of their library after an inspirational library director was hired. While this director was concerned with making the library more innovative, she accomplished this by being more open to communication from her staff, listening more closely to staff ideas and making them feel more a part of the decision-making process for new programs at the library.

Fostering civility and managing conflict are two sides of the same coin of interpersonal relationships, one focusing on the positive and the other the negative. Snavely and Hudson's chapter considers a number of ways to encourage civility in an academic library. And, in her chapter, Plocharczyk discusses how best to manage conflict in academic libraries. She argues that conflict does not have to be seen only in a negative light; when handled constructively, it can bring about necessary and positive change.

Tenure for librarians is another weighty issue in academic librarianship, and two chapters deal with this issue directly. While the research in the article by Hepburn noted that most academic librarians hold faculty rank, what that actually meant in terms of tenure or other conditions varied. Hepburn investigates the different types of faculty status to see what effect, if any, the varying statuses had on the culture of libraries, and he reports on a survey he implemented to help to determine these perceptions. Bruxvoort looks at the different ways mentoring, particularly mentoring tenure-track librarians, can be handled and then determines best practices for this.

Change is omnipresent in the 21st-century academic library, with trends including major budget cuts due to the global economic recession, increased purchasing of and access to e-books, and repurposing of space to allow more collaborative work and study spaces. Most academic libraries are currently facing budget cuts, and two articles in this book elaborate on how academic libraries can provide non-monetary awards and morale boosters. Johnson, Stoffan, and Carstens take up the topic of motivating library staff in a time when monetary incentives are not an option. They conclude by recommending practices that "include giving employees the maximum possible control over their physical environment

and individual work schedules; providing them with opportunities to grow in their job and learn about other departments in the library; providing them with a possible career path within the library; including staff on library committees; attempting to communicate effectively with all staff; and praising employees' accomplishments whenever appropriate." And, while a discussion of enhancing staff morale could take a number of directions, Jennings and Tvaruzka's treatment of this issue in their chapter focuses on an effort to increase the level of fun that co-workers have in the library while still being mindful of budget constraints.

The major themes of this book, diversity, communication, and leadership, seem to fall under the umbrella of one over-arching idea: respect. Increasing the respect for diversity in all of its manifestations, for co-workers, for the value of staff to the point that communication with them, their ideas, and their motivation and development are major concerns of leadership, these things should be on the agenda if the goal is to improve the workplace cultures of academic libraries. The editors hope that this book will provide substantive suggestions and inspiration for academic librarians to improve the respect between their co-workers and leaders, to result in enhanced workplace cultures that will provide optimal conditions for library workers.

Notes

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1

Organizational culture and leadership: exploring perceptions and relationships

Pamela S. Bradigan and Lynda J. Hartel

Abstract: Organizational culture plays a powerful role in the workplace. What issues are impacting the cultural dynamics of the workplace in today's academic library? What are the cultural challenges of the workplace facing library leaders? The authors provide definitions of organizational culture, consider the importance of subcultures, review the literature from corporate and academic perspectives, and explore a leader- and employee-driven approach to fostering a high-performing culture. Principles of organizational culture, including values, perceptions, organizational history, and employee leadership and accountability, are discussed. The authors present recommended leadership practices from the perspective of academic librarians actively engaged in rethinking culture to improve performance and outcomes.

Key words: accountability, coaching, collaboration, leadership, Mood Elevator, organizational culture, organizational health, Edgar Schein, Senn Delaney, subcultures.

Introduction

Resources on the topic of organizational culture are abundant. As of March 2012, WorldCat revealed more than 11 000 books under the subject heading "corporate culture." It is hard to find a management

resource published in the last 30 years that does not discuss organizational culture. Library management and leadership publications also point to culture as a critical factor in the effectiveness of libraries. As many scholars and business consultants have found, an analysis of organizational culture can be used as a first step toward organizational change and development. The powerful role of culture in the workplace is something all library managers are striving to understand, just as their corporate counterparts are doing. This chapter defines what organizational culture is and how it applies to academic libraries. The many components of organizational culture and the roles of all leaders in developing and influencing culture are also described.

Organizational culture defined

A precise definition of the term "organizational culture" is elusive. Organizational culture has been very broadly applied and studied, across a variety of disciplines, for many years. As Linn states, "while broad studies provide many perspectives on the topic, it also makes agreement on how to define the term difficult."[1] Several key definitions stand out and are regularly referred to in the literature. One of today's often-cited definitions of organizational culture, "the way we do things around here," originated in a 1966 book by long-time business leader Marvin Bower. Bower recognized that successful leaders referred to their corporate philosophy, or culture, as unwritten guidelines on how people should perform and conduct themselves.[2] In the 1980s and 1990s, a number of prominent books on the topic of organizational culture were published and continue to be heavily referenced today.[3] Deal and Kennedy assert that a healthy organizational culture contributes to corporate productivity and success. They were among the first to identify a set of elements that make up an organization's culture: history, values and beliefs, rituals, stories, heroic figures, and informal network.[4] Edgar Schein, often referred to as the "father of organizational culture" and routinely cited in current works, provides a framework that supports these earlier notions. At the same time, he argues that culture is the most difficult organizational attribute to explain or change. He suggests that culture goes beyond the espoused values and beliefs to include visible artifacts such as facilities, mission statements, and employee attire. He refers to culture as the deeply embedded, unconscious basic assumptions that are the essence of an organization.[5] Joann Keyton supports Schein's

notions and adds that organizational culture is not any one artifact or value but rather a complex, dynamic system of multiple artifacts and values.[6] Current academic scholars, corporate managers, and library leaders alike agree that, no matter how it is defined, organizational culture largely influences the way most employees consistently behave, the decisions they make, and the reaction when change is implemented.[7] Management consultant Peter Drucker and Ford Motor Company President Mark Fields have both been quoted as saying, “culture eats strategy for breakfast.” In other words, no matter how good a workplace’s strategies are, culture can counteract such strategies.

While all college and university campuses have similar missions, each has its own vision, symbols, and history. Libraries are shaped and influenced by the broader campus culture. Successful academic libraries strive to incorporate and build upon institutional strategies through their services, collections, and collaborations. Library leaders and staff from all departments are encouraged to partner with faculty and staff from across the campus to share their expertise, contribute to changing curricula, expand outreach and engagement programs, and enhance information technology systems and solutions. These changing relationships and networking opportunities lead to possibilities for cultural change.

Unit subcultures

Organizational culture is often considered from the organization-wide perspective. Researchers have found that unique subcultures often exist in departments or units.[8] However, researchers’ opinions differ as to whether these subcultures provide positive or negative impacts on the overall functioning of the organization. As Cameron and Quinn indicate, difficulties in coordinating and integrating processes or organizational activities are often a result of culture clashes among different subunits.[9] Boisnier and Chatman, on the other hand, have found that subcultures can provide the flexibility and responsiveness during times of dynamic change that a unitary culture may limit.[10] When contemplating organizational change, it is important for leaders to consider and acknowledge possible subcultural differences.

Subcultures often exist in academic libraries. Staff members may be working to meet the same strategic goals and objectives of the library while simultaneously working in unique subcultures. An assessment of

academic library culture may reveal a mix of two or more dominant subcultures. These subcultures, with their own values, history, and perspectives, may have a mix of positive and negative qualities.[11] Some departments, especially those with a small amount of employee turnover, develop deeply held beliefs and behavior norms over time. Members of these departments may see themselves differently and interact in very different ways from employees in blended departments or departments with more frequent staffing or supervisory changes.

In academic libraries, librarians may have faculty status. In these libraries, librarians must personally navigate their way through a complex promotion and tenure process in addition to working to meet organizational goals. As a result, this group can develop its own subculture. In the past, groups serving particular roles and responsibilities, such as information technology, public services, and technical services, developed their own cultural norms and behaviors. Given that many academic libraries now foster collaborative interactions and initiatives internally as well as externally, these traditional library units work more cooperatively and may experience cultural shifts.

Perceptions

Organizational culture has been referred to as the personality of the organization.[12] Just like mixed perceptions about personalities, people in the same organization can have different perceptions of the organizational culture. Employees from the Senn Delaney Leadership Consulting Group, an international firm focused on improving organizational culture and performance, suggest that life events, situations, and people look different to each individual due to selective perception.[13] Some individuals have had profound, significant life experiences that continue to influence perceptions of current situations. These experiences may have left them fearful, lacking trust, and reluctant to reach out to others or take risks. On the other hand, previous experiences may have left them confident, willing to take chances and experience the unknown. Either way, the role of previous experiences must be acknowledged as elements of organizational culture. Perceptions can differ significantly between managers and employees and between diverse gender and racial populations.[14]

Perceptions impact academic library employees just as they do corporate employees. Library employees see situations, events, and

people in different ways due to different memories, experiences, and interests. Sometimes employees consult with colleagues to help them see things differently. Strategic changes are often made to library organizational structures due to branch or departmental library closings and consolidations, budget reductions, creation of new types and classifications of library positions, and leadership transitions. In some cases, organizational history may be lost when long-time employees retire. In such cases, new employees are left with stories and myths about the former culture. Given the constant state of change in libraries, it is likely that perceptions are adjusting as well.

Values

Values play an important role in organizational culture. Values are impacted by an organization's history and growth, the behaviors of the employees, and the leaders' beliefs and actions. Some values stretch over an entire organization and some relate only to specific units. Taylor observes that organizations with shared values consistently modeled across the organization experience:

- employees focused on what is important to the organization;
- less stress on individuals;
- less tension between individuals and departments;
- enthusiasm in the workplace;
- pride in work;
- direction in the workplace;
- less bureaucracy;
- positive attitudes;
- positive momentum.[15]

Senn Delaney consultants have, over the years, identified a set of essential value categories that exist in all successful organizations.[16] Here are the broad categories of the Essential Value Set with accompanying academic library illustrations:

- Performance value: Accountability and self-empowerment come into play in this category. This is seen when staff and departments take on a "can-do" attitude and come up with plans to implement a new program or service, or take control of a challenging situation.

- Collaborative value: In today's academic library setting, collaboration is vital. This means collaborating internally across departments and externally with customers. Sharing knowledge and expertise with partners can lead to increased opportunities for growth.
- Change value: Academic libraries constantly face change. Change value means creating a learning culture by supporting knowledge sharing and professional development opportunities.
- Ethics/integrity value: To promote this value, leaders must set the example and expectation for respectful, compassionate, and responsible conversations and relationships with employees and customers.
- Organizational health value: As with personal health, this value is exhibited when the library is operating at a healthy, encouraging, and positive level. All employees are responsible for sustaining a healthy library culture.
- Customer value: Library employees recognize the importance of focusing on the customer. This value means keeping the customer in mind with all new initiatives and seeking customers' advice and feedback often.

Senn Delaney consultants have found that successful organizations use shared cultural values more than policies and procedures as a means to guide employees in determining appropriate decisions and behaviors. They believe that, if an organization falls short in any one of these categories, performance can suffer.[17]

Organizational culture and thoughtful leadership work in tandem in academic libraries. Awareness of the basic concepts, relationships, and trends associated with these important elements is a significant advantage to an organization. Selected leadership and cultural concepts are offered in the following sections as practical information for any individual interested in organizational improvement.

Leadership

Numerous authors have defined corporate leadership and explained who the real leaders are in any organization. Prominent educators and award-winning authors James M. Kouzes and Barry Posner maintain that leadership is not just reserved for a select group of "charismatic men and women." They believe leadership is a "process ordinary people use when they are bringing forth the best for themselves and others."[18] Noted

leadership authorities Noel Tichy and Eli Cohen define leadership as "the capacity to get things done through others by changing people's mindset and energizing them to action."[19]

Likewise, several authors have defined and described leadership in the library profession. For example, Olson and Singer describe leadership in libraries as "the capacity to develop ourselves and our organizations, partner with our stakeholders, and serve our constituents in ways that promote positive relationships, create meaningful work environments, foster new leaders, and deliver high-quality, innovative programs and services that are true to our mission."[20] Giesecke reinforces this notion. She describes leadership as a process rather than a trait and states that leadership involves influence to achieve goals.[21]

Former academic library director and library consultant Sheila Creth suggests that culture should not be overlooked when considering leadership and organizational models of academic libraries. Creth believes distributed leadership among various staff and positions in libraries has occurred primarily on an informal basis, and she advocates for a more intentional expansion of leadership capacity throughout the library.[22] For instance, library staff members from across the organization should be invited to lead projects to develop new services or programs, coordinate special assessment activities, or chair committees. Distributed or shared leadership moves beyond considering only the actions and views of a select few.

Everyone leads

"Leading from where you are" is a common phrase that highlights the notion that each individual in an organization, regardless of position, has the opportunity to lead. Expanding the leadership role to all staff is advocated by well-known organizational and leadership experts. Kouzes and Posner identify leaders as "ordinary people."[23] Similarly, promoting leadership in every staff member is a primary focus of Tichy and Cohen's writings.[24] In considering the academic library setting, Creth emphasizes that leaders are not restricted or limited to those in administrative or managerial positions. Creth believes it is important to recognize the trend and responsibility to "grow" the leadership capacity of all staff.[25] Shared or distributed leadership promotes the full engagement of each staff member's talents and energy in developing innovative services and solutions, building sound relationships across campus, and supporting the organization's vision and goals.[26] Jon Cawthorne believes that shared

leadership can shape the organizational culture of libraries.[27] He recently surveyed academic library middle managers regarding their perceptions of shared leadership and the extent to which they share decision-making as leaders. Middle managers who participated in this study believe they have accountability for decisions made within the scope of their responsibilities but have mixed opinions regarding their influence outside this scope. These middle managers linked shared leadership to communication, learning, and collaboration – all important aspects of organizational culture. Cawthorne's research sets the stage for additional exploration regarding the implementation of shared leadership models in academic libraries.

The availability of staff development budgets and training opportunities, as well as strong organizational role models, supports the goal of "everyone leads." Traditional funding for job-related or specific knowledge growth may need to be expanded if the academic library goal is to encourage leadership in individuals at every level. In the academic setting, innovative teaching and learning opportunities are often provided to all staff, and library leaders may want to point out additional opportunities or provide specific culture-shaping and leadership training for their own staff with the assistance of a consultant or knowledgeable university human resources professional.

Culture-shaping

There are a number of exemplary practices and strategies available to assist current leaders and aspiring leaders in academic libraries seeking to improve organizational performance. In the following section, strategies offered by Kouzes, Posner, Tichy, and Cohen are paired with corresponding Senn Delaney culture-shaping principles.[28] The Senn Delaney principles and key phrases are designed to help employees remember and incorporate these strategies in the workplace.

1. Model the way: Clarify personal values and align actions with values. (Shadow of a Leader)

"Model the way" or "lead by example" corresponds to a principle Senn Delaney calls "Shadow of a Leader." The shadow image is powerful in pointing out the influence of leader behavior in any organization. Awareness of one's shadow, or demeanor, at work is important to recognize first, and managing the shadow is the next step. The Shadow of

a Leader phrase reminds one that an individual's messages and behaviors influence all staff. Young children are experts in understanding their parents' shadow and often mimic a parent's everyday activity. In the workplace, leaders want to determine the current shadows they are casting, reinforce positive ones and alter less desirable ones. Library employees look to their leaders and respected colleagues for approval and direction. The non-verbal shadow is an important indicator and one that a talented leader will use to influence positive results in an organization. Leaders should consider casting positive shadows, such as: a collaborative team player; a listener who is flexible and open to change; an accountable and respectful individual.

2. Inspire shared vision: Create a common vision and enlist others in shared aspirations. (Blue Chips)

Successful academic library leaders commonly inspire a vision in their organization, and they encourage all staff to share in this inspiration. Organizational strategic planning is one process or tool often employed to involve staff in developing a course of action that aligns with the vision. Senn Delaney reinforces the focused approach on important goals with its Blue Chip Mindset. In the stock market, the blue chip is a nickname for high quality corporation stocks that are in sound financial shape and hold a reputation for quality. Senn Delaney encourages leaders to clearly identify the most valuable organizational Blue Chips and focus on these while considering how best to handle the less important "chips" that currently take up time and energy. For instance, might the less important work be delegated, or is there a more economical way to accomplish it, or can it be eliminated?

3. Enable others to act: Foster collaboration and strengthen others. (Accountability Ladder)

Strong leaders enable other library staff members to act through fostering collaborations and strengthening individuals. The Senn Delaney Accountability Ladder is a useful cultural tool and phrase which assists individuals in identifying and developing their own personal responsibility. Individual employee, team, and leader accountability is an important element of collaborative work. The Senn Delaney Accountability Ladder has less powerful or accountable rungs at the lower levels and very accountable rungs at the top. These are the specific rungs, from low to high accountability: unaware; blame others; make excuses; wait and

hope; acknowledge reality; own it; find solutions; and get on with it. On the Senn Delaney Accountability Ladder, an individual accepting responsibility will avoid excuses and determine what more he or she can do to get the job done.

4. Challenge the process: Look for new ideas and ways to create customer loyalty. (Assume a Positive Intent)

The authors offer excellent advice and examples of how organizations have accomplished this. One Senn Delaney culture-shaping phrase that is especially useful during times of organizational and innovative change is Assume Positive Intent. This concept suggests that individuals should avoid assuming others have ill intentions when they disagree and, instead, be curious, assume a positive intent, and ask respectful questions encouraging a colleague to share his or her view on what is best for the organization. Open and respectful discussions among staff promote problem-solving and innovative opportunities.

5. Encourage the heart: Appreciate contribution and celebrate a spirit of community. (Mood Elevator)

The Mood Elevator supports the Kouzes and Posner leadership practice of appreciating staff contributions and celebrating successes. The Senn Delaney Mood Elevator is a simple concept and reminder for leaders and staff to check their moods and encourage high performing thoughts and behaviors. The lowest levels of the Mood Elevator include depressed, judgmental, defensive, irritated thoughts; and the highest or most desirable moods include appreciative, optimistic, creative, and grateful thoughts. In the middle of the Mood Elevator is the “curious” thought, which is very useful when one does not understand or agree with a situation or individual. For example, instead of being critical of a colleague’s position on an issue, it may be more useful to ask or consider why he sees his suggestion as best. Positive reinforcements such as celebrations and other visible appreciation of staff member accomplishments should be part of a library’s culture.

6. Building leaders: lead yourself first, then teach others. (Coaching and Feedback)

Coaching and feedback are methods or avenues for an individual to use in assisting colleagues in reaching their potential. Providing coaching and

feedback to achieve excellence in libraries is the focus of Ruth Metz's recent work. Metz explains that coaching is "the purposeful and skillful effort by one individual to help another achieve specific performance goals."[29] Appreciative and constructive feedback are simple tools Senn Delaney suggests as first steps in the coaching process.[30] Appreciative feedback or praising an individual's work is inexpensive and lets an employee know what he or she is doing well. Constructive feedback lets an individual know how to improve his work and is key to making a change to enhance performance. These skills are important in the academic library environment to enable staff to successfully adapt to change, learn, and work in collaboration with others.

Conclusion

Academic libraries and their teams have a life of their own, with unique values, histories, behaviors, and missions. This is their culture. Culture is a powerful force in every library and can contribute to or detract from the ability to succeed in meeting strategic goals and objectives. Thoughtful leadership and cultural reinforcements promote staff and organizational success in twenty-first-century academic libraries. The basic principles shared in this discussion provide a foundation for a deeper exploration of specific organizational challenges facing librarians today.

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2

Building on our strengths: working towards a preferred workplace culture

Carol Shepstone and Lyn Currie

Abstract: This chapter explores how understanding organizational culture is essential to fostering and facilitating positive organizational change. Analyzing current and preferred cultures makes it possible to develop and implement strategies to move an organization in the desired direction. Following a literature review on organizational effectiveness, management, and change, the authors present case study research at three Canadian academic libraries which assessed current and preferred cultures and proposed action based on current cultural strengths. Though different in size, structure, location and program scope, the libraries had similar desires for cultural transition. The authors examine the experience of two of the libraries and provide examples of culturally appropriate strategies and initiatives that have influenced successful organizational development and growth.

Key words: workplace values, assessing workplace cultures, job satisfaction, cultural characteristics, shared management.

Introduction

In this chapter we focus on how to use an understanding of workplace culture to implement strategies that will lead to improved effectiveness and organizational success in academic libraries. Our discussion is based on case study research conducted at three Canadian academic libraries

which assessed current and preferred organizational cultures and proposed strategies and actions, based on cultural strengths, to achieve organizational growth and success.

Organizational culture is the collective understanding, the shared and integrated set of perceptions, memories, values, attitudes and definitions that have been earned over time and which determine expectations of behaviour that are taught to new members in their socialization into the organization. It is the organizational culture that gives identity, provides collective commitment, builds social system stability, and allows people to make sense of the organization.[1]

The importance of understanding the role culture plays in organizational change or renewal efforts has been well established.[2] Developed and created over the course of an organization's history, workplace culture is often deeply rooted and therefore difficult to alter. It is possible, however, to build upon a culture's strength and to help shape positive developments. Changing organizations in lasting and significant ways requires changes to those fundamental perceptions, beliefs, patterns of behaviour, norms, and ways of sense-making.[3] Creating new ways of working that build on our organizational strengths and shared desires for a preferred culture is the focus of this chapter.

Literature review

Organizational culture is a subject of considerable interest for many scholars working in the area of organizational effectiveness, management, and change. The extensive application of Cameron and Quinn's[4] Competing Values Framework to assess culture has been well documented by a number of authors.[5] Along with analysis and assessment of many for-profit organizations, the Competing Values Framework has proven useful in expanding understanding of complex cultural settings within academic institutions[6] as well as organizational culture within libraries.[7]

This chapter explores the challenges of putting organizational culture change into action by focusing on building on cultural strengths. There is considerable literature examining job satisfaction and employee motivation in libraries.[8] Building organizational success through organizational change leadership and empowerment is also well documented in the literature.[9] This chapter adds to the discussion by providing case study analysis of how successful organizational change can be informed by specific actions based on organizational culture preferences.

Case studies

An initial case study was conducted at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) Library to explore differing perceptions of organizational culture between a well-established cohort of tenured librarians and a rapidly growing number of pre-tenured librarians.[10] This 2007 case study was subsequently replicated at two other Canadian university libraries, Carleton University and Mount Royal University (MRU),[11] in 2009 to identify both the existing culture and the preferred culture at each library with a view to proposing culturally responsive strategies for initiating planning.[12]

For this research, Cameron and Quinn's[13] Competing Values Framework (CVF) provided the theoretical framework for understanding organizational culture. The CVF groups measures of organizational effectiveness along two dimensions: internal versus external focus and high versus low flexibility. The four quadrants created by these intersecting axes describe four distinct cultural types: Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy, and Market.[14] A Clan culture emphasizes a people and relationship focus, cohesion, participation and belonging, teamwork, and employee development; Adhocracy culture reflects innovation and rapid response to change; Hierarchy culture values stability, clear lines of authority, rules and procedures, and accountability; and a Market culture focuses on external positioning, competitiveness, productivity, and achievement of measurable goals and targets.

All three case studies used the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), which is based on six content dimensions that reflect the fundamental cultural values and implicit assumptions about the way an organization functions. The instrument poses a series of statements that reflect the key elements in describing organizational culture. When organizational members respond to questions about these dimensions, the underlying organizational culture is uncovered. The OCAI was administered by questionnaire to all library staff[15] in the three libraries. Scores on the OCAI were used to graphically plot the current and preferred culture profiles for each library. When interpreting the culture plots via the CVF, an analysis of scoring should be sensitive to differences of 10 points or more, according to Cameron and Quinn.[16]

Results

The data revealed three academic libraries with distinctly different *current* cultures, and a commonly shared desire to transition to a *preferred*

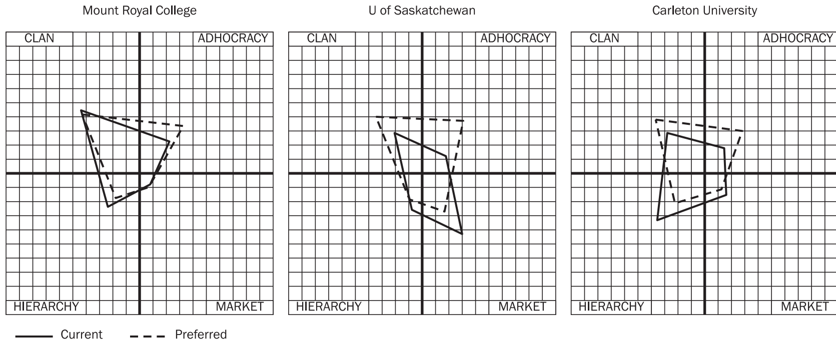

Figure 2.1 **Library culture profiles**

Adhocracy culture while increasing, or maintaining, strong Clan elements (Figure 2.1).

Current cultures

At the U of S Library, staff scored the library highest in the Market culture, indicating a focus on productivity, external positioning, competitive actions, market leadership, and achievement of measurable goals and targets, and a prevailing concern with stability and control.

Carleton University Library scored highest in the Hierarchy culture, indicating a formalized and structured workplace where rules and policies hold the organization together, procedures govern what people do, leaders are coordinators and organizers, and maintenance of a smooth-running organization, stability, predictability, and efficiency prevail.

MRU Library scored highest in the Clan culture, characterized by a people and relationship focus, a sense of cohesion, participation, and belonging, and an organization held together by loyalty and high commitment where long-term goals, teamwork, consensus, and individual development are valued and emphasized.

Preferred cultures

Though different in size and structure, geographic location, and program scope,[17] a comparison of the preferred culture profiles for these three

libraries revealed a common desire for transition to Adhocracy cultures and for stronger elements of a Clan culture. The U of S Library staff preferred a culture with a reduced Market orientation and increased Adhocracy elements, such as innovation and autonomy, along with increased Clan characteristics, such as a focus on the individual and a more personalized workplace. For MRU Library the preference was for a significant increase in the innovation and autonomy of an Adhocracy culture with maintenance of the existing Clan elements. Carleton University Library demonstrated a preference for increasing both Adhocracy and Clan elements and significantly decreasing the prevailing Hierarchy culture.

Discussion

This research made it possible to understand the type of culture preferred at each library and to consider how to apply this new understanding of our organizations. What practical measures could be implemented to build on the interest in the Adhocracy characteristics of innovation and risk-taking? How could Clan features of loyalty, personal relationships, and commitment be protected and fostered? Could the success or failure of new initiatives be linked to cultural preferences? How might activities and projects be altered to align, in both form and function, with these cultural strengths and interests? What could be done to reduce the cultural characteristics that are deemed less desirable, productive, or positive? How might different roles and responsibilities within the Library best be realized and be supported by cultural strengths?

To explore these questions we examined the experience of two of the libraries[18] in building Adhocracy and Clan cultures. The experiences illustrate ways to develop culturally appropriate strategies to manage change and demonstrate how context may influence the success of these strategies.

Building Adhocracy

An organization possessing Adhocracy cultural characteristics encourages and fosters independent action, innovation, and risk-taking. A high value is placed on autonomy and decision-making roles, and responsibilities are both transparent and clearly articulated. It is not surprising that Adhocracy characteristics are preferred in academic institutions that are focused on fostering new ideas, critical and independent thinking, and

creating new knowledge. Autonomy is a highly prized element in academic life, and universities are often found to be high in both Adhocracy and the competing values of Hierarchy characteristics.[19]

The University of Saskatchewan Library Adhocracy experience

The U of S Library has pursued a number of initiatives that are contributing to the development of Adhocracy elements in the workplace culture. These initiatives fall into three main categories: establishing an action plan for change and improvement, creating appropriate support mechanisms, and providing opportunities for learning and growth.

A strategic planning process was launched in 2006 with the "vision of transforming library services, collections, facilities and building an internal culture of engaged employees within a learning organization."[20] Within this Strategic Plan, core strategies have been identified to guide individual and organizational behaviour towards the achievement of the library's vision and mission. The "Employee Engagement and Operational Effectiveness" strategy seeks to continuously improve operations by developing and implementing innovative solutions. This approach involves a rolling plan that incorporates annual priority projects/action items, which gives the library flexibility to respond quickly to emerging changes in a dynamic information environment. Both the planning approach and specific strategies reflect the desire for Adhocracy elements in the workplace culture.

Support mechanisms have been introduced in a variety of forms. Staff wishing to innovate and exercise creativity require a work environment that nurtures ideas and supports risk-taking and experimentation, characteristics of an Adhocracy culture. At the U of S Library, the introduction of a project management approach offers both opportunity and the necessary support. A Project Governance Model has been developed to help align resources with strategic priorities and facilitate the completion of projects that will best contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Project management provides all library staff with the opportunity to translate an idea into a project, identify a project sponsor, prepare a project charter, seek approval and funding, and lead a project team. This process facilitates the emergence of ideas from anywhere in the organization – individual employees, committees, task forces, and informal working groups. It also endorses and supports the notion of risk-taking associated with the articulation of new ideas and creative ways to operationalize them.

The project management approach also contributes to the learning and growth of individuals and helps to ensure that employees feel both respected for their ideas and engaged in the business of learning and running the library.[21] Project management training prepares staff to work in a new way, covering how to turn ideas into action and how to define and manage projects.

The Mount Royal Library Adhocracy experience

The creation of a culture more supportive of Adhocracy characteristics at MRU Library has focused on the expansion of leadership opportunities, both formal and informal, the exploration of new forms of engagement through participation, and new approaches to decision-making and governance.

MRU Library developed and launched a new strategic plan[22] which refreshed the Library's vision and articulated a set of shared values, as well as outlining key priority areas for attention. The plan, along with supporting implementation plans created at the unit/area level, reflected the University's focus on innovative teaching and learning and the fostering of intellectual curiosity as keys to student success. As the Library continues to implement the plan, opportunities to engage staff in discussing new initiatives and activities have emerged through attention to campus-wide improvement initiatives such as the MRU Assessment Seminar.[23] Internal workshops led by Library representatives from the seminar team have been highly successful in engaging staff in identifying new Library initiatives. Bringing this and other institutional evidence, such as Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)[24] and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)[25] results, into Library planning discussions has been extremely beneficial to both planning processes and outcomes.

A review of all Library committees created expanded opportunities for staff and faculty to take on leadership roles through chairing and co-chairing responsibilities, and through participation and representation on new committees and ad hoc working groups. Staff-initiated bodies such as the Library Environmental Group were also supported. A Development and Learning Committee was launched to create, organize, and deliver staff-generated learning programs within the Library. All members of the Library team were encouraged to engage in University committees whenever practical, whether sitting on student misconduct boards, Association committees, or University initiatives such as Centennial planning committees and brand representation.

Opportunities to expand autonomy and build on creativity were also encouraged within the work responsibilities of individuals. While faculty have a high degree of autonomy by the nature of their work, for support staff new activities have fostered these preferred culture characteristics. A new project bank process was implemented to ensure staff had equitable and transparent access to subject support work with librarians in a more flexible and interest-based manner. This project bank approach builds on skills and expands expertise while ensuring a more balanced and responsive distribution of work. Flexible work arrangements were standardized for support staff and made available whenever practical, and a revised performance appraisal form supporting SMART goal[26] reflection and professional development planning for support staff was also implemented. For librarians, the placement of unit coordinators was formalized to reflect a 5-year term, similar to that of deans and chairs at the institution, and a transparent application and selection process was implemented. A process for piloting new support staff positions was initiated and an increased focus on cross-training has been taken up by a number of units.

Support for increased decision-making was further fostered by the university's own shift to a formal bicameral governance system, which clearly articulated academic decision-making as falling within the purview of a General Faculties Council and administrative and financial decisions resting with the Board of Governors.[27] This institution-wide movement created opportunities for dialogue on academic decision-making and for the expansion of both staff and faculty participation in formal structures, such as the Library Faculty Council, the Student Library Advisory Council, and various standing subcommittees of the General Faculties Council. While support staff at times find a "9–5" work schedule somewhat limiting to engagement opportunities in comparison with their more flexible librarian colleagues, interest and willingness to participate are increasing as new ways are found to enable participation.

Building Clan

Clan characteristics are evident in organizations that value and emphasize the personal, teamwork, and relationships, and build cohesion through commitment, participation, and loyalty. A strong desire for Clan culture characteristics in academic libraries is supported by the research on job satisfaction and commitment in library employees.[28] The Canadian 8Rs

study,[29] for example, confirmed that academic library workers have a strong sense of commitment to the value of the work they are engaged in and the positive reinforcement that comes from respect for their work.

Highly motivated and self-directed staff who find and create opportunities to collaborate and build professional and personal commitment are key to Clan cultures. Approaches to building and strengthening Clan factors can be built around such commitment and demonstrating respect and value for individuals and their contributions.

The Mount Royal Library Clan experience

MRU Library demonstrated a current culture with a high degree of emphasis on Clan characteristics and a strong desire to maintain these characteristics into the future. The personal and social connection valued by Library staff is reflected in both the complement of long-serving support staff and a relatively newer librarian cohort. Regardless of length of service, however, the emphasis on Clan characteristics within the library is one of its most pronounced features. This sense of shared meaning is fostered through a strong supportive team environment and is also considered at the point of hiring, where a premium is placed on collaboration, teamwork, and a high sense of professional responsibility to the library patron and the mission of the library.

It should also be noted that many Clan characteristics are reflected in the university as a whole. Still relatively small in size, MRU prides itself on living its "face to face" brand, which emphasizes a strong sense of community and caring. It is a university where staff, faculty, and students know each other, often by name, and where student success is supported at an individual level.

This emphasis on the person, the personal, and the social meaning we create at work can be clearly seen throughout the library. Library staff are lauded, often by name, by students for their assistance, and faculty colleagues often note the outstanding engagement and contribution of library faculty.[30] There is a strong commitment to student success and personalized support, and staff often go out of their way to ensure student needs are met. Library staff also take time to ensure social needs are met through internal group activities, such as milestone celebrations, community support initiatives (e.g. charitable activities), and annual social and team events within the library and as a university community. The central role that staff play in all aspects of the library's success and the invaluable role they have in supporting students and faculty are key

to supporting experiences of individual satisfaction and team success. The library's vision, *Mount Royal University Library: People and Information Inspiring Learning and Exploration*,[31] sums up the centrality of the individuals to the success of the library.

Strong communication and trust are key factors in Clan cultures. While there is considerable personal trust within the organization due to long-term working relationships and a manageably sized library team, emphasis on procedural trust[32] needs to grow increasingly robust as the library and university expand. Communication is key in this endeavour and is supported by increasing transparency around decision-making, particularly in times of change. The library has recognized a need to increase and diversify its internal communication, ensuring that all staff are aware of the roles of formal decision-making bodies and committees, and to create more opportunities for face-to-face information-sharing sessions, as well as unit and all-library meetings. The library's internal blog also offers ways for all staff to contribute and participate. Ensuring that agendas and minutes are shared internally and that regular reports and updates are provided also helps to encourage communication and foster a strong Clan culture where individuals can see the value of their contributions to the whole.

Inter-unit committee representation and joint working group projects have been important for building connectedness within the library. Larger-scale projects, such as planning for a new Library and Learning Centre building, current space renovations, and collections moves, have provided opportunities for staff to work closely together, reducing silos between units. Exploring and implementing a successful resolution to a long-term and significant noise issue within the library has also resulted in a well-deserved shared sense of success in reaching a shared goal.

Intrinsic motivation to do the work for its own sake is important; however, the powerful role recognition plays in job satisfaction should not be overlooked. To augment the university's long-service recognition and employee awards programs, the library has begun to include a regular staff recognition component in its professional development day. Those in leadership positions ensure regular informal appreciation for staff contributions; however, there is awareness that a more integrated program for staff appreciation is needed. A new plan is currently in development and will focus on peer-to-peer appreciation across all units, focusing recognition on library values, including excellent service, student success, innovation and creativity, and team work and collaboration.

The University of Saskatchewan Library Clan experience

The planning activities, supporting mechanisms, and developmental initiatives that are contributing to more of an Adhocracy culture at the U of S are also building a Clan culture. Another core strategy within the Strategic Plan, the "Relationships and Engagement Strategy," is concerned with building and strengthening relationships and connections within the library, the university, and beyond.

The library has also developed a human resource development plan known as the *People Plan*, which sets actions to help people (individually and collectively) grow their knowledge, skills, and abilities; share their expertise and build relationships; appreciate and celebrate contributions and achievements; and effectively communicate within the library and beyond with the community of users.[33] The *People Plan* also proposes the implementation of personal development plans as a shared management activity or partnership between the employee and the library. Employees will have the opportunity to describe their intentions and actions with regard to their own development and discuss their work goals and professional development opportunities with their manager and supervisor each year. This *People Plan* directly addresses the desire on the part of library staff for Clan elements that focus on the development and engagement of people in the workforce.

In terms of individual learning and growth, it is important to consider the behaviours leaders and managers should adopt in order to ensure a successful culture change. The authors reported previously on mapping managerial competencies and leadership styles to the four cultures of the CVF to illustrate how leaders and managers can most appropriately focus their skills development.[34] The U of S Library has invested in developing leadership and building staff engagement through the implementation of a *Library Leadership Development Program*. Through this program, over 70 staff have participated in learning about and developing skills and competencies in leadership; relationship-building; team-building; change management; performance, planning, and accountability; and personal mastery. To sustain this leadership learning, a second series of workshops has been implemented to reinforce and support leadership in action, such as building creativity and innovation, developing a community of practice on leadership, personal development planning, and the art of using feedback.

The investment in staff and in providing learning opportunities, thereby building a Clan culture, is clearly evident in the establishment of

a Learning and Development Committee, whose mission is to enhance staff knowledge, skills, and personal effectiveness. The committee has worked to encourage a learning culture within the library through the establishment of learning organization principles and systematic programming of training and development activities. Through these initiatives, library staff are participating, influencing, and affecting the culture change that is occurring, resulting in a strong foundation to support ongoing change.

Other forms of support can be found in such measures as the articulation of support for librarians as they progress through the requirements for renewal of probation, tenure, and promotion. For example, to facilitate the research and scholarship aspects of a librarian's professional practice, research funding has been made available, and the percentage of time to be spent on research is individually negotiated with the library dean and is specified annually in each librarian's assignment of duties.

Assessment and continuous improvement of these initiatives are being pursued in a variety of ways. In order to track progress against each action item detailed in the Strategic Plan and the *People Plan*, the Library is developing an annual *University Library Achievement Record* to report on achievement in all areas. Three *Library Employee Opinion Surveys* (2006, 2008, and 2011)[35] have also been conducted to solicit staff opinions on a variety of issues in the workplace. This data serves as a key performance indicator for employee engagement and is being used to inform planning and to update the *People Plan*. In successive surveys, employee engagement and leadership ratings have continued to improve. The role the leadership training, people planning, and project management methodology have played in empowering staff can be seen in the increased participation on committees and taskforces and in the management of library operations.

Conclusion

Assessing organizational culture is a necessary first step in organizational change. Analysing the current and preferred cultures of a library makes it possible to develop and implement strategies that will move the library toward the desired culture. Systematically managing a culture change involves engaging library staff in a process of discovering or revealing cultural perceptions and understanding and actively discussing, codifying, and agreeing upon appropriate new behaviors and activities.

The actions taken at the two academic libraries in these case studies demonstrate that culture change may require addressing almost every aspect of the organization to ensure it is aligned with and reinforces the preferred culture.[36] It is also clear that, although a preferred culture may be shared among different groups within the library, the strategies to move toward that culture benefit from being varied and tailored to specific needs of units or staff groups. Librarians, for example, may experience autonomy and the self-directed nature of Adhocracy elements quite differently from support staff, who may have more prescribed roles, duties, and requirements of work. Newer staff members may have quite different understandings of how Clan characteristics are best manifested and engaged with when compared with their longer-term counterparts. Even simple factors such as hours of work, public service desk shifts, teaching loads, or tenure status may impact how library staff are able to engage with strategies to support cultural change. Differences in roles, both real and perceived, may impact the success of change strategies. Library leaders should be prepared to be flexible, offering a variety of tools for building new culture.

These case studies also illustrate that organizational context must be considered. Existing cultural strengths, institutional size and scope, and external cultural influences all affect the type and success of specific change strategies. While one set of actions may find success in one library setting, another setting may need a quite different cadre of strategies. Or perhaps a similar approach may result in different successes, as in the case of the staff development and learning committees implemented independently at the U of S and MRU; at the U of S this primarily fostered Clan characteristics, while at the MRU this strategy helped advance Adhocracy elements. These variations emphasize the need for each organization to consider carefully both current and preferred culture strengths but also the context in which these organizational cultures exist.

These experiences at both libraries demonstrate some practical steps to achieve a desired culture. The process supports Quinn's[37] observation that often the most effective strategies tend to emerge step-by-step from an iterative process in which the organization probes the future, experiments, and learns from a series of partial (incremental) commitments. Along the way, the culture change may require maximizing experimentation and risk-taking, tolerating unknowable consequences, and evolving toward an end state.[38]

Above all, cultural change strategies should start from, and remain focused on, organizational culture strengths. Change based on a

foundation of appreciative and positive inquiry, held and presented in a positive frame, and recognizing an organization's desired cultural characteristics will yield a deeper and lasting organizational change.

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17. These three Canadian academic libraries provide quite different case study characteristics at the time of the study. University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: medical doctoral school offering full range of undergraduate and graduate degrees, CARL member, over 18,000 FTE students, Library 145 total staff (librarian faculty 36, support staff 90). Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario: offers full range of undergraduate and 45 graduate degrees, CARL member, 19,000 FT/ 5000 PT students, Library 104 total staff (librarian faculty 26, support staff 74). Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta: undergraduate degrees, 12,000 FTE students, Library 58 total staff (librarian faculty 13, support staff 45).
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3

Organizational culture and administrative change: a case study at a metropolitan academic library

Jason Martin

Abstract: This case study sought to define the organizational culture at a metropolitan academic library which is undergoing a major transition. Following a literature review which identified two in-depth studies of cultural change in two different academic libraries, this chapter analyzes the history, positive cultural aspects, and challenges faced by the library, and focuses on the values present in the library's culture before and after a change in the library's administration which involved a difficult transition. This research employed a mixed methodology of a survey, interviews, and document analysis; however, the results reported here are mainly from the interviews.

Key words: organizational culture, cultural rituals, leadership, administrative change, resistance to change.

Introduction

Organizational culture can be explained as the shared values, norms, and beliefs in an organization that are learned and guide employee behavior. Organizational culture is a valuable tool that helps to mold the views and behaviors of an organization's members. It can be heard in the simple expression, "That is the way we do things around here." This study used the following definition for organizational culture:

> A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.[1]

Understanding the organizational culture of an institution means understanding the shared values and norms of that organization. These values and norms influence and direct how those within the culture adapt to the external environment, interact with others (both members and non-members of the culture), view the present and past, determine what is truth and how to best make decisions, and establish the type of work and effort in which members of the culture should engage. The study's goal was to discover the organizational culture of the "Metropolitan Academic Library."

Literature review: prior case studies

A 1998 study by Ostrow was conducted in the pseudonymously named "Minerva Library."[2] Many of the librarians interviewed believed academic librarians at their library acted and behaved in a certain manner and would tolerate no deviance from this norm. The librarians at Minerva, who were faculty on a tenure track, defined themselves in opposition to the teaching faculty, the university administration, and even the library administration. They found the tenure requirements for librarians to be impossible to fulfill, and they refused to publish or perform the service required of faculty, yet used their status as faculty to their advantage. Many of the long-term librarians had received blanket tenure without ever going through the process. This created a culture in which poor performance and attitude were tolerated. The librarians viewed themselves through negative stereotypes and felt inferior to the teaching faculty, and, as a result, interacted little with them. The Minerva librarians were "defensive" and had a "vested interest in maintaining the status quo."[3] The committee structure of the library made it difficult to make decisions and take action in the library. As a result, change came very slowly, if at all, to the Minerva Library. Subcultures arose around public services librarians, technical services librarians, newly hired librarians, and those librarians with more experience.

When a new Chief Librarian took over Minerva in the early 1990s, he, with the support of the university president, worked hard to create

change in the library. The Chief Librarian rewrote position descriptions and job assignments, worked with the university administration to create promotion and tenure criteria that were more suited to the work of librarians, and redefined the library's role within the university. He also introduced technology into the library. He was aided in these efforts by a large number of retirements and contract buyouts. This allowed Minerva Library to hire librarians who better suited the new culture of the library. The new culture is defined by library instruction, which allows the librarians to contribute to the education of the students.

A second in-depth study of the organizational culture of an academic library was performed by Lee at the "New Millennium Library."[4] Lee found a culture of passiveness throughout the library. The culture was marked by a desire for consensus and a general non-confrontational attitude among librarians. Committees were not designed to effect change, but rather to inform, and the librarians felt they were generally "too dutiful and cooperative."[5] The librarians at New Millennium Library were not tenure track, so they had no real promotion or advancement opportunities. This created an atmosphere in which poor performance was accepted. This caused new, ambitious librarians to either leave the library or become entrenched in the culture of mediocrity. The librarians at New Millennium tended to view themselves through negative stereotypes and undervalued themselves and the profession. They also felt inferior to the teaching faculty. Subcultures of public services librarians, technical services librarians, newer librarians, more established librarians, and paraprofessional staff all existed in the New Millennium Library.

The cultures of the Minerva and New Millennium Libraries do appear to have a great deal in common. The similarities led Lee to conclude that insiders may be able to distinguish between the two library cultures, but outsiders may not.[6] In both libraries, change comes slowly, in large part due to the committee structure, which makes it difficult to take action within the library. Change also comes slowly because both cultures strongly adhere to the status quo. Both the Minerva and New Millennium Libraries were reluctant to offer new services, and this aversion to change contributed to the overall passivity present in the libraries. The librarians working at the Minerva and New Millennium Libraries felt inferior to the teaching faculty and believed that their work was underappreciated. They tended to view themselves through negative stereotypes and position themselves in opposition to the rest of the university.

Background and methodology

The current study took place in a large, metropolitan university located in the southern United States. Opened in the final third of the twentieth century, this university currently boasts a student population of nearly 40,000, offers over 200 graduate and undergraduate degrees across 12 colleges, and prides itself on its affordability and quality. The university's library houses over 1.7 million volumes and employs about 70 people. Because of this library's location in a large city and its diverse mix of students, faculty, and staff, the library was given the pseudonym the "Metropolitan Academic Library," hereafter referred to as MAL.

For this study, nine interviews were conducted during two separate on-site visits. Interviewees included librarians, library staff (known as Library Technical Assistants or LTAs), and library administrators (see Appendix A for survey). The participants were identified before each visit by their completion of the initial survey (included as Appendix B) or during each visit through the technique of snowball sampling.[7] The semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide, recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by hand. All uncited quotations in this chapter are from the interviews. Approval for this study was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Central Florida (UCF). The UCF IRB did not require approval from the case study's Institutional Review Board.

Positive cultural aspects

The MAL arose from humble beginnings. What the library has lacked in space, materials, budget, and staffing, it has consistently made up for with outstanding service to its patrons. In their interviews for this study, the librarians and library staff working in all areas made it clear that they view service to the patron as their main objective. In the inaugural annual report, the library's first director wrote: "From the beginning, the Library was service oriented and operational." This service orientation has helped to create what those in the library perceive as a positive image among the university community. One dedicated reference librarian emphasized the positive way faculty, staff, and students view the library. Her views were echoed by several other reference librarians, both new and experienced. One upper level administrator, who spends much of her time performing

outreach to the university community, hears a great many accolades for the library and very few complaints. The university faculty value the librarians and library so much that they undertook a faculty senate initiative to increase the library's funding. The faculty senate undertook this measure without prompting from the library. This represents the cooperative relationship that exists between the library and the rest of the university.

The ethic of outreach and engagement was prevalent among the librarians interviewed. Librarians engage the campus through various means, including attendance at university-wide committee meetings, performing liaison duties with their collection development departments, and serving on numerous university committees. This committee work helps the librarians to develop a "collegial relationship" with the university faculty. The librarians who are active on campus "are making the library known" and helping to make the library "a stronger entity on campus." And campus engagement does not simply involve committee work; many librarians teach for-credit classes at the university and are constantly working with the teaching faculty to make the library a more integral part of their classes.

Outreach and campus engagement also serve the important purpose of breaking down the stereotypes often associated with librarians and educating faculty, staff, and administration about what librarians actually do. As mentioned earlier, two previous case studies performed by Ostrow and Lee found the librarians in their studies to harbor feelings of inferiority towards the teaching faculty. These feelings of inferiority can hamper outreach, engagement, and the development of a positive image. The librarians at the MAL felt that the librarians and teaching faculty were not equal; however, they did not they think they were inferior to the teaching faculty, just different. This outlook could be one of the reasons why the librarians have been so successful in their campus outreach efforts.

The culture of the MAL values its librarians and library staff. Repeatedly, when the members of the library were asked to talk about what they liked best about their library, a variation of this response was repeated: their co-workers. Those who work in the library are all passionate about the profession of librarianship and working at the MAL. The librarians and LTAs interviewed love the variety in their jobs. Many remarked that they rarely do the same thing from one day to the next. This variety of duties and responsibilities makes working at the library a "challenge" and "never boring." Working together and being a team player is very much valued in the library and is critical for all aspects

of librarianship, from reference librarians who need help answering questions on the desk, to catalog librarians who need advice as to what cutter numbers to use, and everyone needs to be able to pitch in and help during a large-scale, library-wide project.

The people and the departments of the library get along well with each other. Librarians stated that they look forward to the monthly faculty meeting, if for no other reason than to see their colleagues from other departments and floors. Unlike the academic libraries studied by Ostrow and Lee, there was no evidence that the MAL is divided by public services and technical services, or by any other departments. Any conflicts across departmental lines tend to be of a purely personal nature.

With all the emphasis on people, it is not surprising that one of the major rituals in the library is the annual Christmas party. It is an event to which most, if not all, in the library really look forward. The party is held outdoors, overlooking several small lakes, and is catered. The library administration pays for the event. One librarian described it as a "big family reunion type of thing." People from all departments, including retirees, mingle with each other, talking, laughing, and reminiscing about the library. The party is also a nice chance not to talk about work, and to catch up on everyone's family and social life.

Challenges

Despite all the positives the library has going for it, one big drawback is its scarce resources. Since it first opened its doors, the MAL has been plagued by lack of staff, space, and budget. In his second annual report, the library's first director wrote about the "space crunch" the library was having, and this was before the university officially opened to students. This lack of resources hampers the library in several ways. First is the tremendous strain placed on the librarians and staff to find ways to do their jobs and meet the needs of the students, faculty, and staff without adequate tools. The lack of resources also means not doing things that should be done because just doing the basics of the job can be overwhelming. Any new services must either be put on hold or take the place of an existing service because of the current budget and staffing limitations. All these hardships can create stress and infighting among all those working within the library. As one reference librarian so succinctly stated, "All my colleagues are tired and overworked."

A prominent saga in the culture of the Metropolitan Academic Library is the origins and renovation of the library building. The library arose from humble beginnings. Packed together in a tiny building with no air conditioning, the university and its library took shape. Over time, the library has lived in several locations, including an abandoned garage and a multi-purpose building, until it finally got a building of its own. Some of the men and women who were there at the start of the library still work there today. They tell of sweating through the summers alongside the university's first president, and of all the work it took to move books from one building to the next. Even more people worked through the massive, multi-year renovation which added several stories to the existing building. They tell of the dust, noise, and many other inconveniences that come with working in a construction zone. The previous administration also hampered the cultural development and progress of the MAL. The previous dean had been in place for over 20 years. He was a hands-off, top-down, "kind of old-school . . . fairly autocratic [manager]." He liked to play favorites with departments, was not very transparent in his decision-making process, and "did not like to create waves." Change was virtually non-existent in the library during his tenure. As one administrator explained, under the old dean the library was "an afterthought . . . an old fashioned library."

Change in the library's administration

A few years prior to this study, the MAL welcomed a new dean. The transition was rough. The new dean is almost the exact opposite of the old dean, and the task laid before her was daunting. She had to rapidly move a library which had hardly undergone any change in the preceding two decades into the present and prepare it for the future. She also had to learn about her new library, and let the new library learn about her.

The current dean is a very hands-on manager. She feels this level of involvement is necessary in order to understand how the library is operating; however, some regarded this as micromanagement. The dean is also very accessible. She met with everyone in the library individually when she first started and instituted an open door policy which is popular among the librarians and library staff. She often walks around the building talking to people and asking them questions. The dean's accessibility goes hand-in-hand with her policy of openness. The dean and other administrators are being very open about how resources are allocated and

budget decisions made. She has also tried to make the library less hierarchical. By the creation of a more bottom-up style of management in the library, people are free to make their own decisions and live with the consequences. Many remarked on how supportive administration is and how little bureaucracy exists in the library, at least relative to other places. The administration is trying to increase freedom by having the librarians and paraprofessional staff participate in decision-making, and the librarians are working on improving their governance procedures.

The dean is also a strong advocate for the library. She is constantly engaging in outreach with various units across campus, explaining what the library can do for them. She is also fighting to get back the space the library lost under the previous dean (the total loss was one and a half floors, which mostly went to other departments around campus for office space), and to increase funding and staffing for the library. The dean wants to raise the visibility of the library overall. All of the interview participants gave credit to the new dean for trying to improve the library, even though not everything she has tried has worked.

At the outset, the dean assured everyone she would not undertake change for the sake of change; rather, she would take time to learn how the library worked and what needed to be changed. For an organization that has been so stagnant for so long, this type of shake-up can be very beneficial but also very difficult. For some in the library, a backlash to change is almost instinctive. For others, who were favored under the old administration, the resistance to change may be more a stance against the dean than anything else. It can also be difficult for a new dean to gain the trust of the employees, and change requires trust. The dean admits her schedule of change is aggressive, which leaves little time for her to gain the trust of those in the library. Change also brings about turnover in personnel. After the dean was hired, all the former associate deans left, and some librarians as well. With many budget constraints and a hiring freeze in place, replacing those who have left is difficult. This adds to the strain and stress felt by the librarians and LTAs, making it more difficult for them to adapt to and support change. However, many are encouraged by the change; they see what is happening, see the successes and think it can work. Not surprisingly, with all the change happening in the library, a great emphasis is placed on learning. The new dean has created professional development days during which the library is closed and all the librarians and LTAs attend a day-long, continuing education workshop. The topics of the workshops are chosen by the library employees.

Conclusion

The culture of the MAL is not a strong culture for several reasons. The first is that the previous library director, who spent over 20 years in that position, never developed a real vision or mission for the library. During that time, the MAL operated on a day-to-day basis. They were never working on anything bigger than the day-to-day operations and, therefore, never developed a strong culture. Values, the building blocks of organizational culture, are derived either from the organization's leaders or from "organizational traditions." Those values which are created by tradition are much deeper values, and they act as a stabilizing factor for the organization.[8] Without long-term traditions, the values present in the library are weak. One exception to this is the ritual of the Christmas Party. This is a long-term tradition and is a very strong part of the library's culture.

The second reason for the lack of strength in the culture of the MAL is the scarcity of resources, especially human resources. When I spoke with the dean, she stated that she regrets the inability of the library to engage in group reflection, whereby everyone sits down to think and talk about what the library is doing and where it is going. The librarians and LTAs are too few and simply do not have time for this kind of activity. This lack of reflection, of thinking about the meaning of actions, makes it difficult to develop the richness and textured layers of a strong culture. The development of a strong culture is crucial for an organization, especially one under severe strain. For a strong culture is what helps sustain an organization through difficult times.[9]

The dean of the Metropolitan Academic Library is in an unenviable position. In a short amount of time since becoming dean, she has set about to completely transform the library. Under any circumstances this would be difficult, but her situation has several added layers of complexity. An organization with a strong culture responds to external pressures and change much better than an organization with a weak culture. So much needed to be done in a short timeframe that the dean did not have much of a chance to gain the trust of the librarians and LTAs in the library. The budget situation is dreadful, and that adds pressure and strain to any situation. Most importantly, since the MAL rarely underwent any change over the past 20 years, this does not make for fertile ground in which to plant the seeds of change. The library may emerge from its current state with a stronger, richer culture, or the library may fall into defeatism and low morale. If the dean is successful

in her transformation of the Metropolitan Academic Library, then she will be remembered as a hero in the library's continuing saga. However, if she were to fail, then she would be the main character in a cautionary tale against change.

The Chief Librarian at the Minerva Library was in a similar situation. He needed not only to institute change throughout the library but also to change the library's culture. He was ultimately successful in both these undertakings. He also had the added benefit of being able to remove, through contract buyouts and early retirement, those librarians who were resistant to change and corrupting the culture through their negativity and confrontational attitude, and hire librarians who shared the new vision of the library and could work to build a different culture. The Dean of the MAL does not have that luxury. She must institute change and work with those within the library whether they are responsive to the change or not. One way in which she can be successful is to use and build upon the values present in the culture of the library. For each new change in the library, the dean should explain, clearly and often, how the change benefits the service offered by the library. Because service is such a prominent value in the library, librarians and library staff will be more open to change which increases and enhances the quality of service offered in the library. The dean also needs to focus on the people of the library by making sure they have a voice during any change, are not overcome with change (especially considering the personnel shortages), and are seen as what actually drives the organization. During change it is important to keep some things constant. One important constant for the library is the Christmas Party. This is a very strong piece of the library's culture and should continue. It could also be used to make change more palatable to the library by serving as a place to kick-start change and recap and celebrate the change and accomplishments from the past year.

From very humble beginnings, and after enduring much sacrifice and hard work, the MAL is now the most visible building on campus. By drawing inspiration from the hard work and sacrifice of those who came before them, the current members of the Metropolitan Academic Library are able to endure present hardships, such as a lack of resources, in order to further the mission of the library. The heroes of the origin and renovation sagas provide examples of how not only to endure hardship and troubles, but to emerge from them as a better organization. The new heroes will be those who help move the library forward to achieve greatness, while also nurturing the cohesion and solidarity of those within the library.

Notes

1. Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 17.
2. Rona L. Ostrow, "Library Culture in the Electronic Age: A Case Study of Organizational Change" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 1998).
3. Ibid., 87.
4. Soyeon Lee, "Organizational Culture of an Academic Library" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2000).
5. Ibid., 75.
6. Ibid., 123.
7. Snowball sampling involves asking an interview participant who they think would be a good interviewee, asking the people suggested if they would like to be interviewed, and then asking if they could recommend potential interviewees.
8. William Sannwald, "Understanding Organizational Culture," *Library Administration & Management* 14, no. 1 (2000): 10.
9. George Kuh and Elizabeth Whitt, *The Invisible Tapestry: Culture in American Colleges and Universities* (Washington, D.C: Clearinghouse on Higher Education, 1988), ERIC.

Appendix A: Culture interview

1. Could you tell me a little bit about your background and how you came to work in a library? What made you decide to participate in this survey?
2. What do you love about your job/being a librarian?
3. What do you not love about your job/being a librarian?
4. What are some things you find special about this library?
5. How are librarians and library staff viewed in the university?
6. When interviewing someone for a position what are qualities you would look for? What qualifications would the successful candidate have?
7. What makes a good librarian or library staff? What qualities are important?
8. What are your feelings on non-librarians performing work that was once reserved for librarians?
9. How well do the departments in the library get along?
10. What is the relationship like between administration and the rest of the library?
11. I have to develop a pseudonym for the library. What do you think would make a good pseudonym for your library?
12. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B: Culture survey and responses

Note: This survey was completed by 30 librarians at the MAL. However, not all respondents answered all of the questions. The number of respondents can be assumed to be 30 unless otherwise noted after the statement. The number in parentheses next to the percentage is the number of respondents. Percentages have been rounded for ease in reporting.

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1) **This question asked respondents to select their library's mission statement from among three choices and a "Do Not Know" option. (29 total responses)**

Correct 79% (23)	Incorrect or Did Not Know 20% (6)

2) **My library has well-defined goals.**

Strongly Disagree 10% (3)	Disagree 17% (5)	Agree 47% (14)	Strongly Agree 27% (8)	No Opinion 0

3) **Generally, those within the university (e.g. faculty, staff, and administrators) have a positive image of those within the library (e.g. librarians and library staff).**

Strongly Disagree 0	Disagree 3% (1)	Agree 63% (19)	Strongly Agree 30% (9)	No Opinion 3% (1)

4) **Librarians and library staff interact well with members of the university.**

Strongly Disagree 0	Disagree 10% (3)	Agree 53% (16)	Strongly Agree 30% (9)	No Opinion 7% (2)

5) **Decisions on promotion are made accurately and fairly.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
7% (2)	23% (7)	37% (11)	10% (3)	23% (7)

6) **I am fairly compensated for my work. (29 total responses)**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
17% (5)	41% (12)	31% (9)	3% (1)	7% (2)

7) **Decision making power is concentrated in my library's administration.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
0	17% (5)	47% (14)	33% (10)	3% (1)

8) **Decisions are made quickly and easily in my library.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
33% (10)	53% (16)	0	7% (2)	7% (2)

9) **I have input on decision making in my library.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
17% (5)	23% (7)	40% (12)	13% (4)	7% (2)

10) **My library places too much emphasis on consensus.** (29 total responses)

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
17% (5)	55% (16)	7% (2)	3% (1)	17% (5)

11) **Deadlines are strict in my library.** (29 total responses)

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
17% (5)	52% (15)	17% (5)	3% (1)	10% (3)

12) **In my library, meetings start on time.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
3% (1)	37% (11)	47% (14)	10% (3)	3% (1)

13) **Working in an academic library is a low stress job.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
27% (8)	47% (14)	20% (6)	7% (2)	0

14) **Generally, those within my library strive for excellence.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
3% (1)	13% (4)	57% (17)	17% (5)	10% (3)

15) **Librarians are considered to be the equal of teaching faculty in my university.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
10% (3)	60% (18)	7% (2)	7% (2)	17% (5)

16) **In my library, the work done by the library staff is considered equal to that of the librarians.** (29 total responses)

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
17% (5)	52% (15)	21% (6)	3% (1)	7% (2)

17) **Creating scholarly material (e.g. articles and presentations) is a good use of a librarian's time.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
3% (1)	23% (7)	53% (16)	17% (5)	3% (1)

18) **Non-librarians should answer reference questions.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
7% (2)	20% (6)	47% (14)	13% (4)	13% (4)

19) **Non-librarians should perform original cataloging.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
7% (2)	30% (9)	47% (14)	7% (2)	10% (3)

20) **Library administration has a good relationship with those who work in the library.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
13% (4)	20% (6)	60% (18)	3% (1)	3% (1)

21) **Generally the people in my library get along very well with each other.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
0	13% (4)	70% (21)	7% (2)	10% (3)

22) **All departments in my library are treated equally. No one department is considered better than another.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
21% (6)	34% (10)	31% (9)	7% (2)	10% (3)

23) **Everyone in my library is treated equally regardless if they are a librarian or library staff.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
10% (3)	40% (12)	33% (10)	7% (2)	10% (3)

24) **Library Position**

Professional Librarian	Paraprofessional Library Staff	Other
47% (14)	43% (13)	10% (3)

25) **Department** (28 total responses)

Public Services (Access Services/ GIS/Government Documents/ Reference/ Special Collections) 50% (14)	Technical Services (Cataloging/ Resource Development) 29% (8)	Administration 4% (1)	Systems/ Sound & Image Resources/ Digital Collections 7% (2)	Other 11% (3)

26) **Length of Service**

Less than 5 Years 40% (12)	6–10 Years 27% (8)	11–15 Years 13% (4)	More than 15 Years 20% (6)

4

Organizational climate assessment and improvement planning

Patricia MacDonald

Abstract: This chapter will describe how the Albert S. Cook Library at Towson University examined and assessed its organizational climate and used the results to develop a comprehensive improvement plan. From the several survey instruments available, the University of Virginia Library worklife survey on job satisfaction was chosen as a preliminary exercise, followed by staff retreats facilitated by a consultant to discuss and develop a strategic plan. Mission, vision and values statements were developed. The chapter will include insights, suggestions, guidelines, and lessons learned that might be helpful to other libraries interested in addressing organizational climate concerns.

Key words: assessing workplace culture, job satisfaction, ClimateQUAL+, strategic planning, worklife survey.

Introduction

Organizational climate issues can surface in the most collegial organizations, and the Albert S. Cook Library at Towson University is no exception. While such concerns are common, it is important to address them in order to avoid a more pervasive erosion of the underlying culture of an organization. Most libraries emphasize the importance of respect, teamwork, and staff development for all employees, but libraries often have an organizational structure that may run counter to these values. Academic libraries are normally hierarchical and often have a different job classification system for librarians than for other staff. The management and classification

structure can increase the likelihood of perceived inequalities among librarians and support staff, as well as other organizational issues.

The Albert S. Cook Library serves Towson University, a comprehensive university offering more than 100 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs in the liberal arts and sciences and applied professional fields. Located eight miles north of Baltimore, Towson University enrolls more than 21,000 students. Towson is the second largest public institution of higher education in Maryland and is part of the University System of Maryland. The Albert S. Cook Library supports the university with 51 staff members, 22 of whom are librarians.

University and library employees at Towson have a classification system established by the University System of Maryland. Ranks for librarians parallel those for faculty, with specified requirements for promotion and permanent status. Other positions at the library include staff classified as either "non-exempt" or "exempt." Non-exempt positions are regulated by federal overtime legislation and often involve office, maintenance, and paraprofessional work, while exempt, or salaried, positions are not regulated by overtime provisions and typically include more professional responsibilities and job requirements.

During the summer of 2010, the library held two staff retreats to discuss and develop a University Library Strategic Plan to support the Towson University Strategic Plan. Issues concerning worklife satisfaction and the climate of the library surfaced during these retreats, and initiatives to address these issues were included in the Library's Strategic Plan for 2010–2016. One goal in the plan is to assess the organizational climate and use the results to develop strategies for making improvements. After investigating various methods of organizational climate assessment, the library conducted a worklife survey as a preface to two retreats facilitated by a consultant. Outcomes of the 2011 retreats include recommendations related to communication, employee recognition, staff development, and investigating the possibility of modifications to the job classification system.

Literature review

Organizational climate and organizational culture

Schneider et al. refer to organizational climate and organizational culture as "siblings." Both involve the psychological life of an organization, but climate has more of a focus on the individual, and culture on the

collective.[1] Organizational climate concerns policies, practices, and rewards while culture comprises the beliefs, values, symbols, and stories of the workplace. A similar comparison is made by Kyrillidou and Baughman, who describe organizational climate as "how" things are done in an organization and explain that organizational culture is "why" things are done.[2]

Diversity and climate assessment

Kyrillidou and Baughman discuss the 1999 work of Paul Hanges, the University of Maryland (UM) Libraries, and the UM Industrial and Organizational Psychology program to develop an assessment of the climate and culture of the library system, with an emphasis on diversity.[3] This assessment instrument, now known as ClimateQUAL+, is used in a number of libraries, and it is one of the methods considered by the Cook Library. The Cornell University Library (CUL) used ClimateQUAL+ to assess the workplace environment and test the premise that a healthy organization shows a strong concern for employees as well as its customers. Xin and Bryan stated that CUL consistently received very high user satisfaction scores in LibQUAL+, the survey of library service quality developed by the Association of Research Libraries. Overall, employees gave CUL high scores in climate issues related to diversity, work empowerment, and emphasis on service. Weaknesses were revealed in areas related to uniform procedures for rewards and recognition and diversity among employees of different rank. Several actions were taken to increase teamwork, shared governance, and career development opportunities for all employees.[4]

Another survey instrument for climate assessment was originally created in 1995 by the Pennsylvania State University Libraries and later modified by other libraries for various climate assessment projects.[5] Virginia Fairfax County Public Library revised the Pennsylvania State instrument for their survey in 1997.[6] Next, the Fairfax County questionnaire was a model for a survey that University of Tennessee (UT) Libraries developed as preface to a diversity initiative. While these surveys were intended to assess the diversity climate, UT also found that support staff were less satisfied than librarians in areas of recognition, training opportunities, and hiring practices. Royse et al. also suggest a possible relationship between job satisfaction and openness to diversity, and conclude that addressing job satisfaction issues for all can improve the diversity climate.[7]

Job satisfaction

Lewis notes the history of the distinction between two classes of academic library employees, librarians and support staff, and the more recent addition of a third class of professional, non-MLS library employees.[8] In a study of job satisfaction in libraries, Voelck cites the often contradictory results of previous research. She summarizes the results of several studies conducted since the 1970s that compared all employees, or types of employees, at numerous libraries. Some studies found little difference in job satisfaction among employees at different libraries or in different departments, while others noted higher satisfaction among reference librarians and public services staff than those in other departments, such as cataloging. However, communication, compensation, and promotion opportunities were often found to be areas of dissatisfaction for library staff classified as paraprofessionals, library assistants, or support staff.[9]

The research reviewed by Voelck used instruments such as the Job Description Index (JDI), Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), or the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The JSS was used in the 1989 research by Parmer and East in their study of support staff in Ohio academic libraries, and Voelck used a slightly revised version of this survey instrument in a Michigan study. Although both Parmer and East and Voelck studied support staff in academic libraries, they had some very different, even contradictory, results. Parmer and East found that public services staff were more satisfied than those in technical services, while the Michigan data showed that the more time staff spent with patrons, the lower their satisfaction. The number of years of experience also had the opposite effect: satisfaction was lower for Ohio support staff with more years of experience, but satisfaction increased with years on the job in the Michigan study.[10]

Strategic planning retreats

The Cook Library has a culture which values service, collaboration, and respect. During the strategic planning retreats in which employees from different departments worked together in random groups of mixed professional status, this spirit of empathy and collaboration was very evident in the active participation of these interdepartmental groups. As noted, among the many issues discussed, some involved job satisfaction concerns, especially among those in staff rather than faculty librarian

positions, as they thought their positions lacked opportunities for advancement and incentives for professional development. One of the retreats focused on diversity, and the concerns that emerged were related to these perceived inequalities in job status rather than discrimination issues.

After the retreats, two task groups continued the work begun in the retreats to develop mission, vision, and values statements and strategic priorities based on the ideas and concerns discussed in the retreat. The *Values* statement specifies a workplace that emphasizes collegiality, mutual respect, and teamwork and that promotes professional growth (Appendix A). Additionally, the strategic plan that was developed includes a human resources priority with a number of initiatives to address staffing issues, such as review and revision of job responsibilities, classification, and salary compression. Another initiative is to assess and to improve the organizational climate with the desired outcome that "library employees will feel valued and recognized for their contributions" (Appendix B).

Assessment strategy

The Associate University Librarian, the Library Assessment Committee, and the Dean then developed a plan to conduct an organizational climate assessment. At the Cook Library, the Associate University Librarian oversees assessment of the library's operations and chairs the Library Assessment Committee, a standing interdepartmental committee whose members rotate every three years. As the Committee plans and implements many of the library's major assessment initiatives, the Committee investigated and discussed various methods to assess organizational climate. Since the library regularly administers LibQUAL™, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) service quality survey, the committee first discussed using ClimateQUAL™, ARL's instrument for organizational climate assessment. However, email communication from ARL notes that at least 50 participants are necessary for ClimateQUAL™ to provide significant results, and the number of staff at the Cook Library barely meets this minimum. Thus, the committee decided that administering a complex instrument such as ClimateQUAL™ was not warranted.

The Assessment Committee then considered other options, such as using the services provided by the Towson University Office of Human Resources or asking a faculty member with relevant expertise to provide assistance or act as a consultant. Due to the sensitive nature of job

satisfaction and organizational climate issues, the committee determined that an external facilitator would be more appropriate. One alternative would be to hire an organizational psychology consultant who would typically interview employees individually, analyze findings, and make recommendations.

A consultant from the library field was also considered, and the Dean suggested a well-known local library consultant with much experience in organizational development. Rather than individual employee interviews, this consultant suggested a staff retreat to discuss organizational climate issues. Since the strategic planning retreats over the last couple of years had been so successful, another retreat focused on the Library's organizational climate seemed like a great idea. A retreat was not only more affordable than individual interviews, but the consultant recommended group discussions over individual sessions on the premise that employees need to be able to share their concerns with co-workers in order to develop solutions collaboratively. On contracting the services of the consultant, the Associate University Librarian and the consultant developed a plan for the climate assessment. The first step was to investigate possible climate assessment surveys to use as a preface to the retreat.

Climate assessment instrument

After research into climate assessment surveys other than ClimateQUAL™, the Worklife Survey used by the University of Virginia Library was selected as the best instrument for the pre-assessment. This instrument, originally developed by the Pennsylvania State University Libraries, as discussed previously, has had several iterations and has been used by several libraries. The University of Virginia gave permission to use or modify the instrument to suit our needs. The survey includes 89 statements, for example, "I enjoy coming to work" or "My co-workers value diversity," in nine categories such as "job satisfaction," "management relations," and "diversity."[11] Respondents rate statements on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), with agreement generally indicating a positive attitude. When the Cook Library administered the Worklife Survey, 46 of the library's 50 employees completed the survey. The mean score was 3.89, higher than "neither agree nor disagree "(3) and closer to "moderately agree" (4).[12] Thirty-five respondents identified their status, 19 as staff in exempt or non-exempt positions and 16 as faculty librarians. The mean score,

4.19, for those who identified as librarians was higher than the mean for those who identified as staff, 3.77. The statements related to salary and benefits and another on opportunities for advancement had the lowest means, 2.81 for salary/benefits and 2.87 for advancement opportunities. Again, staff ratings for these statements were significantly lower than those by librarians: salary/benefits, 2.68 for staff and 3.13 for librarians; advancement opportunities, 2.63 for staff and 3.69 for librarians. There were also mean scores below 3.5 in statements referring to interdepartmental communication, staff development support, and relevant job training (Appendix C). On the other end of the scale, the means for diversity-related statements, for example, "I am comfortable working with people who are not like me," were all high and ranged from 3.95 to 4.82. Rather than an extensive analysis of the survey results, the results were used as a starting point for the discussion in the subsequent climate assessment retreats.

Climate assessment retreats

Due to staff availability, the library planned two half-day retreats in order to include as many employees as possible. Nearly all library employees were able to attend the first retreat in June 2011. After an introduction and explanation of the survey findings by the Associate University Librarian, the library consultant provided an overview of the meaning and importance of organizational climate, and facilitated small group discussion sessions. Library employees were divided into random groups of five or six. During the first session, each group discussed the survey results, listed what they considered the major issues on flip charts, and reported back to the entire group. Next, all participants marked the three issues that they considered the most important on the various flip chart sheets. The consultant then grouped the issues that were selected most often into categories, for example, communication, acknowledgement, advancement, and so on, and participants regrouped according to which topic interested them most. In this session, participants generated ideas to address the issue chosen and again reported their suggestions to the entire group. Finally, the consultant provided a summary of the afternoon's results, discussed next steps, and gave a preview of the second retreat.

The first retreat was very successful, with lively discussion and collaboration in the group sessions guided by the well-organized, encouraging, and insightful facilitation by the consultant. Feedback from

this retreat was positive, with many participants commenting on the clear objectives and effectiveness of the presenter, the enthusiastic group interaction, and the good ideas that were developed. However, skepticism was expressed about including managers in the retreat, as the presence of supervisors may have inhibited the free expression of issues by participants. Some were also critical of the survey and suggested that a ranking of "neither agree nor disagree" (3) may indicate apathy or a concern about answering honestly. Rather than presenting the mean score for results from the Cook Worklife Survey, a better method might have been presenting the percentage of scores at the 4 (moderately agree) or 5 (strongly agree) level, a presentation method used by the University of Virginia Library,[13] as well as the percentages of lower level scores. The summary of the results of the first retreat were made available for comment, and a second retreat was held in July 2011.

The agenda for the second retreat differed in that most of the time was allotted to the Library Management Council. This time, the consultant worked with the Management Council to draft a plan for improving the organizational climate based on issues identified and ideas expressed in the first retreat. Communication, employee recognition, and staff development emerged as the salient themes, and initiatives were developed to address each issue. Each initiative involved subsequent work by a library task group or committee. A short-term task group would develop an improved communication plan for the library. A new committee was established to work on employee recognition, and the development of an inclusive staff development plan was assigned to the existing Staff Development Committee. The issue of providing more career development or promotion opportunities for classified staff was mentioned but thought to be beyond the authority of the library itself.

Following the session with management, all employees met and the consultant presented the draft of the organizational climate improvement plan and asked for comments or suggestions. The first response was a question regarding the development of a career path for classified staff. Due to institutional constraints at the University System of Maryland (USM), the consultant suggested that the Dean was in an appropriate position to explore the possibility of modifying the current classification system established by USM, and a relevant initiative was added to the plan. There were few other comments, perhaps due to the difficulty in expressing opinions in a large rather than a small group. Later, the Library Assessment Committee evaluated the second retreat, and one member suggested that the plan could have been presented in a memo, as staff did not have an appropriate opportunity to express their opinions or

provide input. The plan was posted on the library's internal communication system for further suggestions. Although some may have been disappointed by the minimal employee participation in the second retreat, the committees and the task group started work in earnest on the various initiatives of the "Plan to Improve and Enhance the Organizational Climate" (Appendix D).

Outcomes

There has been significant progress in implementing the plan to improve the library's organizational climate, but more time is needed to demonstrate whether the actions taken have been effective. A highlight of outcomes thus far was the "Year in Review" celebration planned by the Employee Recognition Committee. The committee asked each department to submit their 2011 achievements, which were written on large banners and displayed at the celebration. Everyone had a chance to write "thank you" post-it notes to colleagues and attach them to the banners. The committee prepared a slideshow and presented a program commemorating the year's accomplishments, the challenges, and also the very difficult loss of a young colleague. This event was a meaningful way to celebrate the contributions of individuals and departments, and to recognize the importance of each co-worker, both professionally and personally.

The Library's staff development plan has been revised and enhanced to be more inclusive and provide a variety of learning opportunities for both staff and librarians. The plan includes new programs, such as forums facilitated by an employee to discuss an issue in higher education or libraries. Thus far, forums on the topics of staff development and e-books have been conducted and were very popular. Another new component to the staff development plan is a "Cook's List" of library employees and their various skills so that co-workers can call on colleagues for help in their areas of interest and expertise. In addition, the Library's informal mentoring program for new librarians has been expanded to include all new employees. Although the mentoring program is still somewhat informal, guidelines, suggested activities, and incentives have been provided. The Library Staff Development Committee also creates and distributes a quarterly online newsletter to advertise training and development opportunities, whether provided in-house, by the university, or by professional organizations.

Finally, the Communication Task Group developed and conducted a comprehensive survey to determine preferred modes of communication,

and the results are forthcoming. This task group is also analyzing the organization of the library's intranet and network drives in an attempt to make this information more accessible. After full implementation of the library's plan to improve and enhance the climate, the next step will be to conduct a follow-up assessment to determine whether these initiatives have been effective in addressing staff concerns about the workplace.

Lessons learned

As with any endeavor, the library has learned some important lessons about planning assessment initiatives and staff retreats:

1. Test the survey instrument with a small group to identify any areas that may need modification. Employee concern for anonymity also needs to be guaranteed in a group of fewer than 50, especially if respondents self-identify in subgroups, such as their job status as librarians or support staff.
2. Discuss whether or not to include management in group discussions. If management is included, explain the rationale to everyone involved. For the Cook climate assessment, including management in the retreats was the most efficient and economical plan. It also seems reasonable to include management in retreats involving the entire library, so as not to develop a staff/librarian versus management atmosphere. However, the Cook experience suggests the need for an additional forum in which staff and librarians can express their concerns and ideas more openly. This forum might be a group composed of staff or librarians from different departments, or interviews with randomly selected staff/librarians, in order to further discuss and verify the findings and recommendations from the retreats. Of course, this follow-up discussion or the interviews would need to be facilitated by a consultant or by non-management personnel.
3. Capitalize on teamwork and try to include everyone in the decision-making process as much as possible. Small group interdepartmental discussions work very well at the Cook Library and set a precedent for employee involvement in decision-making. If another retreat is planned, the top-down approach of the second retreat would be modified to encourage staff participation throughout the process.

Conclusion and looking forward

As organizations move into an ever more connected world in which there is less of a divide between work and home life, job satisfaction, employee morale, collaboration, and teamwork are increasingly important. The organizational climate assessment at the Cook Library has been an important means of identifying and addressing areas that concern library employees and hinder a positive working environment. While more time is needed to determine whether the assessment and outcomes have resulted in positive changes, this endeavor has been an important step in identifying areas of discontent and taking appropriate actions. While the library may not be able to change the university classification system, it is essential to acknowledge inequities and investigate possible modifications in the staffing system, to recognize everyone's contributions, to improve communication throughout the library, and to emphasize the importance of ongoing professional development and learning.

Notes

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12. Two statements were eliminated from calculation of mean: "I believe that faculty retention is an issue at the library" and a similar question on classified staff. For these questions, a response of 4 or 5 is negative, whereas for the other statements 4 or 5 is a positive response.
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Appendix A: Values statement

To achieve the Albert S. Cook Library mission, we will act with integrity and strive for excellence. In doing so, we are guided by these values:

Environment

- We work to create welcoming and accessible spaces.
- We provide a venue for the exploration and free exchange of ideas.
- We recognize the importance of providing parallel resources and services to on campus and distance learners.

Learning & scholarship

- We encourage intellectual growth and curiosity.
- We support research and teaching across the disciplines.
- We promote open dialogue and scholarly communication.

Service

- We are dedicated to providing responsive services to all users.
- We act with professionalism and compassion.
- We value and respect our diverse community.

Collaboration

- We engage in open communication to support teamwork.
- We invest in partnerships throughout the University and the greater community.

Innovation

- We value flexible use of new technologies.
- We plan and implement creative solutions to enhance our services.

- We explore new models for preserving, accessing, and using information.

Workplace

- We expect collegiality and mutual respect from our colleagues.
- We act as a knowledgeable and skilled team to foster excellence.
- We promote the continued personal and professional growth of every individual.

Appendix B: Cook Library Strategic Plan 2010–2016 (Excerpt)

2.3 Job responsibilities, classification and salary placement of library employees will be reviewed and revised as appropriate. . . .

2.3.2 Job classifications and salary placements 2010 Baseline

1. Classification of staff positions established by TU and USM
2. Promotion and tenure of faculty librarians established by TU and USM.
3. Review and revision of job classification and salary placement occurs with vacancies.

Target 2014

4. Updated library positions will be mapped to appropriate job classifications and salary placement.

Target 2016

- Plan for reducing compression and incorporating equity will be established contingent on TU budget. . . .

. . . .

2.5 Library employees will feel valued and recognized for their contributions.

2.5.1 Library employees will assess library's organizational climate, and the results will be used to develop strategies to recognize value and contributions of employees.

2010 Baseline

- Reflective process indicated organizational climate issues.

Target 2014

- Identify or develop appropriate instrument to assess organizational climate.
- Conduct assessment and use results to develop strategies to recognize value and contributions of employees.

Target 2016

- Develop process for ongoing assessment and improvement of organizational climate.

Appendix C: Cook Work Life Survey

Mean scores less than 3.5 (Scale 1–5)

Category	Question	Overall 46 responses	Exempt/ Non Exempt 19 responses	Faculty Librarians 16 responses
		Mean	Mean	Mean
Resource Availability	My salary and benefits are reasonable for the work I do.	2.81	2.68	3.13
Job Satisfaction	There are opportunities for me to advance at the Library.	2.87	2.63	3.69
Resource Availability	The salary I receive is equitable when compared to co-workers in similar grade levels or ranks.	3	2.89	3.25
Communication	Library staff members in other departments are familiar with what I do in my job.	3.04	2.95	4.25
Health & Safety	I am physically comfortable in my work environment (e.g., temperature, light, noise).	3.07	3.37	2.87
Staff Development	I receive adequate support to attend workshops, conferences, and other learning opportunities outside of the Library and/or University.	3.21	3.68	3.06

Acknowledgement	The Library rewards its staff for a job well done.	3.22	3.11	3.75
Staff Development	The training offered by the Library is relevant to my job.	3.29	3.21	3.75
Staff Development	The training offered by the Library is relevant to my personal and developmental goals.	3.3	3.33	3.5
Acknowledgement	As a supervisor, I feel appreciated by those I supervise.	3.31	3.14	3.38
Communication	I am aware of changes in other departments that affect my job.	3.36	3.58	4.44
Acknowledgement	The Library is supportive of all its employees.	3.43	3.47	3.75
Health & Safety	The Library is concerned about and addresses my ergonomic needs.	3.5	3.42	3.69
Staff Development	The quality of training I receive from the Library helps me do my job better.	3.51	3.42	3.93
Management Relations	I have opportunities for input on policies, decisions, procedures and other changes within the Library.	3.53	3.26	3.94

Appendix D: Plan to improve and enhance organizational climate

The following initiatives address issues, concerns and ideas for improvement expressed in the climate assessment retreats and survey.

1. Develop a plan to improve communication throughout the Library.
    - Communication Task Group: a short-term task group is charged with developing this plan to improve internal communication.
        - Ideas from the Organization climate retreat for the group to consider:
            - Develop ways to share information across departments and keep everyone informed. Identify forums/options for discussion.
            - Develop means for communication/information to flow up, down and across the library and a system that streamlines and makes information available.
            - Establish guidelines for meetings.
            - Describe pros and cons of different communication approaches and the best mechanism for different purposes.
            - Keep everyone informed about building issues and plans to improve the facility.
        - The task group should also research communication strategies and plans in other organizations.
2. Identify ways to reinforce, express appreciation and acknowledge everyone's work and contribution.
    - Employee Recognition Committee: a new standing committee will explore, develop and help implement strategies for acknowledging and showing appreciation for library employees.
3. Create a staff development plan and program applicable to all employees.
    - The Staff Development Committee will develop an inclusive and comprehensive plan for staff development.
    - After Management Council approves the plan, the Committee will assist with implementation by planning and/or providing activities that align with the plan.

- Suggestions from the climate retreat to consider for the plan: competencies including emerging; holistic topics; cross-training; job shadowing; benefits to staff; best practices, e.g., models/ideas; identification of what can be done in-house and where external programs are needed.

4. Job Classifications and advancement possibilities.

   - The Library Strategic Plan 2010-2016 includes the goal to review and all job descriptions and job placements, revise as appropriate and adjust salaries contingent on the Towson budget. (*University Library Strategic Plan 2010–2016*, Desired Outcome 2.3)
   - The Dean of University Libraries will investigate establishing "career paths" by looking at comparable institutions, finding out what is possible at Towson, and keep staff informed of progress.

5

Helping new librarians find success and satisfaction in the academic library

Rebecca K. Miller

Abstract: New librarians are essential to 21st-century academic librarianship as it strives for transformation and to remain relevant and vital. However, as new librarians transition into the professional workplace, they face many challenges and barriers that place them at risk for becoming dissatisfied in their roles and leaving academic librarianship. This chapter describes factors commonly correlated with job dissatisfaction and highlights specific issues and situations where new librarians are most likely to experience these factors. Solutions and strategies for supporting new librarians at risk are explored, and best practices for recruiting, retaining, and supporting new librarians are recommended. When these solutions and best practices are employed, academic libraries become equipped to leverage the new talent, energy, and innovation that new librarians bring to the 21st-century academic library.

Key words: new librarians, job satisfaction, retention, orientation, mentoring, employee expectations, tenure.

Introduction

New librarians entering the workforce in the early 21st century face many barriers before ever securing their first professional position in an academic library. The steep economic downturn means that many new Master of Library and Information Science graduates

compete for fewer jobs in the academy. Budget cuts, hiring freezes, and downsizing in all types of libraries have created an unstable job market that challenges both job seekers and the libraries seeking qualified candidates. The *ACRL 2009 Strategic Thinking Guide* indicates that academic libraries must seriously consider preparing for a “potentially smaller but more stable” workforce that must also be innovative enough to transform library services in order to prevent the obsolescence of the academic library.[1]

While the recruitment and retention of quality, passionate, positive, and forward-thinking new librarians has always been of importance to the library profession, the uncertain economic climate intensifies the need for library leaders and new librarians to strategize and manage the entry of new librarians into the academic library workplace. Academic libraries need to recruit, and then retain, new librarians who are capable of helping libraries to respond to large-scale social, technological, and economic changes. Library administrators and new librarians alike need to be aware of the challenges frequently faced by new librarians in their first few years of employment that often lead to job dissatisfaction and its unpleasant consequences: high turnover, absenteeism, low productivity, poor performance, and worker mental and physical health problems.[2] When new librarians and library administrators fail to consider seriously the unique circumstances surrounding librarians as they transition from school or a previous career to professional librarianship, they essentially fail to take advantage of the grand opportunities for growth, improvement, and transformation that come with the effective initiation of new professionals into the library workforce. In order to highlight some of the challenges and opportunities that accompany new librarians into the library workforce, this chapter first explores the literature regarding new librarians and their transition into the workplace. Then it will discuss strategies and best practices for both new librarians and their employers related to the retention, satisfaction, and ultimate success of new library professionals and the libraries in which they work.

Literature review

Considering job satisfaction and dissatisfaction

While many definitions of job satisfaction can be found within many major studies conducted from various perspectives throughout the

twentieth and twenty-first centuries, most of these definitions simply relate to the way a person feels about his or her job.[3] This body of literature converges on a number of key factors that seem to influence job satisfaction for most people: job identity/role clarification, communication and relationships among colleagues, communication between supervisor and supervisee, working conditions, workplace culture, rewards (pay, promotion, and recognition), worker expectations, and individual differences (personality, emotional tendencies, and person–organization fit).[4] Examples from library literature confirm that these factors influence job satisfaction in the library environment, even though the library environment is unique and distinct from other work environments.[5] Although these factors can and do influence professionals at any point within the span of a career, the research summarized here suggests that new – young or inexperienced – professionals are particularly sensitive to these factors as these professionals strive to adjust to and navigate through new workplace environments.

The role of age and experience in job dissatisfaction

For the purposes of this discussion, new librarians are considered those who have worked in the library profession for fewer than three years. This definition remains consistent with several key studies focused around transitioning new librarians into the academic library workplace (for example, Black and Leysen and Oud).[6] These first three years are pivotal in a librarian's career and for the library that has hired him or her. Literature from the library world and beyond highlights reasons why new librarians need to develop a self-awareness during this unique time in their careers and why their professional colleagues and supervisors need to create a workplace that supports the new librarian during his or her transition into the profession.

In the library literature, there are specific examples of more job dissatisfaction among new or inexperienced librarians as compared with their older or more experienced counterparts. In his comparison between library workers' job satisfaction and that of other American workers, Johann van Reenen found that older workers are more satisfied than younger workers and that experienced employees are more satisfied than those with less experience.[7] Library research from different countries and cultural perspectives also supports van Reenen's findings. Adio and Popoola found a significant correlation between job satisfaction, age, and

working experience among federal university librarians in Nigeria, which is very similar to Genevieve Hart's results with her research on academic librarians in South Africa.[8] To be sure, some library studies, such as the one conducted by Leysen and Boydston on job satisfaction among cataloger librarians, failed to find any significant correlation between overall job satisfaction and age or experience.[9] Overall, though, research indicates that a new library professional may be more likely to become dissatisfied in his or her job because of issues related to his or her age or inexperience.

Adio and Popoola speculate that, as academic librarians become "more experienced on their jobs, they become more satisfied and are more committed to their career than a newly recruited staff member, who can move from one career to another."[10] The theory that librarians gain satisfaction as they adapt to and grow more comfortable in their roles makes a lot of sense; several of the factors most commonly associated with job satisfaction – such as job identity, worker expectations, and organizational commitment – require some time to grow or crystallize within a professional's understanding. Because of this, new professionals may be particularly sensitive to job dissatisfaction-inducing factors as they transition into new professional environments.

Major issues for new academic librarians in transition

Research exploring challenges faced by new librarians reveals several key issues that appear to be common as these new professionals transition into the academic library workplace. In *The NextGen Librarian's Survival Guide*, Rachel Singer Gordon points to several of these issues in her chapter on surviving the entry-level position.[11] Gordon reports that new librarians are often surprised and disillusioned by institutions' resistance to change when they suggest new ideas or try to implement anything different.[12] Similarly, Newhouse and Spisak claim that new librarians often experience "bureaucratic brick walls and resistance to new ideas" in their first professional job, resulting in many new librarians becoming disillusioned and losing their passion for the profession.[13] While every library is different and may have different reactions to new ideas and change, several studies indicate that the real problem in this situation is that the new librarian has not been effectively socialized into the work environment.

Oud suggests that new librarians may not be effectively participating as members of their new organization because they do not yet understand how it functions, something that requires time and effort on the part of the institution as well as the new professional.[14] Simmons-Welburn and Welburn agree with Oud, noting the significance of a library's conscious efforts to socialize new professionals into their new working environments.[15] In short, "effective socialization is critical to the successful transition from graduate school to the academic environment," helping new librarians to understand their new identity, make sense of their role within a larger organization, and fulfill the requirements and expectations from their supervisors and colleagues.[16] Academic libraries, in particular, have a strong imperative to socialize new professionals because many academic libraries include a component of expectations and requirements that are likely to be unfamiliar to a new librarian: the promotion and tenure process.

In the 1980s and 1990s, tenure and promotion in the academic library setting seemed to be much more of a hot and contentious topic than it currently is,[17] but several relatively recent publications indicate that this issue still plays a significant role in librarians' transition into the academic library workplace. A 2002 white paper developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Ad Hoc Task Force on Recruitment & Retention Issues and the ACRL Personnel Administrators & Staff Development Discussion Group identifies tenure requirements as a deterrent to otherwise-qualified applicants and the tenure process as potentially harmful to librarians, if not executed with enough support.[18] In a more recent article, Tysick and Babb point out that, while teaching faculty "assimilate into their departmental culture" during their doctoral experience, most graduate-level library and information science programs do not focus enough on elements related to promotion and tenure, such as scholarly publishing and professional service.[19] Tysick and Babb also report that many new academic librarians feel overwhelmed and stressed by the tenure process, something that is exacerbated by ambiguous promotion and tenure requirements, insufficient feedback, and lack of colleague support – factors that all tie back into those major factors that influence job dissatisfaction.[20] Along the same lines, in her study on the barriers and motivators for new academic librarians to publish and present, Bradley notes that a "lack of support structures" for new librarians to develop the skills necessary to be successful in scholarly activities remains a large barrier for many new professionals.[21]

Solutions and strategies for supporting new librarians in transition

Bradley's article essentially asks what sort of support structures new librarians actually need in order to achieve satisfaction and success in their new work environment. The sheer number of publications on this topic indicates that Bradley's question is not without an answer – or, more accurately, without answers. Ideas and strategies for increasing levels of satisfaction, retention, and success among new librarians pervade the library literature, and research studies related to mentoring programs in academic libraries dominate this body of literature. Many academic libraries embrace mentoring as a solution to problems with socializing new librarians to the workplace culture and supporting new librarians through the promotion and tenure process. Even so, most libraries adapt the mentoring model to something that works for their specific organization. At Kansas State University Libraries and Louisiana State University Libraries, for example, the mentoring programs are more formal in nature and utilize experienced librarians to guide neophyte librarians through the promotion and tenure process.[22] Alternatively, some libraries, such as Colorado State University Libraries and the University of Delaware Libraries, have utilized peer mentors as a support mechanism for helping new librarians navigate new working environments.[23] Other programs are even more casual, pulling together groups of new librarians on an as-needed basis.[24] Freedman has created a helpful chart of US libraries with different types of mentoring programs, offering a valuable overview of the many different types and purposes of mentoring programs currently in existence.[25]

In addition to mentoring programs, other strategies for supporting a librarian transitioning into the academic workplace appear throughout the library literature. Wallace describes an effective orientation program for new professionals that emphasizes the lengthy process of helping a new librarian adjust to different surroundings and expectations.[26] This is similar to orientation programs explored by Oud and Simmons-Welburn/Welburn.[27] Other libraries, such as the University of Buffalo Libraries, employ writers' groups to help tenure-track librarians sharpen their writing and scholarship skills.[28] All of these strategies – mentor–mentee relationships, peer support groups, orientation programs, and writing groups – clearly can be used effectively to mitigate some of the issues that new librarians experience. The success of support programs for new librarians, though, heavily depends on the unique library

environment that a new librarian may be entering. What works at the Colorado State University Libraries may not work at the Kansas State University Libraries, which is why library administrators, supervisors, and colleagues need to consider overall best practices for supporting new librarians, and then adapt those to each library's unique community and culture.

Best practices for supporting and leveraging new librarians

Recruitment of new librarians

A large percentage of the library literature focused around new librarians discusses challenges and solutions for new librarians after they have been hired by a library organization. However, a few best practices related to recruitment and hiring of new librarians can be extrapolated from the known factors that influence job dissatisfaction among new, and other, library professionals. As the literature on job dissatisfaction reveals, personality and expectations play a large role in an employee's satisfaction or dissatisfaction in his or her job. Often, new librarians experience dissatisfaction because their values, dispositions, and expectations for the workplace environment do not match or align with those of their new employer. These are factors that libraries can address early on at the point of recruiting and interviewing new librarians for open positions on their staff or faculty.

Personality, of course, remains a factor related to job dissatisfaction over which libraries have very little control once a librarian is hired. Because of this, library administrators might consider personality types that are congruent with the particular organization and particular professional role for which a new librarian is being hired. By considering the mission, values, culture, and direction of that particular organization, administrators can develop an awareness of certain personality traits that might make an individual a good fit for that organization in order to attract and recruit strong candidates. Recent research does indicate that certain personality traits correlate more strongly with job satisfaction in library environments; emotional resilience, work drive, and optimism are all personality traits that are predictors of career satisfaction.[29] Other personality traits that correlate strongly with job satisfaction include a propensity for teamwork, assertiveness, and other characteristics that are

often valued in an employee.[30] As desirable and congruent personality traits are discussed, library administrators or search committees can consciously write job descriptions and use recruitment communications that attract candidates with these qualities. However, Jeanine Williamson, as she discusses the role of using personality traits in pre-employment assessments of job candidates, urges administrators and hiring committees to use caution when considering subjective qualities, such as personality traits, when recruiting and selecting candidates.[31]

As administrators or search committees write job descriptions, they can address another factor related to job dissatisfaction: management of worker expectations. Through accurate job descriptions and well-developed communications, a library organization can use the recruitment and interviewing process to begin to communicate realistic expectations, making sure that new librarians come into an organization with a clear idea of what the organization expects and how the new librarian can work to meet those expectations. Starting to think about these factors at the beginning of the recruitment process also helps libraries and library administrators facilitate the orientation process once a candidate has accepted a job offer.[32]

Socializing a new librarian to library culture and workplace conditions

Once a new librarian has been hired, his or her satisfaction and success depend on his or her adaptation to and participation in the library workplace and profession. During this critical transition period for new librarians, both the librarian and his immediate supervisor benefit from an awareness of the issues that most commonly cause dissatisfaction for new librarians. As discussed earlier, the factors that can be controlled within workplace include: job identity/role clarification, communication and relationships among colleagues, communication between supervisor and supervisee, rewards (pay, promotion, and recognition), and worker expectations. If supervisors and new librarians are both aware of the fundamental role that communication plays as a librarian adjusts to a new environment, then they can work to ensure that expectations on both sides are discussed and that the new librarian receives timely and constructive feedback related to his or her specific role in the organization. This effective communication can be achieved through regular and structured meetings between supervisors and new librarians during the first year of employment.

Likewise, if supervisors and new librarians are both aware of the important role that collegial relationships play during the transition period, then both can work toward facilitating these relationships as much as possible. Even if a particular library offers no type of mentoring program, the new librarian can and should seek out colleagues or peers whom he or she trusts in order to start developing a support network. Additionally, supervisors can utilize the experienced librarians in their libraries to form a basic level of support for new librarians, having experienced employees individually reach out and offer insights to new employees. Beyond this basic level of support, though, libraries can also develop robust, ongoing support programs that meet the unique needs of their workplaces. As the literature reflects, a library's promotion and tenure requirements, availability of experienced faculty to serve as guides or mentors, and the number of new librarians in the workplace are all factors, among others, that would help libraries determine what sort of support networks they should develop to encourage and sustain new librarians. Mentoring programs, writers' groups, and peer support networks are all examples of the types of strategies that libraries have used to effectively initiate new librarians into their workplace cultures.

Besides socializing a new librarian to the academic library environment and helping him or her adjust to the workplace, a solid support program includes a component of continuing education and professional development. In addition to retaining new librarians through the transition to the professional environment, academic libraries need to prepare librarians for becoming skilled librarians. While many librarians come into an organization with new passion and enthusiasm which that organization needs, they will still need time and preparation to gain the skills and knowledge that they will need to truly impact the organization and the profession. Abram identifies five areas of skills that new librarians will need for lifelong success: leadership skills, advocacy skills, interpretation skills, empathy skills, and entrepreneurial skills.[33] Here, Abram highlights the fact that graduate programs in library and information science fail to adequately address these skills, and that new graduates of these programs will need to participate in continuous learning opportunities that encourage these skills. It makes sense, then, that libraries investing in new librarians should encourage new librarians to participate in development opportunities related to these sorts of competencies, in addition to the more traditional development opportunities based around technical skills related to software, databases, pedagogy, or discipline-based knowledge. Abram

writes that the five skills or competencies that he highlights are "planted firmly in human behavior,"[34] which suggests that orientation and continuing education programs for new librarians should incorporate opportunities to cultivate these "softer" skills that will ultimately prepare new librarians to succeed in their working environment and lead the profession into the future.

Resources for the new librarian

Although much of this chapter has focused on how library administrators, supervisors, and professional colleagues can help new librarians adjust to the professional workplace with satisfaction and success, responsibility for a new librarian's satisfaction and success does not lie solely with these groups. New librarians themselves need to take the initiative to gain awareness about their situation and take advantage of relationships and opportunities that are known to increase new librarians' happiness and success. Supervisors, colleagues, and peers certainly can encourage new librarians to do this, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the new librarian.

If a library is unable to support a new librarian in any particular area, there are alternatives that both the library and the librarian need to be aware of and that the new librarian needs to seek out. Many of these alternatives are found through professional associations on the regional, state, national, and even international levels. Professional organizations provide a different type and level of support for new librarians, and there are many reasons why new librarians should participate in them and why their libraries should encourage this. In addition to the extra level of networking and support from peers and colleagues that research indicates contributes to job satisfaction, professional associations offer many opportunities for guidance and socialization that individual libraries may not be able to offer. One-person or very small libraries, for example, may be unable to create mentoring or peer support groups for new librarians. In these situations, mentoring and other programs through professional organizations are a simple solution for ensuring that new librarians receive the socialization and support that their home library is unable to provide.[35] In her article on mentoring programs in US libraries, Freedman also provides a list of typical mentoring programs offered through professional associations, including the American Library Association, the Association of College & Research Libraries, the Medical Library Association, and the Special Library Association.[36]

However, if new librarians are unable to take advantage of the opportunities offered through professional associations because of location, funding, or other reasons, more unofficial and casual networking groups are beginning to grow in popularity and number. New librarians should utilize social media tools to develop and participate in personal learning networks. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Google+ are all tools that new librarians are using to connect and network with peers and more experienced librarians, all with the purpose of exchanging knowledge and supporting each other. Major professional associations such as the American Library Association, Medical Library Association, Special Library Association, and other organizations facilitate groups and conversations through these tools that even non-association members may participate in. An excellent example of this phenomenon is the ALA Think Tank group on Facebook; with over 900 members, this group strives to act as a collective brainstorming area for all types of librarians to come together and discuss ways to lead and transform the profession.[37]

Leveraging the new librarian

If a library is going to spend time, money, and human resources on supporting and developing new librarians, then it makes sense for the library to start gaining a return on its investment as quickly as possible. When libraries make an effort to collect and implement ideas from new librarians, both the library and the new professional stand to benefit. Leong and Vaughan describe an approach for leveraging the passion of new librarians, while also incorporating professional development with support networks for new librarians.[38] Developed at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (often referred to as RMIT) University in Melbourne, Australia, a New Professionals Group meets regularly to build competencies and current awareness, gain role clarity, and make suggestions for library improvements and changes to appropriate library leaders. Maintaining this group as an outlet for new ideas made the new professionals feel valued while also offering a platform from which ideas for library improvements could spring.

Albertsons Library at Boise State University utilizes a similar group of new professionals to leverage their skills and interests.[39] Experienced librarians at Albertsons Library make a conscious effort to experiment with new ideas suggested by their newest liaison librarians in hopes of discovering new and improved methods for connecting with faculty. This strategy, like the strategy used by RMIT University librarians, exemplifies

a highly original and efficient approach that simultaneously serves to support new professionals and leverage their talents, skills, and potential for transforming their library.

Conclusion

The world of 21st-century academic librarianship is not unlike the new librarian as he or she transitions into a new and different role. As academic librarianship transforms itself through technology and changing models of service and research, it, too, needs to be conscious and aware of how it is interacting with and improving the world that surrounds it. For this reason, academic libraries have the imperative to seek out, support, and utilize the human resources that have the skills and passion to ensure that academic librarianship maintains its vitality. New professionals are these essential human resources. As Editor-at-Large John Berry writes in a 2011 *Library Journal* column, new librarians "will lead the transformation of librarianship as we move more deeply into the uncharted future."[40] Similarly, Schachter writes that new professionals essentially "ensure a vibrant future for us all," by bringing fresh insights and new ideas into the profession.[41] If new librarians are the future of our organizations and our profession, then investing resources in recruiting, retaining, and supporting new librarians is an absolute necessity.

In order for new librarians to be able to lead this transformation and positively influence the field of academic librarianship, several things need to happen. First of all, new librarians need to remain in the library profession long enough to make a difference. Beyond this, though, academic librarianship needs to be able to support and embrace the changes that new librarians have the potential to bring about. Individual academic libraries and professional organizations alike need to continue to invest in supporting and retaining librarians who are no longer considered "new." This chapter has focused on supporting librarians through the critical transition period at the beginning stages of their career because this is such a challenging time for new professionals; however, libraries need to continue to care for, support, and develop experienced librarians as well. Librarians are the most important resource that libraries have to offer to the world, and institutions can demonstrate this by taking advantage of every opportunity to support, develop, and reward the human resources that drive the dynamic world of 21st-century academic librarianship.

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6

Beyond diversity: moving towards inclusive work environments

Paula M. Smith

Abstract: As a result of the demographic changes occurring in communities served by academic libraries and the ongoing diversity initiatives to support these changes, there has been an increasing shift from generally homogeneous workplaces to multicultural, multi-perspective, multi-valued ones. In order to accommodate these changes and raise cultural awareness in their employees, academic libraries must begin to strategize how to develop inclusive work environments conducive to having each voice heard, valued, and respected. A substantial aspect of developing inclusive workspaces is to encourage culturally conscious behaviors and practices. This chapter will highlight the significance of developing inclusive work environments and the importance of elevating the concept of cultural competencies, and suggest methods towards achieving each.

Key words: diversity, cultural competencies, workplace climate surveys, inclusiveness, underrepresentation.

Introduction

Since the introduction of professional diversity initiatives, such as American Library Association (ALA) Spectrum Scholars and the American Research Libraries (ARL) Minority Fellowship Program, the recruitment and support of library employees with non-mainstream social–cultural backgrounds has increased. However, it would be

shortsighted and an oversimplification to assume that recruiting employees with diverse backgrounds will lead to equity among employees and developing an inclusive workplace.

Moreover, categories of diversity have expanded and are complicated by the various ways "difference" is defined. For example, race, ethnicity, and gender have been the predominant measures of workplace diversity, with sexual orientation, religion, disability, and age sizing up as close competitors. Along with these potentially discriminatory designations, intergenerational (Gen X, Gen Y, Millennials, Baby Boomers) conflict and matters of rankism and civility have also become concerns for the academic library workplace. Consequently, academic libraries are increasingly addressing instances of inter-group conflict and the perception (and reality) of inequity.

As libraries experience this ongoing shift from generally homogeneous workplaces to multicultural, multi-perspective, multi-valued ones, they are challenged to define and develop work environments where each voice is heard, valued, and respected. Similarly, as student demographics have changed on college campuses, academic librarians are confronted with providing culturally conscious services to a growing range of patrons. This phenomenon has spurred campus libraries to advance initiatives to increase the numbers of non-mainstream employees, to develop cultural awareness programs and exhibits, and to examine the library workplace culture and climate.

In the absence of an existing success model for creating inclusive work environments, many academic libraries begin their diversity work by offering training and creating committees and programs. Although these initiatives help raise awareness, they have not adequately addressed the potential barriers to cultural differences which may inhibit an employee's full participation and advancement. These include the lack of opportunities for cultural integration in the workplace, knowledge of cultural communications, and methods for managing cultural conflict. With this in mind, this chapter will highlight the significance of developing inclusive work environments in academic libraries, the importance of elevating the concept of cultural competencies, and examples of initiatives that support inclusive workplaces.

Literature review

Similarly to other professions, the influence of organizational culture on organizational performance and productivity has been highlighted in the

library literature for the past couple of decades. While diversity has been a significant aspect of the discussion, with the emergence of increased immigration, virtual exchanges (globally and domestically), and expanded categories of diversity (i.e. sexual orientation, disability, religion, among others), attention to workplace interactions and behaviors is becoming a prominent concern of library administrators.

Various publications recount diversity awareness programs that employ cultural seminars, food fests, and library outreach initiatives. These programs are primarily intended to convey information and raise awareness about the cultural communities served by the library. Despite the aforementioned initiatives being important sources for learning about different cultural entities, further research is needed to address the cultural missteps and conflict negotiated between library personnel. Love's take on diversity initiatives in academic libraries suggests: "Approaches to diversity must be simultaneous and inclusive, occurring at the individual and organizational levels."[1] Therefore, it is just as significant to learn how to act effectively as cultural and civil citizens in the work environment as it is to learn about the cultural attributes of our constituencies; in fact, each informs the other. Additionally, there are various accounts of diversity initiatives focused on recruitment, retention, outreach, and collection development. However, precious few publications detail professional development activities to prepare library personnel to meet the challenges workplace diversity places on day-to-day interpersonal and inter-group relationships.

Underpinning diversity research are the changing demographics in the United States and the necessity to adapt strategies in our workplaces to reflect these shifts in our communities. While academic libraries have realized the increased presence of multicultural and international populations in their campus communities and have tried to develop a workforce reflective of these transformations, the overall change in the diversity of library workforces has not kept pace.[2] This suggests that the library work environment is changing but an overall imbalance remains, which can lead to power differentials and intercultural miscommunications.

One of the few articles that address library organizational multiculturalism and diversity is Joan Howland's standout publication entitled "Challenges of Working in a Multicultural Environment." It is an instructive source for understanding cultural conflict in the library workplace and deftly outlines six potential areas of difficulty for library organizations. They are: 1) fluctuating power dynamics, 2) merging a diversity of opinions and approaches, 3) overcoming perceived lack of

empathy, 4) the perception or reality of tokenism, 5) holding everyone throughout the organization accountable for achieving a positive multicultural environment, and 6) turning each of these difficulties into opportunities.[3] Additionally, Gabriel, who has written several columns on diversity for legal libraries, concurs with aspects of Howland's writing about managing conflict in a diverse workplace. She reminds us that: "Recognizing that organizational culture exists is one thing, but to take the information you perceive about an organization and understand who holds power within it can be more difficult."[4] Generally, Howland and Gabriel both touch on issues significant to workforce diversity and demonstrate that, as organizations continue to diversify, learning to navigate these contentious areas grows exponentially.

Another clear departure from the traditional body of diversity literature is the article by Alexandra Rivera and Ricardo Andrade, "Developing a Diversity-Competent Workforce." They presented the University of Arizona's (UA) comprehensive approach to developing diversity-competent employees and an inclusive work environment. Rather than overemphasizing recruitment as their primary tool for tackling workplace diversity, UA employed the climate survey tool, ARL ClimateQUAL, to examine workplace culture, followed by awareness-raising programs specific to the cultural issues uncovered by the survey.[5] "ClimateQUAL is an assessment of library staff perceptions concerning (a) their library's commitment to the principles of diversity, (b) organizational policies and procedures, and (c) staff attitudes."[6] Although climate surveys are essential instruments for delivering meaningful snapshots of interactions in the work environment, Winston and Li reported that only seven percent of academic libraries make use of them.[7]

Since academic libraries are no longer the homogeneous environments they once were, applying equal consideration to organizational culture and employee behaviors is not a difficult concept to grasp. However, with organizational work culture surfacing as an incredibly complex and challenging area for administrators to manage and define, the difficulty seems to reside in the implementation.

Inclusive work environments

Initially, campus libraries were primarily concerned with increasing the race and ethnic composition of their workforces. Over time the complexity of embracing diversity expanded to encompass other areas of "difference." As the diversity continuum became more encompassing,

managing diversity required moving beyond recruiting to match population and social shifts and to leverage the creative and innovative talents of the broadened pool of perspectives and experience.

Many diversity recruitment programs, without question, have been successful. However, there are institutions that still recruit for diversity but maintain an assimilation approach to workplace inclusion. Assimilation essentially ignores difference in favor of employees adapting to a predefined or dominant culture. With this in mind, this mode of operating can lead to tension in the workplace, with some employees feeling disregarded. On the flip side, institutions dedicated to pluralistic, inclusive work environments inherently make space for effective intercultural interactions in the workplace.

Although academic libraries do not typically operate in a true monocultural fashion, there are overriding values and norms that influence a work environment and shape behavior. Situations of inequality can occur where a dominant voice is generalized, such as in unequal power distribution, and all the "other" voices are marginalized. These instances "require an open and participative dialogue, providing space for other voices to be considered, discussing and weighing arguments, and finding a common approach to a topic or issue."[8] The nature of a culture of inclusion is being able to recognize difference on various levels, while looking for the common bond.

When organizations demonstrate their commitment to creating work areas where ideas and perspectives outside the normative worldview are heard, valued, and respected, library staff are faced with addressing cultural differences outside their comfort zone or understanding. Thomas indicates: "individual employees must learn how to become *effective diversity respondents* – people who act with confidence, wisdom, and effectiveness when interacting with others who may be significantly different from them."[9]

Cultural competencies

In 2007, the ALA added the following section (60.4), *Goals for Inclusive and Culturally Competent Library and Information Services*, to their policy on diversity:

> Cultural competency is defined as the acceptance and respect for diversity, continuing self-assessment regarding culture, and the ongoing development of knowledge, resources, and service

models that work towards effectively meeting the needs of diverse populations.

Cultural competencies are a set of skills designed to encourage sensitivity and to acknowledge cultural differences. Learning how to interact and communicate with groups outside our individual communities is required for individuals and organizations to move past "tolerance" to accepting diversity as a required facet of 21st-century workforces.

Central to being open to other assumptions about the world is to be thoughtful about other cultures without abandoning one's own or disregarding the difference between the two. Rogoff explains that cultural competence requires an understanding that "different cultural practices do not require determining which one is right."[10] Becoming culturally competent is a journey filled with missteps, miscommunications, and misunderstandings. There are no prescribed steps for achieving these skills; instead, what is essential is a constant re-examination of organizational and individual beliefs and behaviors, and filling the knowledge gaps along the way.

These skill sets become a significant factor in addressing workplace cultural awareness when designated as an important aspect for advancing a healthy organizational culture. To assist the academic library community with developing cultural competence, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) drafted the *Diversity Standard: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries*.[11]

Although these guidelines and policies give academic libraries a place to start, some personnel will have difficulty embracing the cultural competence concept. Individuals may discover that interacting with those who are culturally different from them is an unnerving process. In addition, difficulties in accepting diverse populations may interfere with the responsibilities associated with collegiality and customer service. Caution must be exercised to avoid assigning privileges to one group over another. Moreover, careful consideration should be given to the processes employed to help employees on their journey to becoming more culturally aware.

Generally, academic libraries can begin to leverage the cultural and social backgrounds of their employees by understanding the cultural climate of their workplaces and "assessing their policies, procedures and practices for perceived or actual barriers to achieving inclusive work environments."[12] By defining practices and expected behaviors conducive to achieving an organization's diversity objectives, institutions can effect change in how employees respond to cultural differences.

Climate surveys

There are many ways in which campus libraries can approach inclusiveness. However, climate surveys have a good track record for taking the pulse of the workplace setting. Diversity committees or task forces often employ these tools to gain a broad understanding of the cultural interactions in the library environment. As mentioned earlier, ClimateQUAL is a survey product developed specifically for libraries by the University of Maryland (UM). The university libraries partnered with UM's Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program to design the survey tool, which was later tested with the Association of Research Libraries for general use. Several academic libraries, such as Oberlin College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and New York University, among others, have used ClimateQUAL to measure their cultural workplace climate. Other institutions have either partnered with a social science department or developed their own survey instrument.

The benefit of using climate surveys is that they afford a view into employee perceptions of diversity and workplace equity. Moreover, climate surveys can reveal interactions which remained unreported but were internalized. These include instances such as the discomfort accompanying a cultural slight or invasion of personal space, intended or unintended, which can be a subtle form of workplace dismay. Climate surveys also provide employees with a mechanism to identify specific instances and to explain their experiences. Survey questions may also provide opportunities to share accounts in which participants have submitted anonymous reports on inappropriate behaviors experienced or witnessed within their work environments.

Climate survey tools are not intended for one-time use. Continuous assessment of library work areas is necessary for improving and developing a healthy organizational culture. After the survey results are reviewed, problem areas should be addressed with programs, policies, or directives to alleviate any ensuing issues.

Developing inclusive work environments

An important aspect of developing inclusive work environments is the commitment by library administrators to provide opportunities for cultural awareness training. At a minimum, training, resources, and funding designed to encourage employees to become involved in diversity

efforts are needed. However, methods to address cultural interactions and communications are often missing from workplace diversity programs. In order to reduce conflict and strike the right balance between individualism and community, employees must learn to build trusting relationships with their co-workers and acknowledge each other's contributions.[13]

There are a variety of sources available to assist employees in becoming comfortable with perspectives outside their worldview, from training that includes workshops and seminars to travel experiences and self-development. For constructing a training program, it is helpful to use Diller and Moule's five basic areas of cultural competence as a platform; they are: (1) awareness and acceptance of differences, (2) self-awareness, (3) dynamics of difference, (4) knowledge of the "other's" culture, and (5) adaptation of skills.[14] A training component related to Diller and Moule's could emphasize developing outcome-based skills centered in cultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity. The use of resources such as "10 Lenses," by Mark Williams,[15] or Steve Robbins's "What If?: Short Stories to Spark Diversity Dialogue"[16] can challenge participants to recognize and acknowledge their worldview without the rancor typically associated with diversity training. Since the suggested resources require reflection by participants on what they have read, this helps to create a safe environment that highlights commonalities as much as differences and restrains judgment.

A training example related to intercultural communications and workplace behaviors is the program *Speak Up!* Three former members of the Penn State University Libraries diversity committee implemented this initiative to address derogatory and offensive comments in the workplace. They designed and developed a workshop patterned after the Southern Poverty Law Center's *Speak Up!* program, which was created to combat everyday bigotry. The workshop organizers retained the core of *Speak Up!* "and added multimedia content, customized scenarios, and group discussions to adapt it to the Libraries' needs."[17] Other organizations, such as the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Oregon State University, have used a similar program called *Ouch! That Stereotype Hurts*. The strength of these programs is that they provide attendees with "at-the-ready" responses to inappropriate comments.

On a different note, civility statements have become a common way to help foster a positive work environment. Penn State University Libraries developed a civility statement and guidelines for responding to uncivil treatment as a response to results from their climate surveys. This initiative, along with further identifying civility problems and solutions,

helped to promote an environment of respect and civil discourse while emphasizing responsibility for personal behaviors.

These efforts help preserve a diverse staff by acknowledging that each person brings a cultural richness to the workplace along with learned and acquired behaviors that inform how they conduct themselves and perform their work responsibilities. Consider Trefry's interpretation of using multiple lenses to make sense of the workplace:

> Each of us screens and interprets everything through our own perceptual lenses, which are influenced by our cultural background and personal experiences. For commonly reoccurring situations we create mental models about how things work – a constellation of assumptions and beliefs about various factors in a situation. These frames of reference determine what we expect and notice, what we pay particular attention to, and what we evaluate positively or negatively – thus heavily influencing how we make sense of behaviors, events, and situations.[18]

With this in mind, academic libraries that promote practices and strategies to make room for every voice, style, and mannerism are able to shape a foundation for creativity, productivity, acceptance, and inclusiveness based on the strengths and weaknesses of their employees. Aside from fostering opportunities for employees to recognize their differences as attributes at the core of intercultural understanding, individuals are enabled to consider the collective influences of values and beliefs in the work environment that consistently require negotiation.

An international perspective

A transformative method for understanding diversity and inclusiveness is gaining experiences through study or working abroad. Individuals who participate in an international experience essentially position themselves to be the "other" by residing outside the normative group. They are situated as a minority, particularly when traveling to a country where a language different from their own is spoken. This humbling perspective helps a person to understand what it is like to be different, not to be a part of the community, not to be understood, and to constantly ask for assistance.

There are many ways to become involved internationally. One approach is to conduct research with colleagues abroad. Organizations that provide financial support for research projects with an international

perspective encourage their librarians to learn about the international dimensions of their respective field and increase their cultural awareness. This is an efficient method for motivating faculty to develop individual and collaborative projects, and it supports travel to foreign countries to encourage internationally oriented research. It is also a means for employees to bring back the lessons learned in their foreign environments and apply them to the workplace.

Another opportunity for library personnel to expand their knowledge base about different communities is to participate in international committees through ALA or the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

Alternatively, several higher education institutions are beginning to offer study abroad programs to library students and open the opportunities to the general library community as well. Along with Fulbright fellowships for teaching or research, institutions such as the University of North Carolina (UNC) offer library and information science study abroad programs to Denmark, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Spain.

Library leadership

The success of establishing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive work environment is predicated on library leaders. It is through their vision and direction that diversity strategic plans are developed and implemented; however, the work begins with how well the leadership team understands diversity and inclusiveness. Organizational diversity is neither a quota program nor an attempt to satisfy affirmative action guidelines. Instead, organizational diversity should be viewed as a means to expand the dialogue and ideas for conducting library operations by including various backgrounds, lifestyles, viewpoints, and needs. There should be a solid understanding that there is a direct correlation between changing demographics and how libraries are prepared to meet their patrons' requests. The commitment to inclusion must be heartfelt and rooted in sustainability, where having a diverse workforce and an inclusive work environment is a priority.

In practice, this warrants holding everyone accountable to the goals associated with having a diverse workforce by stressing the value of diversity and inclusion to the organization's success. Moreover, daily interactions by the management team should reflect the value placed by the organization on dialogue, respect, and collegiality. Additionally, library leadership must be encouraged to participate in diversity training

sessions and attend supervisory and leadership development programs to improve communication skills, conflict management, and relationship-building. An unstated responsibility of having a diverse workforce is learning how to mentor, coach, and advocate for their personnel who have been traditionally underrepresented.

Similarly, attention should be given to how decisions are made and who is at the table. If the same individuals are always at the decision-making table, even when some are from underrepresented groups, then it is not inclusive and does not fully embody the rest of the organization. Sometimes the same underrepresented voice is heard and all others go unheard. To provide everyone with access to being heard, it is as important to encourage a diversity of underrepresented voices as it is to have representation by marginalized groups.

Conclusion

To date, advances towards diversifying the workplace through recruitment activities are many, while specific initiatives to improve intercultural relationships and workgroup effectiveness are few. Although academic library organizations can provide professional development and reward structures to motivate their workforces to become culturally conscious, ultimately library administrators bear the responsibility to prioritize and fund diversity programs that represent significant progression towards inclusive work environments. In the end, inclusiveness is about building community. It is the foundation by which we establish practices for civil and responsible dialogue and behaviors towards each other.

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7

Cultural competencies in authentic leadership

Joan Giesecke and Charlene Maxey-Harris

Abstract: This chapter focuses on the process of how to enhance diversity in the workplace by combining authentic leadership with the establishment of cultural competencies. For many academic libraries, the challenge to support diversity involves understanding cultural competencies and understanding the barriers to encouraging openness to diversity. Leadership plays a prominent role in cultivating a healthy work climate that supports inclusivity and diversity. Authentic leadership is one management style that brings positive leadership to the organization. This chapter reviews the theories of authentic leadership and explains why diverse populations do not all view authentic leadership in the same way. Combining cultural competencies with authentic leadership may be a way to bridge the gap in viewpoints and encourage openness to diversity. The authors will present a practical case study on how a robust staff development program and an intentional diversity program successfully changed the work culture to one that actively supports diversity.

Key words: diversity, authentic leadership, cultural competencies, diversity librarian, diversity committee.

Introduction

Increasing diversity in library organizations will not succeed if leaders think only in terms of increasing the number of people hired from diverse

groups. To be successful, leaders must create a climate in the organization where everyone participates in improving the climate for all members of the organization. Establishing a climate that emphasizes mutual respect is not simple. Leaders need to understand the various cultures within the organization, the implicit biases that exist, and the need to develop strategies to overcome barriers to change. One leadership strategy that is effective in bringing about change in the organizational climate is that of authentic leadership. Authentic leadership is a form of positive organizational behavior and emphasizes positive values and developing positive relationships between leaders and followers. However, authentic leadership is not sufficient to create a climate that is supportive of diversity. This chapter includes an overview of authentic leadership and will show how adding the teaching of cultural competencies to efforts to support authentic leadership styles at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Libraries resulted in significant improvements in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.

Background on the organizational culture of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries

In the late 1990s, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries began using the learning organization model to encourage change in the organization. Through a series of staff development workshops, all librarians and staff learned the fundamentals of the learning organization model, including the five key areas of shared vision, team values, personal mastery, role of mental models, and systems thinking.[1] Staff were encouraged to learn new skills related to their positions, to practice team values, and to assess how their work related to the work in departments throughout the libraries. The learning organization model helped the libraries create a positive work climate that emphasized engagement in the libraries by all members of staff. Once staff were familiar with the learning organization model, the Libraries conducted workshops on assessing individuals' strengths using the Gallup Strengths Finder tool.[2] The Gallup approach emphasizes positive organizational behaviors and shows individuals how they can be successful by understanding and building on their strengths rather than concentrating on fixing what may appear to be weaknesses.

In reviewing the impact of these efforts, and based on a campus-wide survey on workplace climate completed in 2002, the Libraries'

administration recognized that learning organization models and strength-based assessments did not adequately address the question of how to increase diversity in the libraries and create a climate that promoted diversity. The Libraries' administration, working with the Libraries' Staff Development Committee, reviewed the leadership literature to identify models that would blend well with the culture of the Libraries and improve the climate for diversity. The Libraries looked for leadership models that emphasized positive approaches to change and chose Authentic Leadership as a starting point for introducing an enhanced leadership approach to the libraries while continuing to review ways to enhance the model to address issues of diversity. In the next section, we review the literature on authentic leadership, the shortcomings of the model in terms of addressing diversity issues, and how cultural competencies can enhance the authentic leadership model. We then return to how we successfully implemented these models at UNL Libraries.

Leadership literature

Leaders face a very real dilemma as they look to the literature for advice on how to behave as leaders to influence their organization. The leadership literature now includes over 65 classifications for leadership that have been developed over the past 60 years.[3] Definitions vary from describing traits to describing processes and relationships. Perhaps the only point of agreement in the literature is that the "command and control" versions of leadership from the late 19th century are not effective in today's environments. Rather, leaders are looking for ways to engage followers in actions that will help achieve mutually agreed upon goals.

Leadership scholars have developed a number of theories to help today's leaders be effective in changing environments. One of the most recent theories is that of authentic leadership. Authentic leadership was constructed in response to the decrease in ethical leadership in the business world and the increase in societal challenges in the 21st century.[4] The collapse of companies such as Enron and WorldCom, the increase in terrorist attacks, and the global financial collapse have challenged leaders to find ways to bring positive energy to their organizations. Authentic leadership emphasizes ethics, positive organizational psychology and positive organizational behavior.[5]

While the definition of authentic leadership is still being developed, a working definition notes that authentic leaders are "those who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being

aware of their own and others' values/moral perspectives, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and of high moral character."[6] The theory stresses leaders bringing values, ethical concerns, and optimism back into organizations and institutions.

Northouse notes three different perspectives that can be used to define authentic leadership. From an intrapersonal view, authentic leadership emphasizes leaders' self-knowledge, their originality, and their convictions. Leaders have an understanding of who they are and what values they hold. From a developmental perspective, leaders can learn authentic leadership when they learn positive psychological qualities, practice moral behavior, and demonstrate relational transparency. Authentic leadership is one of the leadership theories that emphasize that leadership can be learned and practiced by those who are intentional in their learning and seek leadership roles. From an interpersonal perspective, authentic leadership centers on the relationship between the leaders and the followers. Here authentic leaders must obtain "buy in" from their followers, and positive outcomes occur when followers can identify with the values of the leader.[7] It is in this area of relational perspectives that authentic leadership is weakest in helping leaders address issues of diversity, where values between leaders and followers differ.

Leaders, including authentic leaders, who see diversity as a positive value and who assume that their values are the same as their followers' can be surprised when efforts to improve diversity in the organization meet with resistance. First and foremost, leaders need to be aware of their own values and then need a way to assess the values of their followers. Unlike command and control-centered leaders, authentic leaders are guided by positive other-directed emotions and transparent values. Positive other-directed emotions are those emotions that show concern for, appreciation of, and good will towards others. Values can vary on a continuum from self-enhancement values to self-transcendent values.[8] Self-enhancement values include pursuit of personal success, pursuit of power, and personal gratification. Self-transcendent values are outwardly directed and include concern for others, honesty, loyalty, and responsibility.[9]

According to this approach, leaders are motivated to do what is best for the work unit and stakeholders rather than making choices that are centered on the leader's self-interest. Since leaders have both self-centered and other-centered values, researchers argue that it is the positive other-directed emotions that help modify behavior so that leaders become more outwardly directed and conscious of the impact of values in the workplace.

Another challenge leaders encounter in creating a positive work climate for diversity is to understand how relationships between leaders and followers impact the climate. For authentic leaders, the challenge becomes fostering hope and optimism among followers so that collective goals, in this case promoting diversity, can be achieved. However, authentic leadership also emphasizes leaders' values, self-knowledge, and self-orientation. The theory is that leaders who are true to themselves will be more effective in creating a positive work climate. As noted earlier, the theory works best when leaders and followers have shared values. When values are shared, and leaders are seen as advocating for community values, followers are more likely to relate positively to the leader and follow the leader's efforts.

Complicating the issue of creating a positive climate is that most leadership theories are centered on Western, white, male values and perspectives, limiting the usefulness of these theories for non-majority leaders. As noted in a special issue of the *American Psychologist*, researchers are only now beginning to explore how cultural and gender differences can be addressed by enhancing leadership theories to incorporate these important variables. The authors are finding that leadership theories and behaviors that are core to Western theories do not necessarily apply to other cultures, to minority leaders, or to women leaders.[10]

As Eagly notes, when a leader comes from a non-majority group that is not traditionally viewed in leadership roles, then the leader has a more difficult time practicing authentic leadership. In these cases, the values of the leader may not be seen as representative of the values of the community. The leader "must engage in negotiation and persuasion that may result in greater acceptance of the leader's agenda but may also include some conformity by the leader to followers' construals of community interests."[11] These leaders may have to overcome feelings of being inauthentic to their own values as they move into leadership roles.

Eagly goes on to note that it is not enough for followers to recognize the values of the leader, but they must trust that these values will serve the community.[12] For women and minority leaders, establishing trust with followers is not as simple as espousing one's own values. Women leaders who have espoused male values, which are more likely to mirror followers' values, are not necessarily seen as being authentic because of the disconnect between the stereotype of women's values and the espoused values of the women leaders.[13] Eagly notes that this prejudice rests on "role incongruity – the view that prejudice often follows from the mismatch between beliefs about the attributes typically possessed by

members of a social group and beliefs about the attributes that facilitate success in valued social roles."[14]

Minority leaders face the same challenge. Minority leaders may have learned leadership skills in areas outside the work setting, through community and church work, but are reluctant to "speak of their outside pursuits and accomplishments to colleagues and managers."[15] Research conducted by the Center for Work Life Policy in 2005 reveals the disconnect that exists between the leadership roles that minority leaders hold in their communities and the lack of corporate acknowledgment of the value of these skills in bringing leadership to the organization. Researchers found that hidden bias in the organization could lead "minority professionals to deny their authenticity in their efforts to fit into the prevailing white male model."[16] Traditionally, organizations have valued "extracurricular" activities that were supported by white male executives, including supporting United Way, sporting activities, and some arts groups. Leadership roles in a church or in community organizations providing assistance to minority groups were not valued. Minority leaders shared that their reluctance to discuss their outside activities at work stemmed in part from not wanting to give the majority group reasons to view them as different from themselves. Further, the minority leaders wanted to avoid the taboo subjects of religion and ethnicity.[17] For minority and female leaders, authentic leadership highlights the challenge of trying to develop a set of shared values that may be in conflict with the values of a majority group of followers or other leaders.

Authentic leadership theory leaves the leader with the question of how to merge the positive aspects of authentic leadership for creating a climate of optimism and hope with the challenges of addressing mismatched values and role incongruity. For leaders who are trying to change the values of the followers regarding acceptance of diversity, and/or are not from the majority culture, the development of cultural competencies among the followers can bring together the leader and the followers in a new set of shared values about diversity.

Nancy Press, a medical librarian, provides a model of a culturally competent librarian based on her experience of providing health information to an African American faith-based community which was different from her ethnic background. As she worked side by side with African American public health educators from the community, she learned that in to order to meet the information needs of a culturally different community she had to examine her own attitudes, hidden biases, and lack of knowledge about the community. Her new awareness made

her conscious of her assumptions that hindered her from meeting the community's needs in the way they needed to receive the health information. Press went on to list the characteristics of being culturally competent in three areas: revealing and understanding attitudes and biases, seeking knowledge about the information-seeking behaviors and social political issues of the group, and developing these skills into strategies for action.[18]

Cultural competencies encompass a range of behaviors, skills, and policies that emphasize cross-cultural understanding of others.[19] In 2011, the American Library Association's Association of College and Research Libraries Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee provided a set of guidelines on cultural diversity.[20] The key components of the competencies are that librarians and staff need to understand their own cultures and then need to learn about and understand the cultures, values, and traditions of co-workers, colleagues, and major constituencies. Libraries need to build collections that reflect a diverse culture and need to provide services that meet the needs of these different groups. Librarians and staff should be advocates for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, and they should participate in creating a workplace climate that embraces diversity and inclusiveness. Finally, libraries should provide staff development opportunities for all staff to learn about cultural competencies and values in order to develop the skills needed to create an inclusive workplace climate that values diversity.

Integrating cultural competencies into an organization is a "developmental process that evolves over an extended period. Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum."[21] Developing cultural competencies is a dynamic ongoing process for both the individual and the organization. In order for change to take place, both the organization and the individual must engage in specific activities and programs that move them outside their comfort zone.

Leaders begin by understanding their own cultural values and those of others. This sensitivity and understanding can lead them to take responsibility for providing an environment that values diversity. Diversity initiatives can then be implemented through educational programs that help employees to develop self-awareness, increase their knowledge of various cultural values, provide opportunities to utilize these skills to work in new areas of creativity and productivity, and serve as advocates for the organization. Cultural competencies developed through diversity initiatives help authentic leaders to enhance the values of their followers to be more inclusive and create a positive climate where

everyone is valued. Followers will learn that their leaders are willing to move outside their own comfort zones to learn cultural competencies from others.

Implementing authentic leadership and cultural competencies at University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries have been committed to diversity since the early 1990s. Taking a stance to increase the number of UNL employees from underrepresented groups was indeed a challenge for the organization in one of the least culturally diverse states in the nation. The goals of the libraries were initially to recruit a multicultural workforce through the traditional recruitment strategies and to provide diversity and multicultural education. As the Libraries attempted to recruit librarians of color, it became obvious that minority librarians could not see themselves working and living in an area that lacked multicultural individuals in the libraries and community. It became evident that the draw to the libraries had to go beyond having an ideal position. Rather, the organization had to demonstrate its commitment to diversity by developing community values promoting diversity.

Recognizing, as noted earlier, that efforts to change the organizational culture through the learning organization model were insufficient to address the issues of diversity, the organization developed three goals as the foundation for transforming the libraries with respect to diversity:

1. Develop an infrastructure for diversity which included the diversity librarian, a diversity committee, and a plan of action.
2. Increase the recruitment and retention of individuals from underrepresented groups in faculty and staff positions.
3. Create a positive working environment with the libraries through continuing education and staff development.[22]

Infrastructure

One of the key strategies for valuing diversity and creating cultural competencies was to create a specific position to focus on diversity initiatives. In 2004, a diversity librarian was hired to develop a plan which

included the recruitment and retention of faculty from underrepresented groups. The plan also included establishing a diversity committee with representation from every level of the library organization and hiring a liaison librarian to work with the ethnic studies centers and departments. UNL Libraries framed the infrastructure on information from the University of Michigan as reported in the 1990 ARL Spec Kit, "Cultural Diversity Programming."[23] The Libraries also drew on diversity reports to learn more about possible configuration for a diversity committee.[24] The diversity librarian reported to the Associate Dean for Human Resources and Budget, and the multicultural studies librarian reported to the Chair of Research and Information Services. The advantage of these positions being in different departments is that it encouraged collaborative teamwork to occur across departments. The diversity librarian provided open forums to share the vision for incorporating diversity values into the organization. These forums emphasized transparency about the reality of our changing world and encouraged staff to express interest in joining the newly created diversity committee.

Diversity committee and mission

The charge for the diversity committee was:

1. Develop and implement strategies to recruit and retain faculty and staff from under-represented groups.
2. Foster an inclusive work environment that supported cultural competencies – one that values each individual's culture, experience, racial/ethnic background, age, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, gender, language, philosophy or diversity of thought.

The first objective of the committee was to develop a diversity statement for the library. The diversity librarian researched a number of academic libraries' diversity statements. However, the committee needed to develop its own statement based on the UNL Libraries' culture. The UNL statement encourages all staff to be involved: "UNL Libraries values diversity and empowers our staff to take active responsibility in developing a supportive diverse environment. We will use our talents, expertise, collections and services to coordinate with UNL's effort to embrace diversity."[25] The statement set the tone for talking about cultural competencies and community values.

The diversity librarian and the staff development officer held mandatory diversity education from a local diversity consultant on cultural competencies. These sessions challenged the participants' attitudes on diversity by acknowledging that diversity encompasses all cultures, that all staff are valued, not just those from a minority or the majority culture, and that the organization values all staff demonstrating professional behavior in their interactions with others.

Workplace climate

Fostering an inclusive workplace was the primary goal of the diversity and staff development committees, because, as noted above, recruitment without a positive work climate would not be effective. The Libraries invested resources in workshops to help staff learn about authentic leadership as the preferred leadership style in the organization while continuing to provide training on the learning organization model. Several sessions were held on diversity, effective communication, and creating a standard language for job descriptions on valuing inclusiveness. Staff began to realize that discussing diversity was not limited to discussing working with people from different ethnic backgrounds. The interactive sessions allowed each person to voice his or her opinions, to see commonalities and differences among all staff, and to build an understanding about how to communicate respectfully with one another. Small group interactive sessions allowed more staff participation because staff could share their experiences and questions. These programs provided staff with the opportunity to take responsibility for their learning and to develop skills to effectively communicate between staffing levels and departments. The outcome of the workshops was a shared understanding of the importance of positive leadership styles and the importance of shared values for promoting and embracing diversity based on cultural competencies. Another outcome from the workshops on shared values was the recognition that diverse voices throughout the organization could lead diversity initiatives.

Assessing workplace climate is always a tricky process; however, the university administered evaluations to measure inclusiveness and staff engagement in 2002, 2004, and 2008. The results of the surveys showed that over time the climate for diversity improved and that staff perceived the library as a good place to work. In 2009, the libraries used the ARL ClimateQUAL evaluation to assess the work climate.[26] This survey allowed the library to measure staff perceptions along the themes of deep

diversity with gender, race, sexual orientation, and rank. The libraries, with a 98 percent response rate to the survey, learned that staff now perceived the libraries to be a very positive and healthy work environment.

Recruitment and retention

With the change to a workplace climate that embraces diversity values, the Libraries were better able to recruit more minority librarians. The Libraries worked diligently to address the recruitment and retention challenges. To recruit more minority librarians, several strategies were implemented to increase the diversity of the applicant pools. Some factors that increased the number of potential applicants were the rise of minority librarian residency programs for recent Master of Library Science/Master of Library and Information Science graduates, a focus on the diversity initiatives of the Association of Research Libraries, and the number of jobs posted through diversity listservs. The diversity librarian and multicultural studies librarian then actively recruited potential candidates through the ethnic minority caucuses as well as through the various minority librarian programs to increase the number of qualified applicants in the pool. By actively seeking minority candidates for open positions and by emphasizing a culture of inclusion in the libraries, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln increased the number of librarians of color from 2 percent to 12 percent in ten years.

Conclusion

Leaders who are ready to embrace the changing workforce realize they may not have all the knowledge and skills needed to create an inclusive work environment. Positive organizational leadership models such as authentic leadership can begin to affect change in the organization. However, this model has limited success by itself when the values of the leaders to promote diversity do not match the values of followers to develop an inclusive workplace climate. Development of cultural competencies allows leaders to expand their own values and relational perspectives and to provide a path for introducing diversity values into the organization. As leaders become more aware of diversity values, support structures can be established in the organization to promote acceptance of and inclusion of all staff. Self-awareness is the first step to

expose the implicit biases that undermine efforts to actively support diversity. The second step is increasing knowledge about different cultures through programs and education that encourage staff to gain understanding and information about different cultures and values. The Libraries started with a commitment to a shared vision and created the opportunity for others to lead in the area of diversity initiatives. Combining authentic leadership styles with a commitment to cultural competencies and diversity values created a new set of organizational values that embraced inclusiveness. By changing the organizational culture, the Libraries were able to increase diversity among faculty and staff and create a more inclusive workplace.

Authentic leadership embraces self-awareness, positive organizational values, and positive connections between leaders and followers. In organizations where diversity values are shared, authentic leadership can be effective in enhancing the work environment for all members of the organization. For organizations where diversity values are not shared, combining the development of cultural competencies with authentic leadership can result in a change in culture whereby diversity values become integrated into the fabric of the organization.

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8

Diversity and sensitivity in the workplace: understanding Asian Pacific American staff

Anchalee Panigabutra-Roberts

Abstract: This chapter aims to provide a deeper understanding of Asian Pacific American (APA) staff (both librarians and library assistants) in academic libraries. Based on the author's and others' experience and the existing literature, the author focuses on the complex and diverse identities of APAs that relate to workplace culture: experiences of refugees and immigrants and those with mixed heritage, the "model minority" stereotypes, linguistic diversity, and accents. The chapter concludes with recommendations for best practices and future research on recruitment and retention of APA library staff in academic libraries, including fostering cultural competency and intelligence and providing adequate mentoring support.

Key words: Asian Pacific Americans, retention, cultural competency, cultural intelligence, model minority, accents.

Introduction

This chapter will begin with a discussion on how Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) have carved out a distinctive socio-cultural and political space in US society, and why it is imperative for the library profession to continue to recruit and retain APA library staff in academic libraries (referring to both librarians and library assistants). Cultural competency and cultural intelligence frameworks will be used to provide deeper understanding of

APAs, the issues they struggle with, and recommendations for practices and research in academic libraries. Their diverse identities will be illuminated, along with other relevant issues.

This chapter covers the following topics: definitions and demographic profiles of Asian Pacific Americans; facts about APA library staff; a literature review of cultural competency and intelligence; works about APA library staff; and APAs' diverse identities. Other relevant issues include the "model minority" stereotype, linguistic diversity, and accents. Case examples, when available, are integrated into each section. The ultimate goal is to help others better understand APA academic library staff and their communities in order to create a welcoming work climate for them. This chapter is based on existing publications on APAs and on the author's and others' experiences rather than on a systematic, data-driven research study. In the recommendations, there are suggestions included for further research.

Asian Pacific Americans: definition

Asian Pacific Americans are US citizens with heritages from Asia, Hawaii, or other Pacific Islands; this is a socially constructed identity based on the racialization of American society.[1] This population combines two racial and ethnic groups recognized by the federal government, Asians and Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders. These groups are reflected in the organization of the librarians' ethnic caucus, the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association. The US Office of Management and Budget uses the data for Federal statistics, administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance. The US Census defines APAs as follows:

> "Asian" refers to those having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. "Pacific Islander" refers to those having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. The Asian and Pacific Islander population is not a homogeneous group; rather, it comprises many groups who differ in language, culture, and length of residence in the United States. Some of the Asian groups, such as the Chinese and Japanese, have been in the United States for several generations. Others, such as the Hmong, Vietnamese, Laotians, and

Cambodians, are comparatively recent immigrants. Relatively few of the Pacific Islanders are foreign born.[2]

APA population's profile

According to the 2010 Census, the estimated number of US residents of Asian descent is 17.3 million. This group comprised 5.6 percent of the total population. This count includes those who said they were Asian alone (14.7 million) or Asian in combination with one or more additional races (2.6 million). Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders comprise 1.2 million or 0.4 percent of the total population, with over half reported as multiple races (56 percent).[3] In addition to the broad Census categories, APAs also may be transnational adoptees, have mixed heritages, be present in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities, or embody other diversity such as age, abilities, languages, or country of origin. In short, there is no such thing as a monolithic group of "Asian Pacific Americans"; the label is used as a socio-political tool for the federal government's civil rights monitoring, to ensure equality for all the ethnic groups in the US.

APA librarians data: diversity counts

In terms of the presence of Asian Pacific Americans in the library profession, the American Library Association's (ALA's) Office for Research and Statistics and Office for Diversity gathered data on diversity with the results in the tables listed below.[4] The datasets were based on the Census estimates of 1990 and 2000 as applied to National Center for Education Statistics Data.

Table 8.1 shows the percent change among credentialed librarians (with a master's degree or another degree higher than a master's) of all types of library employment by race/ethnicity between 1990 and 2000. There was a decrease in the total number of these librarians and in each racial/ethnic group, except for Native Americans and Alaskans with a 9.15 percent increase. APA librarians fared more poorly than other racial/ethnic groups, with a change of –21.57 percent compared with White librarians (–7.63 percent), Latino librarians (–5.69 percent), and Native American and Alaskan librarians (9.15 percent), but better than African American librarians (–29.35 percent). In 2000, for the ratio of credentialed

Table 8.1 **Percent change credentialed librarians by race/ethnicity, 1990–2000**

	1990		2000		Percent change: 1990 to 2000	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Total	120 365	100%	109 958	100%	−10 407	−8.64%
White	105 908	87.99%	97 827	88.96%	−8 081	−7.63%
African American	7 423	6.17%	5 244	4.77%	−2 179	−29.35%
***API**	**4 483**	**3.72%**	**3 516**	**3.2%**	**−967**	**−21.57%**
Native American and Alaskan	284	0.24%	310	0.28%	26	9.15%
**Two or more races	n/a	n/a	923	0.84%	n/a	n/a
Latino	2 266	1.88%	2 137	1.94%	−129	−5.69%

*API refers to Asian and Pacific Islanders, the equivalent of APA.
**This category was first introduced in the US Census in 2000 (US Census Bureau, 2001, 1).

librarians by race/ethnicity, APA librarians were still in the minority, comprising 3.2 percent, compared with White librarians (88.96 percent) and African American librarians (4.77 percent), but they fared better than Latino librarians (1.94 percent) and Native American and Alaskan librarians (0.28 percent).

Table 8.2 shows that APA librarians in higher education fared better than other racial/ethnic groups between 1990 to 2000, with 10.8 percent increase, compared with White librarians (−5 percent), African American librarians (−17 percent), and Latino librarians (−45.92 percent), but less percentage change than Native American and Alaskan librarians (168.85 percent). However, the latter group had far fewer librarians to begin with. In 2000, for the ratio of credentialed librarians in higher education by race/ethnicity, APA librarians were still in the minority, comprising 6.28 percent compared with White librarians (85.64 percent), but they fared better than other ethnic groups: African American librarians (4.83 percent), Latino librarians (1.53 percent) and Native American and Alaskan librarians (0.65 percent).

Table 8.2 **Percent change credentialed librarians in higher education by race/ethnicity, 1990–2000**

	1990 (Table B-5, 26)		2000 (Table A-5, 22)		Percent change: 1990 to 2000	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Total	26 341	100%	25 152	100%	–1189	–4.51%
White	22 680	86.1%	21 541	85.64%	–1139	–5%
African American	1 462	5.55%	1 214	4.83%	–248	–17%
***API**	**1 426**	**5.41%**	**1 580**	**6.28%**	**154**	**10.8%**
Native American and Alaskan	61	0.23%	164	0.65%	103	168.85%
Two or more races	n/a	n/a	269	1.07%	n/a	n/a
Latino	712	2.7%	385	1.53%	–327	–45.92%

*API refers to Asian and Pacific Islanders, the equivalent of APA.

These statistics showed the higher concentration of APAs in academic libraries, with 3.2 percent of APA librarians in all libraries compared with 6.28 percent in academic libraries. The report also showed the same pattern for APA library assistants, with 5 percent of APA library assistants in all libraries compared with 9 percent in academic libraries.[5] Although these statistics are somewhat dated, the new statistics from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) showed a similar pattern, with the ratio of APA professional staff reported in 99 US ARL university libraries, including law and medical libraries, to comprise 6.6 percent, compared with Caucasian/Other (85.8 percent), Black (4.4 percent), Hispanic (2.8 percent), and American Indian or Native Alaskan (0.4 percent).[6] These statistics underline the need to continue to diversify the library profession. And, as stated in the introduction, this book chapter will add to the literature on recruitment and retention of librarians of color by providing best practices to understand APA library staff to promote a welcoming work climate.

Literature review

While a substantial portion of literature addresses recruitment and retention of librarians of color, additional research on retention is needed. The *Diversity Counts* report highlighted the problems in retention of ethnic librarians and their issues related to career advancement and lack of leadership positions. The authors suggested that "measures must be taken to promote and advance diversity at the management level in LIS institutions. If not, they will continue to serve as revolving doors at best, to members of the communities on whom they will increasingly depend for survival."[7] Howland identified retention problems as follows: job satisfaction, continuing status and promotion for tenure-track librarians, unwelcoming work climate, and allowing the individual to be "different" in the workplace.[8] Neely and Peterson concurred that retention is influenced by "positive environment, honoring of employee values, opinion, and voice."[9] For the negative impact on retention, they addressed the problem of racism.[10] Kreitz also pointed out how an unwelcoming climate in organizations can impact negatively on the recruitment of minority librarians.[11] Thus it is recognized by library leaders and educators that a welcoming environment in their organizations for minority librarians is crucial for their recruitment and retention.

Cultural intelligence (CQ)[12] and cultural competency[13] can be suitable frameworks to create a culturally welcoming environment for APA and other minority staff in academic libraries. So, what is CQ? Earley et al. posited that "*cultural intelligence*" is a necessary asset for managers to have in order to develop effective strategies for working with people from different cultures:

> The culturally intelligent or [sic] manager is one who 1) never stops learning about other cultures, 2) never stops planning how to succeed in the next encounter with another person from a different culture, and 3) constantly strives or [sic] to build bridges of goodwill and understanding that will facilitate effective interaction and build an atmosphere of healthy and active engagement in their teams and organizations.[14]

The authors emphasized mentoring in cultural diversity management, using incentives to promote and champion diversity in the workplace, and providing role models and developing mentors with cultural intelligence.[15] They concluded that culturally intelligent managers will

think of how to facilitate cross-cultural understanding while accomplishing organizational goals effectively.[16]

In the library setting, Smith adapted the concept of "cultural intelligence" and advocated going beyond "assimilation" to "the blended organization," which ". . . relies on mutual respect and equal contributions of different cultural perspectives to the organization's values and norms."[17] This type of organization encourages continuous growth in cultural competencies by adopting, as a standard practice, "honest appraisals of its level of functioning with underrepresented and underserved populations."[18] She also addressed the importance of cross-cultural communication and cultural competencies as necessary skills for librarians working in the increasingly global educational community.[19] Recently, the ACRL Diversity Committee created *Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries*. The document is based on *Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*, which defines "cultural competence" as:

> A congruent set of behaviors, attitudes and policies that enable a person or group to work effectively in cross-cultural situations; the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.[20]

While the two concepts "cultural intelligence" and "cultural competency" are quite similar, "cultural intelligence" focuses more on the process or the "how" of acquiring and utilizing the cultural knowledge, while "cultural competency" focuses on the "what" or the attributes of cultural knowledge and desirable behaviors in cross-cultural situations. Thus this chapter draws on both approaches and supports the ACRL diversity standards, especially standard two, on cross-cultural knowledge, standard nine, on the role of the managers to support such learning and advocate for minority librarians and staff, and standard eleven, on promoting research that is inclusive of minority librarians' worldviews.[21]

In the literature on APA librarians, Liu reviewed contributions of Chinese American librarians[22] and Yamashita reviewed the history of the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA).[23] Liu described how the Cold War, communism, and the birth of Area Studies, as well as US internationalism, led to legislation such as the National Defense Act

of 1958 and the 1961 Library of Congress PL-480 Program.[24] These programs drove the need for native speakers to catalog and classify collections, thus resulting in the hiring of Asian librarians. Subsequently, the Asian librarians formed a Pan-Asian ethnic caucus and APALA. Yamashita documented the history of APALA, focusing on the role of the founder, Janet Suzuki, the original organization, Asian American Librarians Caucus/Association (AALC), established in January 1975, and the subsequent establishment of APALA in 1980.[25]

Yamashita surveyed five founding members of APALA, asking questions including what led them to librarianship, inquiries about their mentors, their choices for career paths, their experience in the profession as APAs, and their job satisfaction. Four of the members had been born overseas, in the Philippines, Korea, India, and China, and one had been born in Chicago, IL. Those who had been born overseas came to the US for higher education and entered into librarianship. Most have a PhD or a second master's degree. Their reasons for becoming librarians included having a friend in the library program, coming from a family background in education, having their own interest in the field, and having worked in libraries. As for being mentored or actively recruited into librarianship as a minority, two of five had mentors. All were happy with their career choices. Three out of five did experience discrimination and one person felt that she had to work harder to be equal to others. This last librarian also felt that there was less access to administrative positions for Asians. Another felt being of mixed heritage gave her strength. Her name, which combines multiple heritages, stands out in others' memories in her view. However, she felt she had to develop a thick skin. All felt that their Asian traits and values, such as self-discipline, high performance standards, cooperation, group orientation, hard work, ethical and moral values, diplomacy, and reserve were their strengths. As for job satisfaction, they attributed it to opportunities to use analytical skills and impact changes, their roles in support of scholarship and intellectual pursuits, services and collection for ethnic and (one for) disabled (blind) communities, and the global education community. They also asked for more networking opportunities. The down sides of the profession included bureaucracy and budget constraints.

In summary, cultural understanding of APA library staff, as well as of other minority library staff, would promote positive work environments in academic libraries, a standard value promoted by ACRL. APA library staff are typically hired because their language and cultural skills are needed by libraries, and their cultural values and their work ethics are assets for the libraries. On the other hand, APA staff sometimes experience

racism and prejudice and need better access to career advancement. To better understand APA staff would help managers to improve work climate and better support APA library staff.

APA diverse identities

As discussed in the introduction, APAs are not a homogeneous group and are, in fact, very diverse. This section will discuss the APAs' major diverse identities that relate to workplace culture. Issues and identities in APA communities are distinctive, and others outside each subgroup, even among APAs, may not understand these differences. Learning about their distinctive and diverse history and American experience can help other colleagues improve their understanding and interact better with their APA colleagues.

APAs as immigrants and refugees

The United States of America was and still is being built by immigrants and their labor. From the Gold Rush in California to the railroads across the US, Chinese immigrants and others were major sources of labor. They were also subjected to discrimination by the Chinese Exclusion Act.[26] The Japanese American history is also tied to immigration and later to their internment during World War II.[27]

The Vietnam War brought to the US many refugees from Southeast Asian (SEA) countries, especially from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. They share the common experience of "*Legacies of War.*"[28] Their experience of war trauma still impacts their lives, as shown in "*The Betrayal (Nerakhoon),*" an Academy Award-nominated documentary filmed over the course of 23 years.[29] This film, about the Lao-American refugee family of the co-director, Thavisouk Phrasavath, begins with the family's need to escape from Laos during the Vietnam War. It portrays poverty, language, literacy problems, one parent or parents with minimum education from the country of origin, the lack of English proficiency, problems with alcohol, drugs, gangs, and family relationships. These common experiences and problems in the Southeast Asian American (SEAA) communities are also evident in the study by Wright and Boun, which examined themes in SEAA education to make specific policy recommendations on K-12 education, heritage language education, higher education, and communities.[30]

Asian Pacific Americans and mixed heritages – "What are you?"

Although mixed heritage APAs are not "typical," the 2010 US Census indicated that there are about 2.6 million Asians in combination with one or more additional races out of 17.3 million Asians in total (approximately 1 out of 6), and 56 percent of the 1.2 million Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders reported multiple races.[31] Spickard summarized the making of pan-ethnic Asian Pacific America, especially from the Asian American Movement, and later the lumping together and separating of Pacific Islanders in the racial categories.[32] He also gave an overview of changing attitudes towards multiracial people of Asian ancestry; although they were commonly considered more outcast in the past, multiracial people have gained greater acceptance by the Asian American communities at the present time. However, acceptance varies among subgroups. The rifts may have to do with historical conflicts between the countries of origin, such as Japan and China, or Thailand and Laos. Perhaps the number of multiracial APAs in the Census is the manifestation of a positive change, as studies also show that Asian Americans have some of the highest interethnic marriage rates among racial/ethnic minorities.[33] Some may also have dual heritages of discrimination; for example, Japanese and Jewish couples carry the legacies of both Japanese internment and the Holocaust.[34] The "one-drop rule" also makes a person non-white or a person of color if one parent is white but the other is not. But the issue of how people with multiple races may see themselves is also an individual choice. Ropp also argued that multiracial Asian Americans do not erase the concept of race; on the contrary, it endorses the concept "Asian Americans" to be "read" as "multiracial Asian Americans," based on the allegiance multiracial Asian Americans have with the APA communities and how some APA communities and the discipline, such as Asian American Studies, attempt to be inclusive of multiracial APAs.[35]

APA library staff: other relevant issues

"Model minority" stereotype

The report of the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education dispels the myth of Asian Americans and

Pacific Islanders (AAPI) as a "model minority" with high achievement.[36] The report found that ". . . large sectors of the AAPI population experience low high school graduation rates, high enrollment in community colleges, and underrepresentation in certain sectors of the workforce."[37] The research tried to expose the invisibility and challenges the community faces in higher education and the workforce. It brought much-needed attention to AAPI students, whose unique needs often go unnoticed when targeted interventions are being developed for other underrepresented students. This report's findings are also supported by Wright and Boun.[38]

The relevant findings of key myths and facts are:

- APAs are interested in a wide range of subject areas, in social sciences, humanities and education, not only in the sciences and technology per the stereotype of Asians.
- APA refugees have more problems with English proficiency and a higher poverty rate compared with other APAs.
- APAs also have high suicide rates due to the pressure by their parents to be successful in schools or to be in better-paying professions, sometimes without aptitude or preference. (Thus the report recommended the provision of mental health services for APA students.)
- The low number of APAs in faculty and administrative positions also meant that role models in higher education are lacking.

The implications for APAs in academic libraries would concern recruitment from the Southeast Asian refugee communities and the level of support needed for these students in colleges and library science programs. When they come to work in libraries, they also need the same level of support and job expectations as other ethnic minority staff.

Another indirect impact noted in the study is the low number of APAs in faculty and administrative positions. The author has experienced this firsthand as one of the few APA faculty on the campus. With limited numbers of APA faculty at UNL, I have become a role model/advisor to APA student groups on campus, and, in essence, one of the few "Asians" available to engage in campus activities and committees, so one might say that tokenism is at play here. While I take pride in this contribution, I found the demands for my services to be high. Some APA and other minority academic librarians and staff may have similar experiences in being asked to extend their roles into serving the local APA communities on campus, in student involvement, and/or in teaching. Thus, hiring

more APA library staff will help diversify the campus and library communities, and will help distribute the work and service loads of APA library staff.

Linguistic diversity and APAs' contribution to libraries: accents vs. cultural ambassador roles

APAs are diverse in their languages as well as their national origins. In the US, there are at least 35 major languages from diverse language families spoken by APAs.[39] This means there will be a variety of accents among APAs for whom English is not a native language. Moreover, academic libraries should also consider whether they cover these languages in their collections, especially at the national level, or have personnel with these language backgrounds to support such collections. Those speaking accented English as a second language should be understood from a positive perspective of their bilingual or multilingual capability.

Accents

> "If an actor comes to me and says, 'I want to eliminate my accent,' I say, 'You're eliminating a part of you,' " — Maggie Phillips, voiceover actor.[40]

Schiffman wrote about Phillips's experience working with actors and actresses who came to voice train with her to lose their Australian, Irish–Italian, Russian, Asian or African American accents, as they thought it would help them get more and better roles. On the contrary, the film and theater world still wants people with a diversity of voices, by age, race, and gender, to reflect the diversity of America in theatrical productions. Academic libraries should aim to reflect the same diversity among their staff, who then mirror the diversity in their patrons. Thus, the linguistic diversity is to be embraced, not erased, as suggested by linguistic studies. *Speech Accent Archive*[41] demonstrates that accents are distinctive and reflect a person's linguistic background. Accents are systematic, not mistaken speech. Moyer reviewed studies that found only a few exceptional learners could achieve a convincingly native accent, thus concluding that it is not a realistic

expectation for those who speak English as a second language.[42] Moyer's own study found that second language ability also had to do with the age at which learning the second language was begun; the younger the better. He also found that the length of residence in the country does not always correlate with ability. Some people do change, but some remain the same despite long-term residency. Thus we can expect staff to have accents; native English speakers could use the *Speech Accent Archive* as a useful tool for training one's ears to understand various accents. Besides, what is perfect American English, when there are many regional variations?[43] However, the author does not imply that APAs with English as the second language should not try our best to speak with proper accents. It is very difficult to achieve perfect accents, as Moyer noted.

Bilingual staff should be valued for their language skills and cultural understanding of their APA communities, which enables them to be better cultural ambassadors between their libraries and their communities. Beyond the Asian-language skills, APA staff with accents can better serve as library liaisons to foreign-born and international staff and library users. In the author's experience as an accented and non-native English speaker, she can understand others who are also accented English speakers by listening for the context, even when the words are not pronounced correctly. The author's background as a Thai enables her to understand other Thai people with accents when they speak English, as the words they would mispronounce can be predicted. The author also has a minor in Japanese language in college and grew up in a Sino-Thai community, which is helpful in understanding Japanese and Chinese people when they speak English, since the author is not fluent in Japanese or Chinese. Such understanding has benefitted the library and the author in her role as a liaison to the Japanese and Chinese collections on campus. In conclusion, having an accent is not always a deficit. It can be to a library's benefit to have APA staff with accents as liaisons to foreign-born and international staff and library users.

Best practices and future research

Drawing from APAs and their diverse characteristics delineated in the previous sections, the following are recommendations for best practices and future research.

Recommendations for best practices

- Do not assume that having an Asian appearance means that one possesses knowledge of Asian language and culture. In the recruitment process, do ask job candidates for specific qualifications on Asian languages and cultures if desired for the positions.
- Employers should support library staff to take Asian and other language and cultural courses. US-born APA staff may also want to learn about their own cultural heritages and languages, as well as other languages and cultures. Such knowledge will increase the cultural competency among staff, strengthen the library's mission, and improve work climate.
- Do not assume a person's race(s) and never ask "What are you?" for people whose race may not be apparent physically, such as for those with mixed heritages. One can find out about the person's background through conversations.
- Do not ask "Where are you from?" just because of the person's Asian appearance. Both APAs who are born in the US and long-term Asian immigrants born overseas find this offensive, as it marginalizes them as the "other/outsider" in US society.
- APAs with mixed heritages can be ostracized by their own respective communities; thus one cannot assume that their respective communities will welcome them. Therefore employers and other colleagues should treat the staff with mixed heritages on a case-by-case basis by providing extra support if they are not welcome in their respective ethnic communities. Employers should not assign community outreach to them without gauging how they would be welcomed in their respective communities.
- Do not be afraid to ask if you do not understand or do not know something about the communities, from terminologies such as the terms "snow queens," "rice queens," or "sticky rice"[44] used in the Asian American LGBT community, to issues APAs are currently facing.
- Recognize the need for APAs in leadership/administrative positions to serve as role models for APA staff and to serve as subject matter experts for library and campus policy development.
- Academic libraries should provide the same level of support to APA staff as to other ethnic and underrepresented groups and not assume that they can achieve things on their own because they are the "model minority."

- Academic libraries should collaborate with library science programs in targeted recruitment of students from APA communities that are still underrepresented in academic libraries. Dr Chu's ongoing study, *Information Needs and Barriers of Southeast Asian Refugee Undergraduates*,[45] will be informative for recruitment of this community.[46] The program can be modeled after "*Knowledge River*" in Arizona,[47] but with the emphasis on APA issues. Once recruited, these new librarians can play a major role in collection building, outreach to the communities, programming events, and so on.
- Staff who are bilingual or multilingual, although with accents, should be respected for their language capability, since acquiring a second language is a monumental task that takes multiple skills and intelligence. The bilingual background, with English as a second language, should be a source of pride, not of shame.
- Administrators should allow time to work with the local communities, even if outreach is not in the job description. It is important to understand the stake the APA staff have as community members, not only as members of the library staff.
- Library policies should not be one-size-fits-all and should allow for culturally appropriate practices.
- Be aware of the recruitment challenge in convincing young APAs to come into librarianship and/or graduate programs in international and ethnic studies.
- Academic libraries can work with state library associations to publicize scholarships to APA and other minority students.[48]

Recommendations for future research

These recommendations are for any entities in the American Library Association and/or their affiliates, and any researchers:

- Survey or perform analyses of existing data on the placements of APAs in academic libraries by geographic location, collection type, rank and leadership positions, departments, and position titles, along with other demographic profiles, such as age, gender identities, educational background, and so on. The goal is to ascertain the distribution of APAs in American academic libraries, to assess the recruitment needs, and to plan for succession of APAs in these libraries.

- Survey APA library staff's experience on racial and other discrimination, workplace climate, leadership opportunities and career advancement, career mentoring, and job satisfaction. The results can be used to improve workplace climate and mentoring support for APA library staff.

Conclusion

As APAs are a diverse group, each subgroup has its own distinctive characteristics requiring different approaches in interaction. This book chapter introduces the key differences in each APA subgroup in order to bridge the gap of understanding between non-APA and APA library staff in academic libraries to promote a welcoming work climate for APA academic library staff, with some aspects being applicable to other work settings and/or other ethnic American library staff as well. The author aims to break the stereotype of model minority, so that academic libraries will provide APA library staff with support comparable to that granted to other ethnic American library staff.

In closing, beyond fostering cultural competency to create welcoming workplaces for APA library staff in academic libraries, each institution should ultimately provide them with adequate mentoring support and help them pave the path to leadership to retain these staff in the libraries and in the profession.

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9

Challenges of redesigning staff work space

Wyoma vanDuinkerken and Karen I. MacDonald

Abstract: In today's academic library reality, space is a valuable commodity. Space utilization will change with the trends and demands of higher education. When a library changes the use of space in just one area, it will affect the entire environment and all the employees who work there. If change is unilaterally imposed on library staff, the overall organizational culture can shift to one of distrust, frustration, and anger towards library administration. This shift in organizational culture could eventually lead to organizational failure. By using established frameworks for office space design, library administration can mitigate the chances of organizational failure while still meeting employees' needs for privacy, personal work processes, and teamwork. This chapter discusses the characteristics of openness, density, architectural accessibility, darkness, and social space in office design and provides a planning checklist to aid the redesign process.

Key words: space utilization, space assessment, sociopetal, sociofugal, inclusive planning.

Introduction

Most library renovation or space design projects begin when library administrators repurpose their resources, both space and people, in order to meet the changing needs of patrons. However, no change is made in a vacuum. Like a pebble thrown into still water, small ripples of change

will soon affect the whole pond. When a library changes the use of space in one area, it will have an effect on the entire environment and the employees who work there. For example, administrators generally attempt to maintain existing services and "renovate around" functions that directly affect users' needs, such as reference, circulation, shelving and interlibrary loan. Not only are workflows disrupted, but materials, workspace and job functions must be relocated, either temporarily or permanently. When library employees perceive that their workspace is "invaded" or interpersonal contact among colleagues and patrons is affected, resistance to change caused by the renovations may begin to develop. The overall organizational culture can shift to one of distrust, frustration, and anger towards library administration. This shift in organizational culture could eventually lead to failure. To prevent or minimize the likelihood of failure, library administration must consider and mitigate the impact projects have on library employees and their workspace. Using established frameworks for assessing office space design,[1] this chapter discusses how implementation of these concepts can improve the success of renovation projects. Also, based on this discussion, a checklist is provided in the Appendix to assist in the redesign process.

Literature review

Academic libraries must respond to shifting trends in higher education. Some trends, such as the increase in demand for 24 hours a day, seven days a week access to the library and its information resources, have led libraries to purchase and integrate electronic material and digital services, such as virtual reference, into their traditional services. However, the problem with integrating these new services is twofold. Not only do libraries need more skilled support staff members to administer these digital services, but this type of work is done behind the scenes, making the library less visible on the academic campus. Few students or teaching faculty, for example, realize that access to the full text links within Google Scholar is being delivered and maintained by the library staff of their academic institution. Regardless of user perceptions, the demand for digital information resources has required libraries to reorganize staff and create new "electronic units."

The shift towards collaborative learning experiences within the classroom is another example of an educational trend that has had an impact on the

academic library. Students now look to the academic library for collaborative workspace. Library administrators are addressing this trend by reducing the traditional stack space for printed materials and converting this space into additional group study areas. Other libraries have moved library staff from closed offices to open, dense work environments in order to convert the office spaces into closed group study space.

In response to these trends, academic libraries are restructuring organizations so that the work environment and staff employment conditions are changed.[2] No longer is the print library collection the most important resource within the library building, nor is it the space itself. Rather, it is *the people* who work behind the scenes managing the technological demands of the patrons who are the most important resource a library possesses.[3] Library personnel can be the most important element in the success or failure of changes in the library. As a result, academic library administrators need to assess how their environments meet not just the social, physical, psychological, and behavioral needs of the library patrons but also those of the staff working within the library. The literature supports this assessment by encouraging library administrators to maintain and foster workplaces that support increasing technological and organizational changes while at the same time meeting the employees' needs for privacy, personal work processes, and teamwork.[4]

With the increase in the recognition of the importance of academic library staff, employee job satisfaction is critical. Job satisfaction is related to an employee's commitment to the organization and an increase in turnover.[5] As early as the 1990s, Denka reported that the work environment within many organizations had become a survival camp where employee morale, output, organizational efficiency, and absenteeism had run amuck.[6] The reason for this is that managers fail to understand the cultural environment which is the unifying force of the organization.[7] It is important that library administrators deal with the emotions of the change recipients in order to ward off resistance to change.[8]

Lawler and Worley believe that office designs are physical portrayals of an organization's culture, but it is only recently that office design and its material symbols have been recognized as influencing, both negatively and positively, organizational change.[9] The reason for this reaction is that "design of a physical place influences the mental state of the people in that space . . . everyone perceives the world around them slightly differently, but people respond to that world in consistent ways."[10]

Space assessments

A key factor in employees' resistance to organizational space change is related to how the change affects interpersonal contact between the employees.[11] Certain office characteristics support and assist interpersonal contact, while other office characteristics impede it. It is believed that this support, or lack of support, for interpersonal contact is what influences staff members to react negatively or positively to their office environment.[12] According to Oldham and Rotchford, there are four general office characteristics that can influence the amount of interpersonal contact among employees. These characteristics are: openness, density, architectural accessibility, and darkness.[13]

Openness

Openness refers to the unrestricted area of open office space and is described as the ratio of total square footage of the office space to the total length of its interior walls and partitions.[14] This means that, if two offices had the same square footage, the office with the lower number of interior boundaries would be considered more open than the office with the greater number of walls and partitions (see Figure 9.1).[15]

Today, open office designs are the most implemented office layout in US libraries.[16] This trend developed because managers believe that open office design fosters communication and heightens workplace social interactions.[17] Managers also favor the open office design because they believe that it allows flexibility of space and low cost of operation.[18] However, other studies have shown that open office designs create

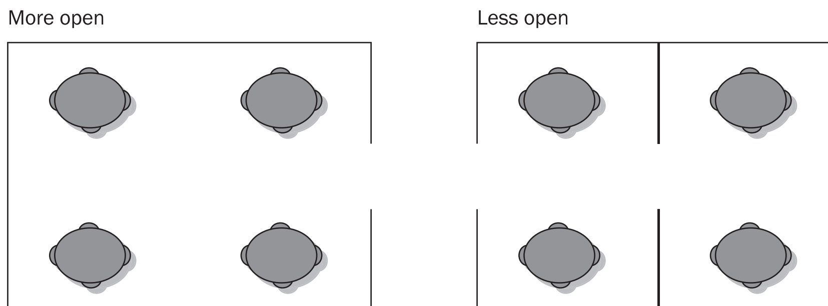


Figure 9.1 **Openness**

inefficiencies within the unit because they hinder communication with supervisors[19] and other members of the employees' team.[20] As a result, this creates an environment where there are fewer chances among the staff to build an office friendship, thereby decreasing the potential for bonds between team members.[21] Brookes and Kaplan reported that these problems have resulted in a decrease in office efficiency.[22]

In academic libraries, certain similar job functions lend themselves to open office space design, and others do not. As a rule of thumb, job functions which are symbiotic, such as acquisitions and cataloging, work well together in an open office design space, as do Interlibrary Loan and Circulation. When one department's workflow feeds into another's, often there is an understanding in each department of what the other does and how they perform job functions. Because of this understanding, it is easier for the two teams to communicate and work together to address conflict. Other departments, such as Interlibrary Loan and Reference, do not have a close, symbiotic workflow relationship with one another. Generally, ILL Departments use scanners, printers, and faxes to process requests, and these machines can produce a substantial amount of noise. Reference, on the other hand, focuses on the interview and listening to user needs. Privacy near the service area allows the reference librarian to focus on the patron, whether online or in person, and noise levels must be kept at a minimum. Since each department has little understanding of what the other department is doing, communication is minimal. Without forming a communication bond, each department can develop a misunderstanding of the other department's workflows. This misunderstanding can lead to distrust and conflict between the two teams.

Density

The second influence on interpersonal contact among employees is density.[23] Related to openness, density (sometimes referred to as social density) refers to the number of square feet available to an employee in their office environment.[24] Workspace is considered dense if there are a large number of employees working together in a small space. According to several studies, "density is positively correlated with turnover intentions and negatively related to individuals' job satisfaction and task performance."[25] Individuals in work areas with high social density feel more crowded.[26] Crowding and the sense of loss of privacy contribute to job dissatisfaction because some employees begin to feel frustrated with their inability to focus on their job functions to complete assignments.

This frustration can cause them to become angry with their job environment and position. As a defense mechanism, these employees often internalize their anger and cut off communication with their co-workers.

Architectural accessibility

Architectural accessibility also influences the amount of interpersonal contact among employees.[27] Architectural accessibility refers to an employee's individual workspace and its susceptibility to outside disturbances, including noise. The fewer boundaries, such as walls, partitions, and doors, surrounding an individual's workspace, the more architecturally accessible it is. An architecturally accessible workspace is open to behavioral, visual, and noise intrusions. A workspace that is inaccessible provides the employee with a physical boundary that limits noise and distractions (see Figure 9.2).

A study of 2000 office workers from 58 diverse locations reported that 54 percent of these office workers were regularly disturbed by the office noise around their work area. Noises were defined as telephones, people talking, ventilation systems, piped-in music, and office equipment. These employees added that, when these external noises were combined, their environmental satisfaction and job satisfaction decreased.[28] Despite these findings, many academic library administrators continue to design open office areas for their staff, primarily in the belief that open office designs increase employee interaction and communication, which leads to greater productivity, but this is incorrect. The reason for this, according to Sundstrom, is that, for some employees, group interaction and communication can surpass an ideal level. Once this level is exceeded, the

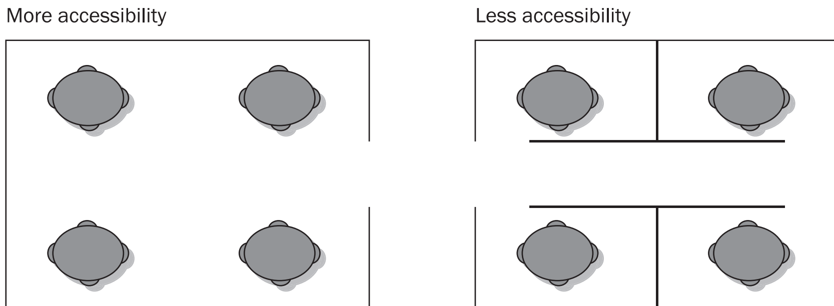


Figure 9.2 **Architectural accessibility**

employee can begin to feel that he/she is crowded, leading to a decrease in job satisfaction and performance.[29]

In order to balance the behavioral, visual, and noise intrusions in a workspace, academic library administrators can use architectural tools, such as cubicle walls, and placement of desks to limit or increase the accessibility of an employee. For example, cubicle walls can be a clear line of demarcation between employees, making them less accessible to outside contact while giving them a sense of privacy and reducing distractions and noise. The height of the cubicle wall can also play a role in accessibility. If the cubicle wall is three feet high, it does place a clear line of separation between work areas but does not give the library employee the sense of privacy they may crave, nor does it reduce noise levels. Desk placement can also give the illusion of privacy to an employee. If two desks are placed together so that two employees are facing each other in a 200 square foot room, then both employees will have the perception that they do not have any privacy. Both will feel that they are subject to outside disturbances (each other) and, as a result, their communication patterns will change. However, if the desks are placed apart, so that the employees do not face one another, both employees will feel that their workspace is less accessible, which gives the illusion of providing each employee with a boundary.

Darkness

Darkness in the work environment also influences the amount of interpersonal contact among employees.[30] Darkness refers both to low illumination within an office space and to dark walls. Studies have shown that employees consider dark rooms to be smaller, with less available space, compared with same-sized rooms that have more light.[31] A dark office environment causes people to feel crowded and leads them to report a general sense of uneasiness. In darker environments, other senses, such as hearing, become more sensitive. Consequently, employees begin to hear more noise and are more alert to distractions in the office environment. When interrupted suddenly, they become overstimulated and are easily startled.[32] As a result, library employees become uneasy and stressed. This often results in ineffective interpersonal contact among employees.

Darkness in the work environment is possibly the easiest factor to modify. However, darkness is a perception. Each employee perceives space differently, and there is the potential for disagreement. For example,

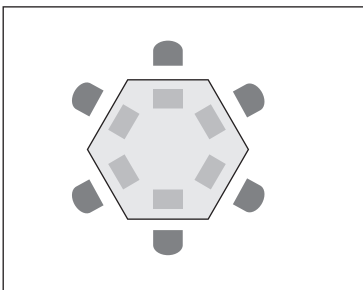
in most academic libraries, the technical services work environment is an open office space design. Employees working in this environment often share overhead lights. Problems arise when one employee prefers to have the overhead lights turned off because their workspace is too bright while the adjacent employee wants the lights on because they feel their workspace is too dark. The astute administrator can avoid this problem by offering employees the option of their own individual light sources. Traditional desk lamps on each desk or workspace would allow each employee to control their own environment.

Social engagement

In addition to the workspace characteristics of openness, density, architectural accessibility, and darkness, library administrators should consider the impact of the "sociofugal" and "sociopetal" aspects of office design. According to Osmond, sociofugal office designs tend to keep employees apart, discouraging social contact. In contrast, sociopetal office designs foster communication and interpersonal relationships between members of a team.[33] One way to achieve the desired environment is through the use of furniture placement. Sociopetal furniture configuration places the furniture so that employees are facing one another. On the other hand, sociofugal furniture configuration discourages personal interaction, which allows for individual space requirements (see Figure 9.3).

One important point that administrators need to keep in mind is the placement of social zones. Developing an open space helps limit the number of interior boundaries in the office space as a whole. Not only does a social space allow people to interact with one another informally,

Sociopetal seating



Sociofugal seating

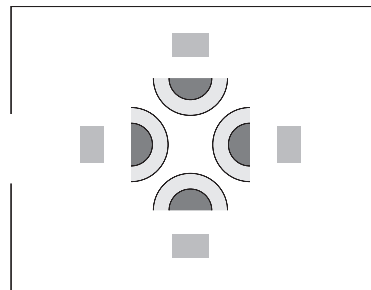


Figure 9.3 **Social engagement**

but it creates an environment that seems less dense by creating open social areas for people to meet and talk outside their individual work area or meeting rooms.[34] Social zones need to be placed at a distance from those employees who dislike noise or prefer privacy. Sociopetal and sociofugal concepts should also be applied to individual workspaces. In the offices, small tables with side chairs can be added to encourage communication. If the space limitations do not permit this, one or two visitor chairs in the office can be included.

Depending on the needs of a particular work group, an administrator can use sociofugal and sociopetal aspects of office design to influence the amount of interpersonal contact among library employees. In areas where the office design is dense with employees, such as technical services departments, including a sociofugal social space will break up the feeling of density. However, in reference departments, sociopetal design elements would allow the reference staff relative privacy to work with individual patrons.

Planning for space changes

Renovation or space redesign decisions are usually implemented after the library performs a "needs assessment" based on its academic mission and the role the library plays in the larger academic institution. However, since each academic library has different organizational missions, "it is difficult to uncover uniform or definitive conclusions about how space design supports libraries in their provision of services."[35]

It is important to note that, while "people support what they help create," not everyone will support the change.[36] Empowering employees throughout the needs assessment process allows them more autonomy over their work area. As a result, employees are more likely to feel a part of the change and not as if change had been imposed on them.

Interviews

As a first step to space redesign, the academic library administrators should meet with every employee and ask the following questions:

- What is your job function?
- How do you do your job now?
- How would you like to do your job?
- Describe your current work environment.

During these discussions, administrators need to understand how employees might be affected by the four general office characteristics (openness, density, architectural accessibility, and darkness) mentioned above. It is important to recognize that every employee is an individual who performs different tasks. Even those who do similar tasks, like cataloging, do not always like to work in the same type of environment. Some catalogers, for example, might prefer quiet while others prefer a little more noise when they are working. Some reference librarians might prefer working as a collaborative team, while others may feel it is important to offer their patrons privacy for consultations. If managers fail to take these individual needs into consideration, employees will become unhappy, which will affect productivity. It is important to offer employees a work environment with a variety of spaces that can meet individual needs.

Observation

The second step is to observe the employees over a period of time. Observation can tell an administrator even more about their employees' workloads and processes. Observation may explain why employee A might need more light while employee B prefers less light to perform their assigned tasks. During the observation stage, administrators should also study the tools the employees use. By noting the noise from the tools (such as photocopiers) and the frequency of use, the astute administrator can begin planning for noise management in the new space.

Inclusive planning

The third step in workspace redesign is comprehensive planning. At this point, the administrator, working with the employees, uses all the previously collected information to physically draw out the new work area, which should have both sociofugal and sociopetal components to address the general characteristics of openness, density, architectural accessibility, and darkness.

The space should consist of both open and private workspaces. If some employees dislike isolation, keep their workspaces closer to the social areas. For those employees who are distracted easily, and would prefer not to witness this type of office activity, assign them to workspaces farther away. Office furniture, such as desk lamps, should be chosen and placed in the drawings of the employees' workspaces. Furniture placement

is primary when developing the floor plan drawings. For example, most people are uncomfortable working with their back facing the door. They can be easily startled when co-workers enter their space. In addition to furniture placement, wall and furniture colors need to be chosen carefully, keeping in mind that color will have an impact on the feeling of darkness and space in an office area. Using light-colored office furniture can contribute to a sense of spaciousness.

Implementation

Unfortunately, library administrators frequently tend to make the mistake of announcing the need for a change and then moving directly to implementation, without acting on the three critical processes of interviews, observation, and inclusive planning. If these steps are overlooked, library administrators will "not sufficiently consider their organization's work environment which causes them to neglect key variables in the fundamental structure of their organization."[37] Only when the previous steps are completed should the academic library administrator move to implement the desired change.

Implementing the plan is not easy. When changing space in one area of the library, consider the effect this change will have on the entire building. Disruptions are caused when materials, equipment, and functions are moved. Library administrators must coordinate events so that they happen in the most efficient sequence. For example, in any workspace, computers need to be installed properly. To do that, network administrators need to check each port in the new office space. However, if the network administrators arrive on the scene before the computers are moved, everyone involved will just be frustrated at the waste of time and effort.

Finally, careful consideration should be given to the timing of actual changes; most academic libraries do the majority of their large "noisy" projects during down time in the library, such as weekends, summer vacation, or over the winter holidays. Implementing change during these times minimizes the negative impact the process can have on both library patrons and employees' usual work processes.

Assessment

The final step in the workspace change process should not be overlooked. A library administrator needs to assess the new work area after

employees have worked in the environment for a while. This assessment involves speaking to the employees to see if their environment is working for them and to see if anything needs to be adjusted. Absentee rates and production measures should be checked for clues to employee satisfaction.

Conclusion

According to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a "library facility should be well planned; it should provide secure and adequate space, conducive to study and research with suitable environmental conditions for its services, personnel, resources, and collections."[38] However, in today's academic library reality, space is a valuable commodity. Changes need to be designed and implemented judiciously. While it is important to meet the demands of patrons, it is essential that library administrators consider the needs of library staff and include them in the planning process. If change is unilaterally imposed on library staff, the overall organizational culture can shift to one of distrust, frustration, and anger toward library administration. This shift in organizational culture could eventually lead to organizational failure. However, by including employees in the process of analyzing workflows and planning the desired change, managers get the added insight and creativity of experienced employees. By including employees in the design decisions, managers provide employees with a sense of ownership and control over their environment. This, in turn, leads to increased employee satisfaction and greater likelihood of success in the change initiative.

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Appendix: Workspace needs assessment and renovation checklist

Interview every employee

✓ What is your job function?
✓ How do you do your job now?
✓ How would you like to do your job?
✓ Describe your current work environment.

Observe employees and work flows

✓ What job functions will occur in this area?
✓ What and how many work flows will be operating at the same time in the space?
✓ Is the workflow symbiotic between all affected departments?
✓ How important is communication between the departments?
✓ Will the work performed in the environment be team based or individual based?

Inclusive planning

Consider design elements: openness, density, architectural accessibility, darkness

- If work is team based, is a social work area needed?
- If work is individually based, how much privacy is required?
- How many employees will be working in the area?
- What machines or equipment are necessary? Where should they be placed?
- Is it important to minimize noise or maximize convenience?
- Can cubicle walls be used in the work area? What height should the walls be?
- How much communication is required between individuals? Departments?

- Is there enough light? Is individual lighting necessary?
- How should furniture be arranged?
- Do employees have a sense of control over individual workspaces?

Social engagement: sociopetal and sociofugal design

- Is there space to create social areas within the work environment?
- What sociopetal design elements are needed?
- What sociofugal design elements are needed?

Implementation

- When should actual implementation take place?
- How will implementation impact work flow? Can this be minimized?
- Who needs to be involved with implementation?
- Can various requirements be sequenced effectively?

Assessment

- Is the space redesign working? Can it function better?
- Are library staff pleased with the changes?
- How can the success or failure of this change be objectively measured?

10

All integration is local: merging cultures in an academic library

Elizabeth J. Weisbrod

Abstract: This paper provides an overview of the challenges faced when a traditional library department merges with an information technology unit. Auburn University Libraries recently combined the Media and Digital Resource Laboratory, an information technology support service, with the Microforms and Government Documents unit, a traditional library unit. The two service points brought different cultures, skills, and expectations to the merger. Although both groups knew and liked each other, differing approaches to learning and training created unexpected problems. Understanding each group's different cultures and expectations might have prevented misunderstandings and made the transition smoother.

Key words: merging departments, merging cultures, information commons, information technology, traditional library unit.

Introduction

In the summer of 2011, two very different units in the Auburn University Libraries merged. The Microforms and Government Documents unit, a traditional library service point, and the Media and Digital Research Lab (MDRL), a multimedia production lab, moved into a shared space. While the two groups were well acquainted with each other and shared a common desire to serve library users, their cultures, work patterns, backgrounds, and, indeed, missions differed radically. Learning to work

with new materials, developing new procedures, and adopting a new, shared approach proved challenging to all. The lessons learned from the merger illustrate some of the difficulties when two dissimilar cultures merge and also some of the benefits of bringing together two groups that serve library users in different ways.

Literature review

The combination of traditional library services and information technology (IT) in academic institutions is the subject of many articles. The literature falls primarily into two categories: merging the library with the campus IT department to create a new "information resources" division, and combining IT services with reference services in an Information Commons setting.

Academic institutions began merging libraries and information technology centers in the 1980s. Hirshon notes that, with the increased availability of online information and the convergence of information and technology, combining the two units presented an appealing opportunity for some institutions.[1] Although there is a significant amount of literature on integrating IT centers and libraries, Renaud writes that these mergers still remain a relatively rare occurrence[2] and occur predominately in private liberal arts colleges, possibly because they "possess attributes of scale and flexibility that make mergers possible."[3] Ferguson et al. cite the benefits of merging departments as improved service, fewer service points, currency in design of new services, possible budgetary efficiencies, greater organization flexibility, and the synergy created between departments to better and more creatively serve the needs of the institution.[4]

As Ferguson and Metz write, "All integration is local."[5] There is no one model for integrating IT and library services. Some institutions have completely integrated units, and others have divisions where library and technology personnel remain separate in their job duties and do not engage in cross-training. How integrations are organized depends on such factors as organizational cultures, personalities, and organizational history, as noted by Ferguson and Metz.[6] They go on to write that merged organizations should "[f]ind a third space beyond computing and libraries. The new organization should be galvanized by a vision and values that draw on the best of both previous organizations, help each to identify with the other, and motivate all to participate in building something new that would not have been likely otherwise."[7]

Information commons (IC) or learning commons (LC) are an example of another sort of library merger, usually including some sort of IT support. Bailey and Tierney define an information commons as "a model for information service delivery, offering students integrated access to electronic information resources, multimedia, print resources, and services."[8] IC and LC often combine traditional library services such as reference and information retrieval with writing centers, learning support centers, and IT and media production resources, as noted by Bailey and Tierney.[9] Beagle argues that IT and media support services are an essential part of IC, as they support the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) information literacy competency standards by using technology to help users learn to present information effectively.[10]

Staffing models in information commons also come in many different configurations. Some have a single service point model, typically combining reference and technology support, while others have multiple service points. Rumble notes that the reasons for each are dependent on such factors as the physical space, the service partners in the commons, and philosophical differences about staffing.[11] Bell and Shank argue for a "blended librarian," defined as an "academic librarian who combines the traditional skill set of librarianship with the information technologist's hardware/software skills, and the instructional or educational designer's ability to apply technology appropriately in the teaching-learning process."[12] Boyd, on the other hand, suggests that "[r]ather than attempt a uniform set of skills for all Information Commons staff, it might be deemed better to identify the resident experts in the Information Commons who are particularly adept in particular areas and create technical support levels or system of referrals."[13]

Boyd writes that the "work of an Information Commons has many and varied dimensions. The library staff best suited for this innovative and ever-changing work must likewise be multi-dimensional."[14] He goes on to write that "the ideal candidate for an Information Commons will bring pertinent and current information about the use of technology in a library setting, can demonstrate skills associated with information retrieval, collection and presentation, has the native ability to grasp new concepts and materials quickly and exhibits the aptitude and attitude that is needed to survive, and thrive, in a constantly changing information environment."[15] Since staffing in IC may consist of a mix of librarians, support staff, IT workers, and student workers, a variety of training strategies are used. Bailey and Tierney, in their survey of information commons in academic libraries, report that training may take the form of classes, online tutorials, orientation sessions, or weekly meetings and

usually covers both library and technology procedures.[16] Boyd notes that "agreeing to core competencies for Information Commons staff can prove to be no easy exercise requiring a skillful combination of insight and diplomacy to ensure general acceptance."[17] He goes on to suggest that *all* library employees should be trained in both service and technology competencies, and hiring, training, and staff performance appraisals should be based on the qualities demonstrated by successful IC personnel.[18]

When traditional library services and IT services combine, either to form a new academic division or as part of an IC, two different cultures merge as well. IT and library personnel, although both having customer service as a goal, may have differing organizational cultures. Ferguson and Metz give an overview of library and IT organizational cultures. They point out that, although librarians share a common professional preparation, IT personnel do not necessarily share a similar academic or professional background, and technical expertise is more important in their area than academic credentials.[19] Guzman and Stanton posit that IT workers have a "distinctive occupational culture that crosses the boundaries of the organizations where these people work."[20] They cite such elements as a high value of technical knowledge, a need for constant self re-education, use of IT in leisure time, a lack of formal work rules, and feelings of superiority relative to the ordinary IT user.[21] McKinstry and McCracken write that "[c]ommunication between the computing and library culture is often a challenge. Both cultures *think* that they are communicating, but styles and timing are often very different."[22] They report that, at their combined reference and technology desk, the library had different expectations of work behaviors and interactions with patrons than the technology students exhibited and, while they shared a desk, they did not share much of each other's worlds. The planning sessions for the merger involved more about the physical layout of the desk than concerns each side had about the other party.[23]

To prevent misunderstandings, Walters and Van Gordon suggest that developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between IT and library units can "set expectations, foster cooperation, delineate the governance structure of the partnership, and ensure the successful delivery of services."[24] They describe the successful execution of an MOU between library and IT services in the University of Indiana's Information Commons. The MOU model has been extended to several other projects, and is now considered a standard part of any partnership between the library and other university units.[25]

Case study

Auburn University Libraries is an Association of Research Libraries institution with holdings of over three million volumes. Auburn is a land-grant institution with 1300 faculty and over 25,000 students, of whom 20,000 are undergraduates and 5000 are graduate students. The collections of the Libraries are primarily housed in one central building, the Ralph Brown Draughon Library. The Libraries have their own Systems department which maintains the Libraries' staff computers, online public access catalog, website, and other technology, and is separate from the campus Office of Information Technology.

The Media and Digital Resource Laboratory was established in 2004 to help Auburn University students and faculty create and use multimedia materials in their class assignments, projects, and scholarly research. The Lab provides state-of-the-art multimedia hardware and software along with on-site technical expertise to assist in using these resources. The lab has 36 workstations (18 Windows systems and 18 Mac systems) along with high-end audio and video editing capabilities, and large-format printing. The media collection (CDs, DVDs, VHS tapes, and audiobooks) also resides in the Lab. The MDRL staff, administratively part of the Systems department and classed as administrative professionals, consist of four full-time employees with differing technical and design backgrounds, supported by eight to ten student employees from many different academic areas.

The Microforms and Government Documents Unit administers a selective depository library collection of over a million volumes, a microform collection of 4.1 million pieces, and a map collection of 185,000 maps. The unit, administratively part of the Reference department, consists of one tenure-track librarian and three full-time support staff, along with three to four student workers.

When the merger was first discussed, the library administration and the staff in the MDRL and documents unit believed that the union of the two units would be an easy one. Relations between the two groups had always been collegial. They had collaborated on several projects for the library, some of the documents staff had experience working in the lab, and the head of the MDRL had formerly worked in the documents unit with the map collection. Both units had a relaxed, easy-going atmosphere and a strong customer service orientation. Based on this past experience, neither group expected any problems combining the two units.

Despite their warm relationship, though, merging the two departments was not always a smooth process. Neither the documents librarian nor

the head of the MDRL realized how different the organizational cultures of the two groups were. If the differences in attitude and learning styles had been understood before the merger, planning, especially for training, might have been approached differently.

The idea for a merger began in January 2011, when the library initiated planning for a new learning commons. A learning commons had previously been constructed on the second floor of the Ralph Brown Draughon Library in 2008, and was considered a great success, combining the Reference Desk, a writing center, a tutoring center, and an Office of Information Technology help desk. The Media and Digital Resource Lab, although located on the first floor and not contiguous to the Learning Commons, is an essential part of the Commons, providing hardware and software support for multimedia computer applications.

The Libraries were eager to extend the learning commons concept to other areas of the library. The area that housed the Microforms and Government Documents unit, adjacent to the MDRL on the first floor of the library, presented an ideal space for a new commons area. The unit, consisting of four staff offices, a service point for government documents and microforms, and a sizeable collection of microforms, maps, and government documents, would have to be moved. A new location was found in the former Cataloging offices, which had been left vacant after the Cataloging and Acquisitions Departments combined. The offices, separated by a wall from the MDRL, provided almost the perfect amount of space for the microforms, maps, and staff offices. The libraries took down the wall, expanded the Lab, and merged the MDRL and the Microforms and Government Documents unit.

The head of the MDRL drew up plans for the move in conjunction with the depository coordinator and the building manager. New staff cubicles were ordered and constructed and the microforms and maps were moved to the new area. Some government documents stayed on open shelves on the first floor, adjacent to the new commons area, while several ranges of documents were moved to closed stacks. In August 2011, the new Study Commons opened and the MDRL and the Microforms and Government Documents unit opened as a combined service point.

The two units had very different functions and structures. The documents unit was a traditional library division, focused on helping users find information in any format. The unit had a strong service tradition and many years of experience in both cataloging and reference service for government documents and microforms. The MDRL staff, on the other hand, focused on helping students and faculty create projects

using the multimedia hardware and software in the Lab. Their mission was to assist users with technology, not to help patrons find information.

Much of the planning for the organizational structure was left up to the documents librarian and the head of the MDRL. No overall director of the two groups was designated, and the two groups would "cohabit" rather than truly merge. Full-time staff would remain administratively separate, while student workers would be shared equally between the two units, with one of the MDRL full-time staff serving as student supervisor. Both MDRL and Documents personnel would staff a common help desk. The documents librarian, the supervisor of the MDRL, and the library administration all believed that the best service model would require that everyone who staffed the help desk have a basic knowledge of everything in the lab. This meant that the documents staff would learn to assist users with basic design and printing tasks using software such as Microsoft Office and the Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, and Acrobat) along with document scanning and large format printing using both PC and Mac computers. MDRL staff would learn to locate microforms, government documents, and maps and use the microform readers. Complex questions would be referred to a specialist in the appropriate unit.

The units valued very different skills. While the documents staff believed reference skills, customer service skills, and knowledge of the libraries' collections, especially government documents and microforms, to be essential, they were much less interested in technical matters. A basic knowledge of word processing and spreadsheets covered most needs, and anything more involved simply required an e-mail to the Systems department. There was very little off-hours exploration of software or computers, and, other than an occasional game of solitaire, no gaming. The MDRL staff and students, on the other hand, thrived on learning new technical skills, knowing about the latest gadgets, and playing computer games. Helping users find information and working with their research needs was simply not a requirement of their jobs, and the libraries' collections, for the most part, held little interest for them. Comments about the microform collection, such as "Why isn't all of this online already?" "Who uses this stuff anyway?" and "We could just scan all of the microforms and then get rid of them," while said in jest, did demonstrate that the MDRL staff were coming from a very different place than the documents staff.

The documents staff, although not Luddites by any means, had only basic experience with any of the software in the MDRL. Their previous experience working in the lab had been brief and over two years before (a

lifetime ago in computer years), and the prospect of working with the large format printers, sophisticated design projects, and constantly changing technology instilled a deep fear, bordering on panic, in the documents staff. The MDRL staff, on the other hand, understood that they would have new job duties but figured they could pick up any needed skills on the job.

Before the merger, the two groups discussed plans for training. The documents librarian believed training was essential as most of the MDRL staff and students had little experience answering “library”-type questions, and the documents staff did not feel confident about helping users with computer questions. The documents librarian suggested bringing all of the students and staff together for an introductory training session, but the session never materialized. Meanwhile, requests for more formal training for the documents staff went, for the most part, unanswered. A fundamental difference between the two groups began to emerge. While the documents staff preferred a more structured training program, the MDRL staff believed that learning on the job was the best method. By the beginning of the fall semester, no training plan had yet been agreed upon.

When the combined help desk opened, MDRL staff gave the documents staff and students a quick overview of the lab and the basics of setting up and printing documents, and the documents staff walked the MDRL staff and students through the collections. Since no formal training plan had been created, everyone was supposed to learn on the job. The documents staff began working in the mornings at the help desk when there were few customers, a situation that meant less stress, but also less opportunity to practice in a real-life situation. Since both an MDRL and a documents person always staffed the help desk, it was easy for documents staff to let the more knowledgeable workers assist users with computer questions. Similarly, MDRL workers tended to let documents staff handle the microforms and documents questions and gained little experience in locating microforms or documents.

By the beginning of October, instead of one staff familiar with everything in the MDRL, there were still two separate groups with little knowledge of each other’s responsibilities. Many of the MDRL staff and students were not much more familiar with documents, maps, and microforms than they had been two months earlier, and the documents staff still had only a cursory knowledge of the required software and technology.

With the training stalled, or at least proceeding very slowly, a different approach needed to be taken. The documents staff began working hours when the lab was busier, providing more opportunity for practice. Since users commonly requested help with tasks such as printing posters and using scanners, documents staff went to workstations in the lab every day

and completed projects using these skills on both a Mac and a PC. Working on their own projects allowed staff to learn basic procedures in a non-stressful environment, and after a short time documents staff began to feel more confident in helping users with common projects.

The MDRL staff and students also needed a better training approach. The students required a training method with which they could learn independently during free periods on the desk. Developing a web-based training program would have been very appealing to the students but was beyond the documents librarian's skills and available time. So, training proceeded in "retro" fashion – on paper. Every week, the documents librarian prepared four sample user questions, designed to take less than an hour, about the microforms, media, maps, and documents collections in the lab. All students and staff (including the documents staff) were encouraged to work through the questions. Students and staff could collaborate with each other or work on their own. The questions were designed to teach how to locate materials, not how to answer reference questions (those could be referred to the documents librarian, or to the reference desk), and the process of finding the answer was as important as getting the right answer. After the students completed the sheets, a documents staff member met with each student and went through the questions.

Reactions to the questions varied. The documents staff looked forward to the questions every week and completed them immediately. The full-time MDRL staff occasionally worked through the questions, acknowledging the usefulness of the exercise (at least for the students). The students, for the most part, completed the sheets. Although complaints surfaced about the question sheets, students soon began to feel to more confident about answering users' questions, both because their knowledge of the collections was greater and because they had begun to learn how to approach users' inquiries.

Although neither the documents nor MDRL staff had completely mastered their new job duties by the end of the semester, significant progress had been made. Most importantly, staff began to accept that their jobs had expanded to include new duties that they had never expected to be assigned.

Conclusion

Was the combining of the two units a success? The merger is only a few months old, and, while a few results can be noted, a longer time frame will be needed to truly evaluate the results of the merger. One objective

has been achieved – everyone working in the lab is beginning to have a basic knowledge of both sides of the house. All staff can assist users with everyday computer projects as well as locate documents, microforms, and maps. Reaching this point has not been an easy process, but everyone is beginning to consider both technology and library questions as part of their job. For the documents staff, learning to use new technology has allowed them to expand their skills. Information technology is always changing and they have had to adopt some of the continuous self-education attitude of the IT worker. While none of the documents staff have achieved "blended librarian" status yet, knowing more about technology has certainly made the staff more aware of possibilities and less afraid of learning new technologies. The MDRL staff have developed new skills as well. The MDRL has always been a public-service unit, but until the merger the staff were not involved in "traditional" library services. MDRL students and staff have become more acquainted with the libraries' collections and how to help users find information in addition to assisting with computer projects. Future plans include continuing to utilize the sample question approach to training, but as a computer application, thanks to the skills of the MDRL staff. The application will have technology questions along with microforms and documents questions and will be used to train new student workers.

Before the merger, considerable time was spent on matters such as the layout and design of the space and much less on how the two groups would learn their new jobs and work together at the help desk. When working with two disparate groups such as a traditional library unit and an IT unit, a document similar to an MOU, as described by Walters and Van Gordon,[26] may make the transition easier. Although an MOU is not usually written within an organization, establishing basic policies and "getting it in writing" might have been a good way to begin, especially between two groups who had formerly had very different responsibilities. An MOU-like document would have established responsibilities for each party, the management of the combined space, and a method for resolving conflicts. No matter how well two groups seem to get along prior to a partnership, sharing a space and service responsibilities can be fraught with difficulties. A document agreed to by both parties and their respective department heads could establish ground rules and prevent conflicts later.

As said earlier, "All integration is local." Both parties continue to adjust to each other and evolve in their relationships together. Although the process has not always been easy, relations between all personnel have remained cordial, and this has gone a long way to ease tensions between the two groups. By drawing on each group's strengths and

interests, the combined unit hopes to bring out the best in both cultures to create an integrated organization to serve users.

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Promoting and enabling civility in the academic library

Loanne Snavely and Alexia Hudson

Abstract: Civility and a climate of respect enhance quality of life and contribute to a positive workplace culture. Improving civility in the workplace will make any academic library a better place to work. Incivility, whether blatant or subtle, commonplace or infrequent, mars the general workplace climate, impacts on productivity and can even lead to violence, so efforts to promote and enhance civility will improve the climate in an academic library. In this chapter, the civility initiative at Penn State University Libraries will be shared, along with suggestions for creating civility programming in academic libraries.

Key words: civility, diversity, respect, impact of incivility, civility statement, climate survey.

Introduction

Since ancient times, a civil society has been upheld as an ideal, and civility continues to be considered a component of a positive quality of life. Civility and a climate of respect contribute to an excellent academic library workplace culture and environment. Those who come to work at the Penn State University Libraries from other places often comment on the positive atmosphere and overall supportive environment they find there. Three locally developed library climate surveys taken over a period of more than ten years have shown an improvement over time towards an increasingly positive work environment in the libraries. In each of the

climate surveys, the libraries saw improvement, and some long-time administrators and employees have noted huge improvements over the years.

The broader issues of civility and incivility

> *"We have a choice about how we behave, and that means we have the choice to opt for civility and grace." Dwight Currie*

The literature's treatment of civility and incivility runs the gamut from anecdotal to quantitative studies anchored by large samples. A broad review was conducted by the authors from 1996 through December 2011 to determine variances in the discourse as America ended one century and moved into another. However, the majority of the materials reviewed span from 2007 to the present day, to ensure that culturally appropriate terminologies and accepted norms are reflected.

It is also noteworthy that, during this time period, a rapidly changing technological environment was coupled with increasing attention to workplace age, racial, cultural, and sexual orientation diversity in America, all of which have been identified as possible causes for modern-day incivility. Other major pressure points leading to incivility in the American workplace have been identified as urban overcrowding, sleep deprivation, the decline of family life and sense of community, and so-called "affluenza" (defined as an addiction to consumption driven by a desire to make more money to acquire the accoutrements of exhibiting a successful lifestyle).[1] Workplace bullying and incivility are often treated in the literature synonymously. The reality is that workplace bullying is considered an escalation in incivility.[2] Workplace bullying is considered more strategic and threatening over an extended period of time and is usually directed at a specific individual. This is in contrast to someone who perpetrates occasional incivility but tends to be more "democratic" in his or her behavior towards others. The psychological and sociological communities appear to agree on workplace incivility as "low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. . ."[3]

There is an emerging group of studies within the organizational behavior field that examines incivility's impact on workplace productivity.[4] The real emotional and financial impact of incivility on workplace productivity is chronicled frequently. For example, employees who report being subjected to incivility also report a reduction in loyalty to their

place of employment, lost time avoiding those who have perpetrated incivility, and absenteeism.[5] Personal and workgroup incivility can negatively impact an entire workplace in a multitude of ways, such as obnoxious outbursts, grumbling, and general disenchantment.[6] Manifestations of workplace incivility have been identified as causes for mental and physical distress, burnout, poor social interactions, and the replication of uncivil treatment towards others.[7] Without direct and immediate intervention, workplace incivility festers and can potentially escalate into extreme cases of violence.[8]

It is the possibility of workplace violence instigated by incivility that has prompted several explorations within legal studies. One study suggests that gender should be taken into consideration when developing laws on workplace bullying, as male and female responses are usually different. Disproportionally, the perpetrators of overt physical workplace violence are male, whereas women tend to be perpetrators of psychological hazing or less obvious forms of aggression.[9]

In 1996, *US News and World Report* conducted a poll in which 89 percent of respondents indicated that incivility was a serious issue, and 78 percent added that incivility has worsened in the past ten years. This article polled a wide range of individuals in various professions, including police officers, medical professionals, lawyers, and managers. In January 2011, a nationwide survey was conducted to determine Americans' viewpoints on civility. More than 71 percent of adults aged 18–49 surveyed believe that Americans are generally civil towards each other. Nearly seven out of ten adults (69 percent) believe that politicians have a negative influence on how people get along. Interestingly, Americans are divided on how social media (Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites) influence civility. Forty-seven percent think the influence is negative, while 42 percent think it is positive. Over seven in ten Americans (73 percent) think schools have a positive influence on how people get along.

The American Library Association offers four "Key Resources for Promoting Diversity in the Workplace." One of the four is civility, which includes information on the relationship between diversity and civility and the effects civility and incivility have on the work environment:

> If we really think about the goals of diversity, we are seeking a workplace where different perspectives and experiences can be mutually respected and fostered for the betterment of the organization. If we can create a civil environment, we will be better able to cultivate a diverse environment. And if we fail to cultivate a civil environment, all of our diversity efforts will be for naught. To

> put it simply, a polite, courteous and welcoming work environment furthers diversity efforts by creating a workplace where people—all kinds of people—want to contribute to their fullest potential.[10]

While academic libraries stand as a part of the vocal vanguard regarding diversity in the workplace, the literature on workplace civility programming, interventions, or training in libraries is non-existent. A Penn State University Libraries project and educational initiative on empowering individuals to promote tolerance[11] is an earlier effort that was folded into the civility initiatives. This chapter will aid in filling a crucial void by providing strategies to enhance workplace civility against the backdrop of inevitable library transformation.

A commitment to diversity and to civility

Penn State University is committed to diversity and considers one aspect of a successful diverse workplace to be a climate of civility. To acknowledge that commitment, Penn State has a *Framework to Foster Diversity*, which outlines the many aspects of creating a diverse institution. Each college and unit at the university is charged with reporting on how it is addressing the challenges listed in that document. *Challenge 2* of the Framework is: *Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate*.

In addition, the University Libraries' current Strategic Plan has diversity as the fourth (of five) goals. In this commitment to diversity, the first strategy under that goal is: "We will enhance and maintain a welcoming climate that promotes equitable access to information, and have civility and respect for all members of the Penn State community." The first tactic under this goal is: "Conduct periodic surveys to monitor the workplace civility and climate."

Implementing action

The Penn State University Libraries has had an active Diversity Committee for nearly 20 years. This group has provided an impressive array of programming and a variety of initiatives to enhance the workplace. It has also been instrumental in shaping and monitoring our stated goals, developing diversity contributions to the overall strategic planning efforts, encouraging and tracking the libraries' progress on the *Framework to Foster Diversity*, and helping to monitor and propel the Libraries

forward in these areas. The Diversity Committee is responsible for tracking progress towards goals. One initiative has been the development and implementation of the climate surveys to "take the temperature" of our current climate and to track progress along the way. Fostering a climate of civility and respect has been identified as a focus and was originally singled out as an area for attention. At the recommendation of the Diversity Committee, a Civility Team was appointed in spring 2009 and charged by the Libraries' deans to "develop a shared definition of civility, and to promote programming to further improve the climate within the Libraries." The team was further asked "to develop a vision to improve the work climate in the University Libraries. The team's ultimate goal is to build a culture of respect in the Libraries where employees feel valued for their unique contributions to the organization" and "to further investigate issues of civility and rankism identified in longitudinal analysis of three climate studies, to conduct activities with the employees of the University Libraries leading towards a unified definition and understanding of civility and to coordinate programming to highlight the concepts of civility and rankism." The team was comprised of staff and faculty from throughout the Libraries, including representation from individuals working full-time and part-time in a variety of units and from various locations.

The team began work on several fronts. One of the first efforts was to explore ways to construct a civility statement as a grass roots effort representing the thoughts and perspectives of the whole organization. Additional goals included fostering an awareness and expectation of civil behavior, and addressing any issues of incivility that might occur. The Civility Team developed programming designed both to educate library employees and to draw interest to the civility initiative. A series of discussions called "Civility@OurLibraries Discussion Groups" was developed. These brainstorming sessions assisted the planning and sharing of ideas. These sessions were facilitated by representatives from the University's Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment, who provided summaries of the conversations to the Civility Team. In addition, a very brief survey was sent to everyone requesting individuals to list three words that meant "civility" to them, as well as three words that meant "incivility." A Wordle (word map) was created using the words offered in the three-word "civility" survey. This brightly colored image provided a visually striking representation of the many aspects of civility as uniquely defined by our library community (Figure 11.1). Eventually the Civility Wordle was used to create a t-shirt that team members wore to several events and which was later offered more broadly.

Figure 11.1 **The Civility Wordle**

As an additional initiative, the Civility Team selected a number of staff development programs offered by the University's Human Resources Development Center to be offered specifically for the University Libraries on topics related to or supportive of creating a civil work environment.

Creating a statement

The team included all University Libraries faculty and staff in an effort to define and describe civility. Content from discussion groups, surveys (provided as an alternative to attending a group), open forums, and the three-word survey, as well as database literature, Internet, and benchmarking searches to see what other libraries were doing, were all used to create a Civility Statement for the University Libraries. The finalized statement is included in the Appendix.

The Civility Statement was shared with the Libraries' human resources department, the Dean, and the Dean's Library Council, as well as Penn State legal counsel. It was shortened slightly, approved, and placed publicly on the website. The Public Relations and Marketing Department created a poster with both the text of the statement and the Civility

Wordle, which was distributed to all libraries and units. Additional copies were printed on standard-sized paper and distributed widely.

In an effort to highlight the issues related to civility, raise awareness of the issues, and assist us in defining our vision, the Civility Team wished to host a well-known speaker on the topic. After discussions and exploration of various possibilities, and on the high recommendation of one committee member who had heard him speak, Dr Robert Fuller, author of *Dignity for All: How to Create a World Without Rankism* (2008) and *Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank* (2003), was invited to campus to talk about his research. To ensure that as many individuals as possible could take advantage of his visit, a partnership with other units on campus was established to share the cost and to enable Dr Fuller to speak in several venues and to multiple audiences. He spoke three times over two days to faculty and staff in the University Libraries, Information Technology Services, and Penn State Outreach in locations across campus. In addition, the first presentation and discussion was simultaneously broadcast online and also recorded for asynchronous viewing. Dr Fuller applauded the Libraries' efforts and considered them unique and worthy of serving as a model for other libraries and institutions of higher education.

About a month later, while the conversations surrounding Dr Fuller's visit were still resonating, an event called "Conversations with the Deans" was held to discuss the Civility Statement. Having buy-in from our administrators, and having all four of our Associate and Assistant Deans present and actively participating during this very well-attended session, helped facilitate the importance of the message.

Ongoing efforts

After the intensive information-gathering by the team and the official launch of the statement, the Civility Team's work was complete. However, the Diversity Committee later appointed a Civility subgroup to continue to monitor and promote civility initiatives. Current efforts include:

- Meeting with each department and unit in the University Libraries as a follow-up to have a brief discussion about the issues of civility that will eventually include all members of the Libraries' faculty and staff.
- Offering programming at the annual in-service staff development day known as "Discovery Day." Two programs are offered this year,

designed to promote conversation around civility issues and to enhance civility awareness:

- "Incivility in Pop Culture," a program developed by one creative member of the committee, showed and discussed examples of incivility in TV, movies, videos, and current events. The audience was invited to bring examples of incivility in film and media to be added to the discussion. The discussion was so enthusiastic and wide-ranging that not all of the examples could be shown, and requests were received for hosting the program again so that others could attend.
- "Speed Networking" provided a fun opportunity to get to know colleagues who might normally be seen only in passing by spending a few minutes on specific questions before moving on to the next person. It was designed on the "speed dating" idea; participants sat across from another individual for five minutes, had a quick conversation to get acquainted, then rotated to a new partner, and so on. An unexpected aspect of the event was that several library administrators participated, which gave some other participants an opportunity to get to know them on a more casual and personal level than they had in the past.

- Launching a brief survey to assess climate change over the past three years.

Launching a civility initiative in your library

While each library may have its own set of issues and areas for improvement regarding civility, some guidelines are offered here for exploring those unique areas and moving forward to address individualized workplace issues. Following are some tips and strategies for initiating a conversation around civility and creating a civility statement in an academic library.

- Select a team of individuals interested in the topic, committed to a civil workplace, and willing to work to create a civility statement and improved atmosphere appropriate to your particular work environment.
- Charge and empower the group to move forward. Offer administrative support and resources as needed.

- Identify issues and assess the climate – this may be done through surveys, discussions, focus groups, or other methods that are appropriate to get broad input from all members of your library community. If individuals feel uncomfortable speaking publicly, create an anonymous survey to solicit input broadly and assess needs.
- Work with your library's human resources department to examine strategies for sharing information and addressing civility issues.
- Bring in appropriate speakers and other programming to help educate everyone on the issues and the importance of civility.
- Examine statements from other institutions, such as the one in the appendix or the Florida State student Civility Statement.[12] Reflect on what aspects of these statements might suit your unique needs.
- Develop the civility statement after broad input that reflects the concerns at your location. Inclusiveness is essential for success, and the process is as important as the product. A good civility statement should use culturally appropriate language and avoid academic jargon. It should include a strong, positive statement championing dignity for all and a clear definition of civility for your library. It should set clear expectations for civil behavior. It may include examples of civil and uncivil behavior, but keep a balance between brevity and including too much detail that could result in a lengthy document.
- Share a draft, get more input, and revise as appropriate.
- Share the final document with library administration and the human resources department, and work with them to develop a strategy for addressing civility issues and instances of incivility.
- Once the statement is finalized and approved, enlist the support of the public relations office or a graphic designer to make an attractive poster. Print posters and flyers.
- Consider having a "launch" party or event; include an outside speaker and/or ask a prominent member of the administration or staff to speak on civility. Celebrate your commitment to civility in the workplace.
- Distribute posters throughout the library, in staff break areas and common areas and to every work unit. Request that the posters be displayed prominently in each department. Have members of your team visit departments to discuss and roll out the statement.
- Consider sharing your initiative with others across campus. The library can potentially be a leader in a campus-wide initiative.
- Keep the conversation going.

Conclusion

Civility is an increasingly important quality to cultivate and encourage in academic libraries. An active awareness and promotion of civility, as well as a shared acknowledgement of its value, enhances the quality of the workplace environment. Academic libraries can and should promote civility through a local program of defining and encouraging it. Penn State's efforts can be seen as an example of such a program, and elements of this example can be applied to any academic library in order to foster a culture of civility.

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Appendix: University Libraries Civility Statement

Within the University Libraries, civility comprises a conscious demonstration of mutual respect – for people, for their roles, for their knowledge and expertise. Civility requires cooperation, tolerance, acceptance, inclusiveness, kindness, courtesy, and patience. It is expressed not only in the words we choose, but in our tone, demeanor, and actions. All members of the University Libraries community are responsible for and expected to exemplify and promote civility.

The University Libraries is committed to creating and maintaining a positive learning and working environment. While it is understood that disagreement will, and should, occur in a collegiate setting, open communication, intellectual integrity, mutual respect for differing viewpoints, freedom from unnecessary disruption, and a climate of civility are important values that we embrace.

Examples of civility include:

- Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
- Respectful acknowledgement of individual differences
- Empathy and patience
- Refraining from insulting, disrespectful, dismissive, or humiliating language and/or actions.

All employees deserve to be treated with dignity and respect at their place of work. They deserve to work in an environment free from incivility, harassment, or bullying. Actions must be evaluated not only in light of what the actor intended, but also by what the recipient felt, i.e., impact as well as intent is important.

The University Libraries management is ultimately responsible for creating a positive work climate, and will deal with civility concerns in a timely manner.

A set of Guidelines for what to do about Uncivil Treatment is also included. (*http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/groups/civteam/statement.html*)

12

Building staff morale and creating a positive workplace

Eric Jennings and Kathryn Tvaruzka

Abstract: Libraries often have arbitrary divisions among staff members – librarians vs. paraprofessionals, technical services vs. public services, staff vs. students, and so on. The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire's McIntyre Library has broken down many of these divisions through a variety of internal and external activities; some officially work-related and others just for fun and recreation. Through these team-based activities staff relationships and morale have improved. This chapter will showcase some of the activities and projects carried out at McIntyre Library and discuss the positive outcomes these have had on library employees.

Key words: morale, play, fun, division between departments, workplace relationships.

Introduction

Divisions between staff members are not unique to libraries. Whether the divisions are based on gender, age, education, or other personality and social characteristics, it is something that is unavoidable. Library staff members are also divided by department, division, floor, status, and seniority. Overcoming differences between individuals and groups within a workplace is no easy task, but doing so has a direct impact on the quality of services offered at the library. Infusing playfulness and fun into the workplace tends to increase productivity and creativity. It also can reduce the chance of staff burnout and turnover. Building interpersonal

relationships and a culture of innovation and fun over the past several years has brought the staff at McIntyre Library on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus together and created a more cohesive working environment. Through various activities sponsored by the library, and activities that individuals have taken upon themselves to organize outside the work day, the library staff now more fully appreciate collaboration, innovation, and communication.

Literature review

While there is substantial library literature on staff development, morale, and training, very few articles provide examples or cases of simple, inexpensive staff activities and events being successfully employed to address issues of staff divisiveness. A search of the database *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA)* yielded few results, with the emphasis on larger-scale staff development events. Anecdotal, non-scholarly articles focused more on guidelines to follow for initiating staff development activities, such as planning events, projecting positive attitudes, and communicating.[1] Everett discusses the various ways in which fun at work "is an outgrowth of a positive organizational culture," and the concept of fun at work can improve organizational goals while also improving the employee's job satisfaction and commitment.[2] Themes of staff recruitment and retention, collegiality, improved customer service, and job satisfaction permeate the library literature. While there is some discussion of the discord between professional librarians and paraprofessionals or other staff members, very little is written about overcoming alleged, direct, or unintentional divisions among staff in different library departments or work areas.

Innumerable sources on the topic of staff morale and the concept of fun at work are found in the business, leadership, and management literature. Ford, McLaughlin and Newstrom found that human resource managers define fun at work as being "created through actions, including funny, humorous, or playful activities that publicly communicate management's belief to the employee that the personal and professional accomplishments he or she has achieved are valued by the organization."[3] Many articles discuss specific workplace activities that large corporations use to recruit and retain employees. Google, for example, has been identified as one of the best examples of fun workplaces. In fact, in their "Top Ten Reasons to Work at Google," number four is "Work and play are not mutually exclusive."[4] Google co-founder Larry Page maintains

that "we don't just want you to have a great job. We want you to have a great life. We provide you with everything you need to be productive and happy on and off the clock."[5] While libraries certainly do not have the budgets and freedom that private companies like Google enjoy, there is literature that suggests that the concept of fun at work is the same for both public and private sectors. A study by Karl et al. compares attitudes towards workplace fun in public, non-profit, and private sectors.[6] Through the authors' extensive research it was clear that, while non-profit and public establishments are different from private business in many respects, "all organizations are competing in a common labor market when it comes to recruiting and retaining employees."[7]

Other literature describes the rationale for why a fun work environment is important to companies' bottom lines. In *Canadian Business*, Wahl describes how companies that are consistently ranked as being "Great Place[s] to Work" outperform their peers in the stock market.[8] A "great place to work" only exists if the employee trusts in the workplace itself. For employees to have trust in their workplace, the workplace must have: credibility, respect, fairness, pride, and camaraderie.[9] These themes are not limited to the private sector; libraries whose employees believe they are treated respectfully and fairly are passionate about what they do, take pride in themselves and their libraries, and develop positive relationships with co-workers.

According to a recent Randstad Work Watch Survey, American workers are happier at their jobs because of the friendships they develop with colleagues, with 67 percent reporting that having friends at work makes their job more fun and enjoyable; 55 percent feel that these relationships make their job more worthwhile and satisfying.[10] Riordan and Griffeth, exploring the idea of workplace friendships more explicitly, theorized that "friendship opportunities would have a positive and indirect effect on organizational commitment."[11] Their findings support this positive association.[12]

The literature also suggests that good communication is a key to workplace cohesiveness and staff morale. Social interaction, and thus communication, "fosters the development of common values and goals, and aids in the achievement of those goals."[13] A survey of job satisfaction found that 85 percent of employees state that their morale drops sharply after just six months on the job, but simple recognition can curb this; employees repeated often, and with great feeling, how much they appreciate a compliment.[14]

The business and management literature is full of articles and studies about fun in the workplace, and all express the same basic comments

from employees who have fun at work. Employees who are allowed to have fun on the job report that they are less anxious and depressed, are more satisfied with their jobs and with their lives in general, and are more convinced that other people have fun at work. They are also more creative in their work, better able to meet job demands, less likely to be absent or late to work, and more motivated by their work.[15] The idea of having fun may not be prevalent in the library literature, but it can be successfully employed in an academic library if the library culture is ready and willing.

Background

As of 1 January 2012, McIntyre Library on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus had a staff of ten professional librarians, 15 paraprofessional staff, and over 60 student employees. Since the staff is relatively small, cross-departmental collaboration is essential to a happy and productive workplace. McIntyre Library, however, is not unlike other libraries in that its history affects the present day library. As two relatively new librarians at UW-Eau Claire, the authors have learned how divisions in the library have affected the current work environment. McIntyre Library is also not unique in that it finds itself in a transition phase. In just the past five years there have been many retirements, a change in directorship, and other staff turnover due to relocations. Of the professional librarians employed at McIntyre Library, only two remain from the previous administration. Staff members include those fresh out of library school, those who had a few years of experience before coming to McIntyre Library, and some who have 15 or more years of experience in other library sectors or in different professions. With the addition of so many new personnel in the library, there is a lot of energy to try new things. These new things have not always been cutting edge services; quite often they are ideas adapted from a previous workplace or something that was read in a journal or online. Nevertheless, by doing things differently, not being afraid to fail, and working together on these new endeavors, McIntyre Library has experienced a sea change in its culture and atmosphere.

Probably the most crucial element leading to the atmospheric change in the library-as-workplace was a change in library management. A new director was hired recently and he brought somewhat new (to the staff) and unconventional attitudes towards traditional librarianship and library services. Director John Pollitz believes that the role of a leader is

to articulate a vision, hire talented people, provide resources, and get out of the way. As he has given his staff members the latitude to try new things, the library has become more collaborative and has a fun atmosphere that permeates the building.

Library divisions

It is safe to say that in most libraries there can be spoken or unspoken contention between different service areas. The old organizational model of libraries, "with its separate departments for public and technical services, and its hierarchical routes of communication," somewhat stifled social interaction between librarians.[16] Communication may have been inefficient, and cataloging staff, for instance, may have wondered what reference librarians did because they so seldom had a chance to interact. With the advent of information technologies, the lines of responsibility have blurred. There is now the necessity of having to work together and discuss services in a very different way. While new librarians may have an easier time with this interdepartmental communication, there can be generational differences regarding services and philosophies.

A problem that exists at, but is not unique to, McIntyre Library is who gets the credit for making the library run smoothly. Those who work in the library know that a lot of work goes into making the library's catalog run efficiently. Similarly, having databases that consistently work well and a library collection that is current, relevant, and actively used is necessary for the library to function and keep our users happy. Unfortunately, the personnel responsible for this do not always get credit. The public service personnel in circulation and reference are the point of contact for the library's users and thus get the praise when things work well or a user finds that "perfect" source in the library catalog. Public services staff are also often the personnel who hear user frustrations and recommendations. Technical services is rarely commended by users with accolades and appreciation, instead usually hearing from public services staff about the problems with library products and services. Technical services must be content with the "no news is good news" attitude – otherwise, the overwhelmingly uneven ratio of complaints to praise would take its toll on employee morale and job satisfaction.

According to Jankowska and Marshall, "technical service librarians, primarily catalogers, have been traditionally concerned with the product – the creation of a catalog to the library's collection – and public service librarians, primarily reference librarians, with service – guiding patrons

to the information sources they need."[17] But these should not be separate goals; instead they are two parts of one whole. There is often disagreement between what public services staff *want* from the library catalog and what catalogers are willing and able to do. Public services staff may be of the opinion that technical services staff are too rigid and adhere too much to arbitrary rules. They may even feel that technical services is not taking the needs of the patrons to heart. On the other hand, technical services staff may ascribe a disregard for structure, principles, and standards to public services staff, or a lack of knowledge of the capabilities of library systems.

Bridging the great divide

So how to rectify the problems inherent in the division between public and technical services? Communication is the most important way to prevent the harboring of bad feelings. With positive communication, public services staff can learn the limitations of library systems and products, and technical services staff can come to appreciate the reasons why public services asks for alterations and improvements to library products and procedure. If there is generally good communication, then when conflicts arise there are less likely to be problems because communication is of an ongoing nature. Librarians can benefit personally from such communication as well. Good communication between divisions and departments increases the development of peer and mentor relationships, possibly even friendships.[18] At McIntyre Library, many cross-departmental relationships have led to collaborations on writing, presentations, and projects within the library. These scholarly endeavors do not materialize without positive communication within the organization between individuals and departments.

In addition to a general understanding of each other's roles and interests in library service, showing appreciation for one another is an easy, non-threatening, and positive way to build relationships and rapport. McIntyre Library has just finished a large weeding of the reference collection, having discarded or moved nearly three-quarters of the materials. This was a time-intensive project that touched nearly every department in the library: the research and instruction librarians weeded the collection, cataloging staff handled the removal of large sets of materials from the catalog, collection development and electronic resources staff found ways to move several reference sets to e-book versions, and access services staff shifted books to make room for volumes

the library kept in its circulating collection. Simple emails or words of thanks went a long way to show appreciation for making this seemingly easy project run smoothly. As was noted earlier, just as survey respondents in the corporate sector stated how much they appreciate compliments for their on the job performance,[19] these results are just as applicable to academic libraries. Showing your gratitude for the work that someone else does makes them feel appreciated. Additionally, the successes you hear about should also be shared so that all staff involved are able to take credit for a job well done.

Building staff morale and cooperation between departments is more than just sending an email or stopping by someone's office to chat and acknowledge their work. It is also working together on teams and getting to know colleagues on a deeper level. Academic libraries are known for their formal and ad hoc committees, task forces, and working groups. While these obligations can serve as positive ways in which to collaborate and get to know each other, they rarely provide the opportunity to get to know your colleagues on a deeper, more personal level. At McIntyre Library, we have an unofficial motto: "families who play together, stay together." And it is by "playing together" that we develop meaningful personal relationships that lead to a better understanding of our individual roles in the library.

What are some of the ways that libraries can play together? One easy way is literally to play together on a sports team. McIntyre Library has two such teams: a bowling team and an intramural ultimate Frisbee team. The four-year-old bowling team has been made up of members of various departments, including members of the research & instruction, systems, periodicals, and collection development departments. Each week during the bowling season, the team has a collective goal for each individual participant. As a reward for accomplishing that goal, team members go out for ice cream after bowling. That goal gets team members to root for each other but also builds a sense of "we're in this together" that makes participants want to learn more about each other. Undoubtedly, the bowlers learn about each other because of their participation in this game – their families, their aspirations, their personalities. They also learn about what others do at work because it is common for work issues to come up. These informal discussions lead to a better understanding of what each participant's role in the library is and how they fit into the big picture. In turn, when someone is critical of a viewpoint expressed at work, that criticism is not taken as personally because the individuals involved have gotten to know each other personally through their successes and failures as a team.

The library's intramural ultimate Frisbee team is another form of play that participants from the library's circulation, research & instruction, systems, and periodicals departments have joined. Unlike the library's bowling team, the library's ultimate Frisbee team also has student participants from various departments within the library. As is the case with many academic libraries, the library could not function without its student workers. Libraries value their student workers, but it can be difficult to let them know how important they are. It is also important to make them feel that they are part of the library team. We have found that, if students feel that they are more than just another cog in the machine, the library staff become an extension of their university family. Getting to know staff and students in other departments because of their participation in an intramural team is an important step in building the morale of the students. At McIntyre Library, the circulation and reference desks are located near, but not next to, each other. Because the circulation desk is the first service point seen upon entering the building, many users visiting the library ask questions there rather than at the reference desk. By getting to know students who work at the circulation desk via ultimate Frisbee, many of the circulation desk students refer users to specific library staff or to the reference desk because they know someone personally who staffs the desk. As any marketer will tell you, word of mouth advertising is the best type of advertising. Furthermore, playing on a sports team humanizes the library staff for the student workers. They do not just see staff in the context of their day-to-day jobs; they also see them in the context of being a teammate and even a friend.

As with many libraries, we have found great success in simple events and activities held during the workday. Many of our internal activities are student-worker-focused simply because they are our largest staff population. These events also provide an avenue for staff to work together across departments and levels to pull together a large social event.

One way in which our library builds the morale of its student workers is by hosting a student appreciation party at the end of the fall semester. Normally this takes place on a "study day" before finals when there are no classes held. The goal is to provide students with a home-cooked meal and allow them to relax and interact with other students and staff. As part of the student appreciation party, library staff pitch in collectively to get every student a gift of appreciation for their work. Most of these gifts are snacks, gift cards to local coffee shops, and small things that students can use when studying for finals. During this party, the students graduating mid-year are specifically requested to attend for the "presentation of

books." For the presentation of books, we ask graduating students to pick a book already in the library's collection, or choose one to be purchased for the collection. The library puts a bookplate in their honor in the front cover acknowledging their educational achievement and thanking them for all the hard work that they have done for the library. In addition to the book plate, a picture of them is taken with their book and they are given a READ poster with that image. These are on display on the library's plasma screen monitors that are used for advertising. Though not as large as the appreciation party, the library also hosts a party for those graduating in the spring with cake, cookies, and punch. At that party the library also showcases graduating students through book selections and READ posters. Students generally comment on how they really appreciate what the library does to celebrate their work and express how much they will miss the library when they graduate.

Building student morale is more than just parties and sports; we also make a point of keeping in touch with our students. Presently, that is easier with the advent of Facebook and Twitter, but another way is to get their contact information before they graduate. By getting their contact information, we are able to send out a copy of the biannual library newsletter to students via email. This is something that they are already familiar with, since it is distributed to student workers in the library. The best part about this is that it is free. In addition to its being a way for the library to connect with students after graduation, we have found that this is a way to showcase our commitment to them after they have left the university. With such a kinship, we inevitably attract siblings and relatives of student workers to the library.

Though it may seem that a lot of the things that we have done at McIntyre Library are student-focused, it is important to have specific events for permanent staff, too, because actively trying to make work fun leads to people having more fun on the job.[20] One of the easiest ways to get people together is over food. The Karl et al. study found that the main activities all three sectors (public, non-profit and private) viewed as the most enjoyable are those that are food-related.[21] McIntyre Library has an annual soup luncheon in which staff members bring home-made soups for a staff potluck. This event is scheduled in January, between semesters, when the library is less busy and almost all of the staff members are able to attend. Another simple and cost-free option is to celebrate library-wide dress up days. It may seem a bit juvenile to have "dress up days," but a large portion of the library staff participate, and often the general student body does as well. Halloween is by far the easiest and most recognized option, and at McIntyre Library everyone from the library

director to student workers participates. The library has also celebrated by having a Hawaiian shirt day and participating in "College Colors Day" and even "Talk Like a Pirate Day."

Formally planned events held outside the library are more time-consuming and take a great deal of preparation and dedication, but taking the time to organize such events demonstrates commitment to the library and colleagues. For five years, the authors of this chapter have organized an annual picnic and potluck at a local park after work. This event is held either in May, to celebrate the end of another successful academic year, or in August, to celebrate the start of another year of working together. Staff, their spouses, children, and significant others are all invited to attend. While waiting for the bratwurst and hotdogs on the grill, many people throw a Frisbee or football and children play on the jungle gym equipment; others converse about what is happening in their lives and get to know staff members' significant others. Due to budget constraints, the library is unable to furnish more than the cost of the park pavilion rental. The library staff association, to which we all contribute, donates 25 dollars, but there are usually no problems with staff contributing other funds to this event.

In addition, due to all the recent hires in the library, many new staff have hosted "open houses" outside work hours. Staff members are under no obligation to host these after-hours get-togethers; individuals volunteer to do this as a way to get to know colleagues and their families better, but also as a way to show off a new apartment or house. For a relatively small staff, these events are good bonding experiences that bring people together over drinks, finger food, and games. In many cases, staff members bring their spouses, significant others, and children.

Finally, there is always happy hour. We have found that for many of the younger employees there is a need to decompress after a busy workweek. No one is under any obligation to attend happy hour, but there has been a good level of interest generated by these simple email invitations to meet at a local establishment after work. The number of attendees has also been surprising, as not only new librarians meet together, but long-timers, paraprofessional staff, and student workers come as well. As with all library employees, each of our workdays can be filled with stressful situations, important decisions, difficult meetings, and obligations that pop up without warning. An evening of karaoke is another activity that alleviates stress and brings library staff together. Perhaps there is nothing more intimidating, or hysterical, than singing in front of a group of strangers and co-workers. The conversations and laughter that take place at karaoke provide a great release. With many

individuals feeling the need to imbibe before taking to the stage, people are a bit freer with conversations. Karaoke events are usually tied to someone's birthday or as a way to celebrate the close of a successful semester. Employees in a fun work environment often complain less about boredom, anxiety and stress,[22] and karaoke has provided the staff with a perfect outlet to let down their guards, become freer to talk openly about life and work, and strengthen positive relationships.

Conclusion

The concept of incorporating and allowing fun in the workplace is a phenomenon that has been taking over the private sector for years. That same concept is slowly but surely making its way into the library sector as well. The levels of fun that can be woven into an organization are based on leadership, employee attitudes, and actions. Simple steps can be taken, like those mentioned in this chapter, that cost little to no money. However, there is no silver bullet that will work for every library. But not being afraid to try something new is an important lesson, because you will find out more about your colleagues and their interests through whatever methods you choose to employ. Library staff are no different from private sector workers in that they desire trust, respect, and positive relationships with colleagues. Incorporating fun activities and a sense of humor into the library can result in increased employee productivity, creativity, motivation, and satisfaction. These improved qualities in turn lead to a better provision of library services from all departments and from all statuses within the library, whether a student worker or a library faculty member.

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13

Interdepartmental communication in academic libraries

Martha Mautino and Michael Lorenzen

Abstract: Communication is important in any organization. For an institution to be successful, employees at all levels need to be aware of what is happening and have an opportunity to give feedback on both daily policies and goals for the future. This can be difficult at times for any organization but can be particularly hard to facilitate between departments in academic libraries. This chapter will address this by looking at the underlying organizational culture that may prevent effective communication. It addresses strategies for enhancing the communication pathways between academic library staff members to increase awareness, retain knowledge, and prevent duplication of effort. The chapter also describes a successful program to improve communication at Western Washington University Libraries.

Key words: interdepartmental communication, intranet, cross-training, climate surveys, barriers to communication.

Introduction

Communication is a popular topic with those writing about and researching management theories. Rooks writes that communication and information are similar to power and that the "loss of access to information is perceived as a loss of status."[1] Bakewell recognizes that poor communication is a dissatisfier and that, though they may not want to be in on decision-making, "employees like to be told what is happening,

and given the opportunity to find out more."[2] Green et al. state that relationships are built upon communication and that it "allows cooperation and generally fosters a pleasant working environment."[3] The authors go on to say that, if an employee is kept informed, "the employee can be motivated and made to feel a true part of the organization."[4] They also make the point that staff can be motivated by being involved in the decision-making process, as it will cause them to feel informed and that they had the opportunity to express their views.

People carry to work with them the same basic needs that are present in their day-to-day lives, and, just as trust is important in all relationships, trust between managers and subordinates is important for a successful workplace. One way for trust to be cultivated is by successful workplace communication. Evans and Ward note that trust is "vital to knowledge management, where every person needs to share information fully and not hold back."[5] Opperman discusses the importance of a comfortable organizational culture in motivating and retaining employees.[6] Team environments can be a large part of building a comfortable organizational culture, and, as Sheffer argues, it aids in the development of "a sense of togetherness."[7]

One way for managers to build trust is to attempt to understand the thoughts and feelings of their staff, embracing the concept of emotional intelligence. Porter notes that, since much of library work revolves around interactions with others, including staff and the public, "being able to effectively communicate and listen to others is crucial" and can help to build strong workplace relationships.[8] Porter also notes that emotional intelligence focuses on assessing the emotional state of those around you as well as yourself, which often enriches communication and interactions between co-workers, "no matter where they sit in the hierarchical structure."[9] By understanding "the feelings of . . . employees and how they are likely to respond in a given situation,"[10] managers can assess how best to utilize the skills of employees and effectively deal with any problems that may arise. This can help build trust between employees and managers, as employees will appreciate being understood and accepted by their managers.

Communication is vital in motivating library staff and is essential between all levels of staff. It can be key in relationships between different library departments. Green et al. write: "Communication builds relations, allows cooperation and fosters a pleasant working environment. Conversely, a lack of communication can breed distrust, prohibit learning and heighten insecurity."[11] It is important for interdepartmental communication to flourish in the library or problems can occur.

Communication should be positive, but it may also be necessary for department heads to communicate with each other, as Cranford notes, to "convey the consequences of careless errors and sloppy work."[12] Staff may believe that certain tasks are arbitrary and capricious, but, if the consequences of not performing tasks properly are explained to library department staff, they will better understand the need for the given task and stay motivated to perform the task properly. Additionally, library managers can motivate staff by involving them in the decision-making process through group consultations and discussion as well as one-on-one meetings as appropriate. Green et al. write that, if library managers communicate and discuss the decision-making process with staff, "the staff feel that they have been kept informed of development in their work and have had an opportunity to express their views."[13]

Communication is important for organization and productivity. It also helps with employee morale and in successful relationships between library departments. While relationships with superiors can motivate employees to work harder, effective communication also provides the guidelines and structure needed to correctly complete a task. Osif notes that symptoms of poor communication can include "conflicting goals, priorities and schedules . . . low morale, rumors, poor attitudes . . . lack of trust . . . unclear message, perception of incompetence, isolation and no feedback."[14] Good communication ensures that there is motivation, high work quality, and coordination between library departments.

Underlying barriers to interdepartmental communication

Even with an effective plan for interdepartmental communication in place, there can still be roadblocks and barriers to effective communication. As Gunn asks, "Why do the best-intentioned efforts to improve communication so often fail?"[15] There are several aspects of the underlying organizational culture of academic libraries that may prevent or at least impede the effectiveness of communication. Stratified roles, varying work schedules, and different primary job goals can contribute difficult hurdles and complexity to bridging communication gaps. In order to build a healthy organizational culture, it is helpful to understand some of the inherent obstacles and suggested strategies for overcoming them.

Barriers to interdepartmental communication have been noted for decades, as evidenced by Walton et al.'s study in 1969. They point out

that physical proximity or distance can be factors, as can "lack of knowledge of one another's work."[16] Phillip G. Clampitt, author of the seminal work *Communicating for Managerial Effectiveness*, postulates that there are four significant attributes natural to departments which contribute to difficulties with interdepartmental communication. Different departments typically have dissimilar job duties, are not co-located (physically housed near each other), may have their own budgets, and generally adhere to their own reporting and "authority structures."[17]

In his chapter on interdepartmental communication, Clampitt points out "potential problems of departmentalization." These include "untimely communication," "the 'silo' mentality," "overlapping responsibilities," and "unnecessary conflict." He goes on to note that "contributing factors" exacerbate these problems, such as "language differences," including the use of jargon, acronyms, and specialized terminology. The very nature of how workspaces are laid out can be an issue. Clampitt remarks that "Office design may well create the subtlest barrier to effective interdepartmental relationships, because it subconsciously restricts natural communication impulses." Other factors include "priority differences," "structure of rewards and punishments," "adherence to rigid procedures," and, in general, the "complexity of communication relationships."[18]

Departments in academic libraries can certainly be shown to exhibit these obstacles to interdepartmental communication. Consider, for example, the competing needs of public versus technical and collection services departments. Public services, including reference, circulation, and interlibrary loan departments, place paramount focus on serving the library patron. Staff schedules vary in order to provide adequate and extended evening and weekend public desk coverage. Instruction duties and other "librarian" activities often contribute to a scattered workforce whose members may only touch base with each other at the service desk or in departmental meetings. On the other hand, technical and collection services staff in cataloging, acquisitions, stacks maintenance, information technology, and the like may typically work near each other during regular business hours. Although they do ultimately serve the library patron, their focus is primarily on developing and maintaining resources and tools.

In the underlying organizational culture of academic libraries, the differing roles and job responsibilities of librarians, support staff, and administrators can be barriers to communication between and within departments. In one example, the Instruction and Reference Department and the Collection Services Department at Western Washington University

Libraries both work hard to be cohesive and collaborative units in spite of competing roles. The reference department currently consists of nine faculty librarians (six tenured, one tenure-track, one non-tenure-track, one temporary resident) and three experienced support staff, overseen by the Associate Dean for Public Services. All department members work at the public service desk. In addition, the librarians and some of the staff provide bibliographic instruction to classes, and the librarians offer credit instruction and participate in collection development. Issues about tenure and liaison responsibilities directly affect some but not all of the librarians and none of the support staff. However, reference desk coverage discussions held at department meetings involve everyone and often lead to lively debates about workload, roles, and even identity. In the Collection Services Department, two librarians work with 18 support staff. Recently, a major shift in focus relating to collection development priorities is leading to significant changes in the liaison duties of some reference librarians. Ultimately, these adjustments will also affect the workloads and job duties of support staff and other librarians in both the reference and collection services departments. Effective communication between and within these departments will prove to be a key component in the successful adoption of major changes in process, roles, and responsibilities.

Each member of every department needs to stay well informed about not only their own departmental issues, but also the activities in other departments and in the library organization as a whole. However, as noted by Ballard and Seibold, issues of available time to spend absorbing communications as well as aspects of "communication load" can directly influence workers' satisfaction with the quality and amount of communication they receive.[19] Chung and Goldhaber define communication load as "a measure of the extent to which, in a given period of time, an organization's members perceive more quantity, complexity, and/or equivocality in the information than an individual desires, needs, or can handle in the process of communication."[20] According to the Ballard/Seibold study, various temporal factors affect satisfaction with interdepartmental communication, and satisfaction varies between members of different departments. The type of work, expectations of free-time versus work-time activities, differences in an individual's control over the flow of their workday activities, and similar factors all play a role in whether interdepartmental communication is perceived as a time waster, essential to planning and accomplishing work, frivolous, and so on. Their study and research suggest that there is a relationship between successful and appropriate communication and job

satisfaction. They also propose that: “Perhaps communicating with other departmental members about long-term goals and plans leads to more satisfying relationships and communication patterns.”[21] The study concludes that “given the centrality of time in shaping the substance and quality of a variety of communication relationships . . . identifying critical aspects of this relationship in the context of organizational communication” is an important focus for further research.[22]

The benefits of effective interdepartmental communication encourage the effort required. What are some approaches for overcoming roadblocks and improving interdepartmental communication? Clampitt offers four ideas: “Rally employees around common goals and values,” “make cooperation between departments a priority,” “reconcile the inherent tensions between information providers and consumers,” and “create organizational processes and procedures to manage interdepartmental conflicts.”[23] Although Clampitt is looking at a variety of business organizations, from factories to *Fortune 500* companies, similar principles can be usefully applied to academic library organizations.

Explications of common goals and values for academic libraries may be found in organizations’ strategic planning documents and mission statements. In a study of library mission statements, Bangert notes that “the mission statement has been identified by researchers and practitioners as the most common form of communication to express organizational purpose, vision, and values.”[24] Some statements even expressly refer to support for interdepartmental communication goals. For example, one library’s mission statement includes this value: “We reach for excellence in performance and relationships. We strive for integrity, trust, and respect for each other and those we serve.” The Strategic Plan states that “we must invest in our most important resource: the people who work at the Libraries. The current economic times have heightened the need for restructuring, communication, training programs, and recognition.”[25]

The strategic plan may encourage the “rally ’round the flag” approach suggested by Clampitt. In the example above, one of the library plan’s initiatives expressly states that they will “integrate the Libraries’ mission and values into the organization’s culture.” Regardless of the focus of the common goals and values, the fact that an organization places primary importance on them is significant. In developing strategic plans, an organization’s planning group has usually solicited ideas and feedback from its employees throughout the process. Undoubtedly, among the specific goals of the process itself is to elicit contributions from all departments and individuals, and thus to garner buy-in from them for the values, goals and initiatives. For academic libraries, the over-arching

value of customer service provides inspiring and fundamental bedrock for all to embrace. It guides the activities of every department, from cataloging to circulation, behind-the-scenes or public. It could be said that embodying values, attaining goals, and achieving organizational initiatives can happen most effectively through cooperation and collaboration between departments, processes which are significantly enhanced by successful interdepartmental communication.

The information loop is a complex construct, and successful management of it demands attention to its many, sometimes conflicting, aspects. Sharing upcoming changes, soliciting input, informing stakeholders – all these activities are part of managing the interdepartmental communication process. As Clampitt points out, "The objective is to develop sensitivity to the needs, desires, and problems of other departments."[26]

Interdepartmental conflicts can certainly be obstacles to interdepartmental communication efforts. Managing those conflicts requires a holistic organizational approach. Appropriate but flexible structures and policies can be created for use by all departments to assist supervisors and employees as they work through potentially divisive issues. "In short, healing interdepartmental rifts usually requires patience and the right environment – not necessarily radical surgery."[27]

How can organizations overcome roadblocks and improve interdepartmental communication? Clampitt offers "specific activities that have proven useful in resolving interdepartmental problems," from easily-implemented modest changes to more complex reorganization initiatives. He notes that even "minor effort projects . . . can help foster a deeper sensitivity on the part of employees as well as provide more specific information about departments across the organizational boundaries." These projects might include "job switching" and "companywide seminars" or other training sessions open to employees in various departments. Other activities could be "coauthored articles" and cross-departmental teams to bring together employees with different perspectives on issues. Even "brainstorming sessions," such as those that are an important part of strategic planning activities, can help bring out creative ideas and alternate viewpoints. At general staff meetings and in other venues, "show-and-tell" activities can go far toward enhancing understanding of others' work. Creating "interdepartmental agreements" and "tracking organizational processes" help establish a structure to support interdepartmental communication and understanding.[28]

In recognizing that "more radical measures [might be] needed because the interdepartmental communication problems are more deeply

ingrained within the current organizational structure," Clampitt also presents what he refers to as "major effort projects." Some of these projects most relevant to academic libraries include "job rotation," "office redesign," "job description modifications," "cross-functional teams," and, finally, "organizational restructuring."[29] Both types of activities – minor and major effort projects – can help library organizations break down barriers by improving interdepartmental understanding through shared experience and effective communication.

Successful interdepartmental communication can be influenced by the relative strength and health of employee relationships, both among and within departments. In workplaces where relationships are characterized as exhibiting negative components, such as lack of trust, bullying behavior, and secretive decision-making, the root causes of the dysfunction can be linked to interdepartmental communication failures. In detailing the impact of their library's Staff Development Committee, Davis and Lundstrom note that its "events re-energize staff, increase productivity, help mediate change in the library, and build workplace camaraderie, which fosters interdepartmental communication and enhance [sic] productivity."[30] As Somerville points out in her explication of an "organizational learning approach," "engaged and dedicated employees . . .must learn to respect and engage others' ideas, behaviors, and beliefs in order to enjoy convivial and creative workplace experiences that advance a common purpose."[31]

Success at Western Washington University Libraries

Library organizations often work diligently to improve communication, foster collaboration, engage individuals in the goals of the organization, and help one another deal with information overload. In fact, as mentioned earlier, improved communication is often explicitly listed in the strategic plans of some academic libraries reviewed, attesting to the importance of this issue for effective and healthy functioning of the organizations.[32] A significant aspect of this initiative is improvement in communication between and among departments. Western Washington University Libraries (known as Western Libraries) is one example of an academic library that has worked diligently on this issue.

How can interdepartmental communication be improved? As Somerville poses, "The question then becomes how to design workplace

environments rich in information access and exchange and fortified by dialogue and reflection opportunities."[33] One tool for internal communication available to library personnel is the staff intranet. At Western Libraries, the staff intranet was originally developed as a way to foster an online community, to function as social media to help raise morale, to build trust, and to provide a place for discussing community issues. As time passed, the intranet rather organically became a repository for meeting minutes, an avenue for updates from the dean, and a sharing of library-world articles. However, it was frustrating to navigate and used only by a few stalwarts.

As an organization, we are aware that effective and productive communication is critical to a healthy workplace and have made improved communication a strategic initiative. The importance of the initiative to improve communication was pointed up by a recent organizational development survey, which focused on workplace communication. An earlier survey on communication tool use and preferences had demonstrated that some improvement was needed to develop the intranet as an effective communication tool. We are currently engaged in a variety of efforts to improve communication, foster collaboration, engage individuals in the goals of the organization, and help each other deal with information overload. One of these efforts this year is the intranet redesign project, an organizational development/ library information technology joint venture.

How can we make the intranet a more effective communication tool and repository for documentation? Should the intranet be a more engaging social tool that helps us build morale and community within the library? An online survey was created to ask these questions, and focus group sessions with library personnel were held. In order to make the intranet a more effective communication tool, the goals of the user studies were to hear staff feelings, attitudes, thoughts, preferences, and ideas to discover what they wanted and needed from the intranet, to identify usage trends, and to find out how staff currently used the intranet.

Some recommendations that resulted from the user studies demonstrated clearly that effective internal communication was critical to workplace satisfaction. For example, in the past, a popular weekly digest of department projects, news, upcoming activities, and other items of interest to the staff had been compiled and sent out to staff via email. This summary had contributed significantly to a heightened sense of staff cohesion and shared experience that had perhaps eroded since its demise. In the studies, many suggested that resurrecting the digest as an important

part of the redesigned intranet would help build organizational unity through improved interdepartmental communication.

As Green et al. predict, respondents point out that making information about group work available to all leads to improved understanding of and support for initiatives underway in the library. Thus, continued improvement of the staff intranet as a repository for team charges, documents, and minutes of meetings is also an important goal of the redesign project. Guidelines and best practices are currently under development for internal communication by groups, such as committees, task forces, and teams, with the rest of the library. Groups will have latitude about what and how much to include, but the focus will be to keep the organization informed about group activities.

Western Libraries has also engaged in several of Clampitt's "minor effort projects," with the goal to provide enhanced interdepartmental communication and improved organizational climate. Osif notes that a better understanding of the work done by other departments can often improve an organization's climate.[34] Cross-training activities, even informal ones, have led to a deeper appreciation of other department processes and to greater awareness of the impact on services. In one example, staff members from the Cataloging department at Western Libraries volunteered to work the public reference desk when needed to cover department meetings. They received a minimal amount of training – enough to field basic directional and informational questions – and were encouraged to refer to subject specialists or even page reference staff for immediate help, as needed. As a result, these "back-up" desk staffers could see firsthand in their encounters with students the value of their cataloging work as it affected discovery of resources.

In another instance involving the Western Libraries Informational Technology (library IT) department and the reference and circulation public service desks, breakdowns in process were improved through interdepartmental communication efforts. Frequent printer issues were causing frustration for all, but the crux of the difficulties revolved around inconsistencies in reporting problems and the tracking of responses. The goal for both public service and library IT was similar – to get the printers working again quickly. However, a communication breakdown meant that no one was sure of the status of a problem at any given time. In consultation with the service desk staff, the IT department designed an online "trouble ticket" reporting system. The service desk staffers were able to input problems quickly and directly at their public posts. The IT staff could then expeditiously diagnose and solve the problems, reporting progress and resolution in a timely and easily accessed manner.

Making learning opportunities available to a wider range of employees at all levels can reap benefits, too. Many of Western Libraries' training sessions are offered to all library personnel. For example, a recent series on library leadership[35] was originally proposed for supervisors and administration as the typical "library leaders." However, the development coordinator felt that, in this time of change, leadership skills are needed not just by those in traditional supervisory or managerial roles but by any library employee who has an interest in developing leadership potential. Another supervisor-focused program on so-called "soft skills," such as encouraging positive employee attitudes and dealing with difficult employees, garnered enthusiastic involvement by public service staff as well. A series of webinars on institutional repositories, primarily geared to faculty, have proven intriguing to staff in cataloging, heritage resources, and others. Including different voices from many departments has broadened the conversations. The goal is to encourage employees from all levels to improve skills, share ideas, and help carry the library into the future.

The perception of one department by other areas of the library can be problematic and affect ease of communication. At Western Libraries, a climate survey several years ago revealed that the reference department was viewed as somewhat dysfunctional by other units. As is typical in many academic libraries, employees from other departments were confused about reference roles. Faculty librarians dominate the reference department and other units tend to have the majority of support staff. Reference personnel were sometimes viewed as "elitist," always rushing off to conferences and setting their own hours. There was a perception that librarians were not busy with the "real work" of the library, but spent their time in meetings endlessly discussing arcane issues. The distinction between faculty and support staff roles, job duties, time schedules, and library leadership and campus-wide responsibilities caused friction and lack of understanding at times. The reference department took some steps to change this perception. These included forming a public service advisory council, sharing useful tools with other library units, participating in library-wide initiatives, and conducting a follow-up climate survey.

As initiated by the Associate Dean for Public Services, an advisory council, made up of representatives from all the service units who interact with patrons, has recently been formed to address shared issues and develop some standardized practices. This goes with what Evans and Ward note: to "share information and not hold back."[36] Quarterly meetings with all staff in these departments are planned to discuss related

concerns and to work together on common activities, such as helping students with citations and coordinating policies on qualifications for issuing guest scholar logins.

The reference department is also sharing useful tools with other library units and working with library partners on shared initiatives. For example, the LibGuides program was originally developed and implemented by the reference department to create reference help guides. When interest in using LibGuides was expressed by other areas, the implementation team deployed to provide training and quality-check review for any library department that wanted to use LibGuides to describe their services and resources. Another significant library-wide initiative has been the development of a learning commons, and the reference department is a major player. The department collaborates with the other partners on an advisory council and shares in activities presented by the group. A recent example was the "Coffee in the Commons" event for which each Learning Commons partner hosted a Wednesday afternoon open house to share information and explain services.

To gauge the effectiveness of its efforts, the reference department recently conducted a follow-up climate survey and found that there was improvement in the perception of the department throughout the library. The activities chosen in response to the earlier negative survey focused in many ways on interdepartmental communication as a primary mechanism to help share knowledge and concerns, and have served to effectively drive these improvements.

As mentioned earlier, "major effort projects" like "organizational restructuring," "job rotation," and "job description modifications" can also improve interdepartmental communication. While reorganizations are not necessarily embarked upon to specifically deal with communication problems, their results may often include an improved organizational climate with enhanced interdepartmental communication.

Western Libraries has recently implemented some major reorganization projects. Some have involved reassignment of duties and changes in job descriptions. This has encouraged sharing and understanding of departmental perspectives and expertise. In a recent instance, the university map library, originally housed in the environmental studies department, was moved into the main library. It is now administered as the Map Collection. Library cataloging staff and a reference librarian have been detailed part-time to catalog and provide patron service to the map collection. This change has brought greater awareness and higher use of the collection and has provided personnel with refreshing new job duties.

Another reorganization project uses Clampitt's "cross-functional teams." In 2011, Western Libraries took a major refocusing step and began to develop a Learning Commons. The Student Technology Center had already been moved next to the Reference and Instruction Desk. Next the library brought into its fold some additional university programs, viz. the Writing Center, the Teaching-Learning Academy, and the Faculty Writing Instruction Support program. The university Tutoring Center was also given permanent space in the library building. These programs were combined into a Learning Commons with Instruction & Research and Circulation Services in the library and also included the popular online forum Viking Village.

Each of the programs is currently in the midst of reconceptualizing public services by answering these five questions:

1. What are the core services that your program currently offers that you want to continue?
2. What are the services that your program currently offers that might be discontinued?
3. What services would your program like to offer in the future?
4. What kinds of services/activities might your program offer in collaboration with other programs?
5. What kinds of spatial configurations would best achieve all these services (current, future, and collaborative) for your program?

As they share their answers, new visions of cross-departmental collaboration may emerge. All the units in the Learning Commons are developing new ways to work together across departments and are finding that interdepartmental communication is an important key to success.

Conclusion

Although it can be difficult to achieve at times, successful interdepartmental communication is crucial for the continued well-being of any academic library. For the library to be successful, employees at all levels need to be aware of what is happening and have an opportunity to give feedback on both daily policies and goals for the future. Stratified roles, varying work schedules, and different primary job goals can contribute difficult hurdles and complexity to bridging communication gaps in the academic library. So can the complexity of the relationships and nature of work between

different public and technical services units. Encouraging personnel at all levels to participate in decision-making will enhance relationships, foster collaboration, aid in creating job satisfaction, and contribute to a healthy, functional workplace. As has been shown at Western Washington University Libraries, there are strategies that can be used to help bring this about. These can include creating and using a library intranet, cross-training, and climate surveys. To insure ongoing effective interdepartmental communication, continual vigilance will reap rewards for a more successful organization.

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Interaction between departments: strategies for improving interdepartmental collaboration through communication

Sever Bordeianu and Rebecca Lubas

Abstract: Collaboration within libraries can be a challenge; with specific jobs and areas of expertise, it is easy to focus only inward. But collaborating with the staff in other departments may help librarians be more effective information providers. The University of New Mexico Libraries has tried to meet this challenge by instituting formal and informal communication mechanisms. One-time learning opportunities and groups that meet regularly were created between different departments. This chapter will describe the ways in which the University of New Mexico Libraries organized these events and groups, which methods met with the best success and participation, and advice on how to apply these suggestions in other libraries.

Key words: collaboration, cooperation, interdepartmental communication, educational outreach, cross-departmental groups, common projects.

Introduction

Typically, modern American libraries have a half dozen or more departments. Regardless of the level of direct need for cooperation

between them, no department works in a vacuum. Generally, the better the communication and understanding among departments, the better the library is able to achieve its mission and goals. Even though it is universally accepted that communication is a fundamental requirement for a successful organization, the reality is that implementing and maintaining good communication requires concerted effort and time. Good communication and its positive outcome, cooperation, don't happen spontaneously but need to be purposefully created, applied, and nurtured. Even though everyone's goal is the library's success, due to poor communication, departments sometimes unintentionally work at cross purposes with each other, thus hindering the final success of the organization. In part, this may explain the constant reorganizations that are very common. (A search in the library literature for the subject "Libraries-Reorganization" uncovered 110 articles on the topic, 93 of which date between 2001 and the present.) Ultimately, a library whose departments have good communication and cooperation will be more successful and a more satisfying place in which to work.

Literature review

A review of the library literature on the topic of cooperation, communication, or collaboration among library departments found few articles or books dedicated to the topic. The articles that exist describe cooperation between two individual departments which took place in order to achieve a specific project or goal, rather than how to make collaboration the normal operating mode.[1] In "Building Bridges: the Role of the Systems Librarian in a University Library," Guinea discusses the role of the systems department in coordinating activities within the library as well as with the University.[2] In this study, systems is the pivotal department that negotiates with other library departments as well as outsiders, both within the university and beyond. The aforementioned articles describe similar approaches and strategies of collaboration, such as learning each other's environment, clarifying terminology and concepts, and a common understanding of each other's rules, procedures, and practices. On a broader scale, vanDuinkerken and Mosley discuss the various aspects of organizational culture and human factors at play in libraries as a backdrop to change.[3] In their book titled *The Challenge of Library Management: Leading with Emotional Engagement*, they make the point that communication between management and staff is essential, and they provide examples of both good and bad ways of communicating.

It is of the utmost importance for management to create institutional support for optimal cooperation. These topics are addressed in more detail by Bordeianu and Lubas, in a chapter which covers collaboration among all library departments from the vantage point of a cataloging department and addresses, in addition to general guidelines for good collaboration practices, specific aspects that need to be followed in each instance.[4] For example, collaboration between Cataloging and Instruction requires learning different skills than cooperation between Cataloging and Systems.

The literature review highlights the need for more scholarly contributions to this very important topic, which, while universally recognized, seems to have received little attention as a research topic.

Multi-stream communication

For successful interaction, good communication is essential. In the case of departments in a library, the interaction needs to go beyond mere informing to become proactive and collaborative. Traditionally, libraries have been divided between technical and public services. While technology is continuously blurring the line dividing the two areas, there are still distinct functions that need to be performed according to established rules and procedures. Even in modern libraries, librarians tend to self-classify as technical or public service librarians, holding a firm belief that their skills are not interchangeable. Communication, interaction, and ultimately cooperation require that departments understand each other's work environment, restrictions, rules, procedures, and timelines. For example, deadlines are paramount in Collection Development and Acquisition Departments, and daily schedules are just as important to Instruction and Access Services Librarians, for whom deadlines do not have the same meaning as order deadlines or end of fiscal year deadlines, while standards are the way of life for Cataloging Departments. Understanding these conditions and respecting each other's set of rules is the first step in successful interaction and cooperation. Interactions between departments increase in complexity in direct proportion to the number of departments that are involved. While no cooperation is simple or can be taken for granted, interaction between two departments generally requires less effort than interaction between three or more. Even among these scenarios, in libraries today there are some areas which have closer affinities with each other, where it is easier to cooperate, and others which require more learning, communication, and effort.

Cooperation requires several stages. First, the library's overall organizational culture and environment need to support and encourage cooperation. Second, each department needs to learn the work environment, jargon, timelines, restrictions, goals, and missions of the other department. Once these variables have been identified and acknowledged, librarians need to look at areas of overlap and identify those processes which make their operations interdependent. For example, cataloging needs to be aware of acquisitions ordering and receiving cycles, instruction needs to be aware of ordering and cataloging turnaround time, and all units need to be in tune with budget cycles and academic or fiscal year cycles. Finally, librarians will need to identify the areas in which collaboration is essential and create projects that will produce a better and more successful organization.

What will be addressed here are the building blocks of cooperation with the purpose of giving professionals a model against which they can analyze the current status of their department's interaction with other departments, as well as giving the library's administration a tool to evaluate the level of interaction and cooperation among departments.

Creating the right organizational culture and environment

What are the requirements for creating an environment conducive to interdepartmental communication and cooperation? As seen from the examples and scenarios described in this chapter, an institutional culture that recognizes and supports cooperation is essential. This ensures that staff from various departments will be willing to collaborate and invest the time in collaborative projects rather than viewing them as a waste of time or as an impediment. Having institutional support also provides legitimacy to collaboration and gives staff the incentive to put effort into such ventures. By providing a nurturing environment, library administration can ensure that various departments work together without trying to protect their turf. Common goals must be acknowledged and promoted. This type of environment creates a more efficient organization and one which can adopt change more quickly. It also creates an environment with a better morale and provides a richer professional experience for its employees. The project planning method used at the University of New Mexico Libraries (UNM) helps build

support and buy-in. Linking projects to the over-arching strategic goals builds an instant bridge to the library administration.

How to speak the same language

In general, the library profession has its share of jargon, but it is actually more complicated than that – there are local dialects. Cataloging, circulation, reference, instruction, and technology workers all have their own vocabularies. The first step towards cooperation is learning each other's dialects. In order to do this, various constituents need to be brought together to begin discussions. There are three kinds of encounters in which people from across departments can be brought together. One could be termed "educational outreach," in which one department invites other departments to a general presentation about their work and their procedures. Another is to have standing committees of staff from different areas meet regularly to set common agendas and to address common issues. The third is to have working groups created to work on a common project in which there is an equal stake. All three scenarios have been used in UNM over the years and have yielded various degrees of success. In all scenarios the willingness to meet, talk, and learn is the first step towards successful cooperation.

Discovery through to educational outreach

As technical services became increasingly automated in the mid-1990s, it became apparent that there was a gap in understanding of the ordering process between technical services and the rest of the library. A training session was held, and the selectors were introduced to the new acquisitions module and shown various fields in the order record. As a result, acquisitions staff realized that selectors did not readily have access to the order module of the new system. It was subsequently discovered that the ILS had a "public" mode, which could be set up and accessed via generic password and allowed records to be viewed by selectors. All of these discoveries came as a result of these meetings. Cataloging and reference had similar encounters at UNM around the same time. Again, as a result of automation, it was now possible to track and identify books in process. As users became more accustomed to expecting quicker turnaround times, reference librarians, as the intermediaries, were struggling with how to quickly identify where an uncataloged item could be found.

Several educational workshops were conducted in which the cataloging department discussed and explained the catalog records. Even though the specific focus of the sessions was to help public service librarians to find uncataloged books more quickly, the discussion evolved to cover such difficult access issues as uniform titles, alternate titles, and, of course, subject headings. Public service librarians provided input into how they would like the public display to look, and, as a result, the systems department was able to make changes that improved the display. Again, as in the previous example, issues were identified and solutions found for topics that had not been part of the original discussion.

The tradition of communicating and cooperating through educational opportunities has continued at UNM. There have been several cases of technical services personnel providing instruction for colleagues. Ideas for these sessions come through various channels. Some are inspired by the types of questions that are routed to the cataloging department through our internal request tracking system. Other ideas come from events such as changes in the cataloging code or a new discovery tool being implemented. In 2010, the current incarnation of the cataloging department, Cataloging and Discovery Services, organized and conducted an educational outreach session on the MARC record for public service librarians, called “How to Read a MARC Record.” The session was repeated for reference, access services, and branch personnel. In addition to educating, the presenters also uncovered what the audience looked for in the online catalog. The exercise led to a better understanding of each other’s work and needs. Cataloging personnel also presented training sessions when UNM chose to use OCLC’s WorldCat Local as the default search on its home page. Catalogers had quickly realized that reference and instruction librarians would not automatically know what the differences between the OCLC record used in WorldCat Local and the customized local version of the bibliographic record would be and how that would affect searching. Catalogers were in the best position to explain these differences, and making this information available contributed to the successful launch of a new search tool. This information-sharing also helped reference and instruction know when to refer a patron to the “classic catalog” with specialized local notes, such as in the case of archival collections. In addition, an upcoming session, “Understanding how RDA works,” is planned for public services personnel, which builds on the same concept that technical and public services personnel need a common language to understand how new developments affect services. The sessions will be held when RDA records

begin to appear in significant numbers in the catalog, so library personnel unfamiliar with cataloging will understand what they are seeing.

Evolving collaborative groups

By the early 2000s, UNM had created joint cross-departmental groups which consisted of managers of technical and public services. These groups met regularly and set the working agenda for the library. Over the years, they had interesting names such as TSMT/PSMT (Technical Services Management Team and Public Services Management Team), and later Joint Services. These groups provided the forum for planning, discussion, implementation, monitoring, and resolution of most of the Library's activities. Today they have evolved into a Dean's advisory group, which uses project management methodology to identify and keep track of all active projects in the Library. This method requires a project announcement stating goals and how the project supports strategic directions. After the announcement has been distributed to the whole staff and volunteers have been given the opportunity to join, a project agreement is complete, with detailed timeline information. A key component of the project management process is the communication of the project's goals and progress to the whole system.

Cooperative projects or working on a common cause

Once the library has a culture of cooperation, when opportunities arise it is easier to create ad hoc groups working on a common project. The culture of cooperation ensures that everybody involved feels invested in the project, has the willingness to collaborate, and is ready to invest the time and effort to make the project successful. This section will highlight several cooperative projects in which various constituents at the University of New Mexico Libraries have worked together successfully in accomplishing some ambitious goals.

One informal project was to create a group for anyone who works on aspects of record maintenance in the Integrated Library System (ILS). This idea sprang from challenges when faced with a large serials inventory and holdings project. There was frustration and misunderstanding due to the lack of any centralized set of standards or centralized workflow and procedures. As a result, people in the front lines, and patrons, had difficulty

interpreting the Library's serials holdings. Most personnel were not eager to join yet another committee. So, the Libraries called it the *Informal Database Maintenance Group*, with the major goal being to get all the parties into a room at the same time. Keeping the tone informal was the key to success. Staff had a place to bring their questions, and there were a number of "ah ha" moments. Just talking helped break down the jargon and get everyone on the same page. As a result, people from across public and technical services have worked successfully to standardize the serials holdings in an agreed upon and easily understood format.

Cooperation is also critical to the success of new initiatives. When UNM decided to create a Digital Initiatives Unit to manage, promote, and grow the University Libraries' digital collections, cooperation between special collections, technical services, and information technology was required in addition to the new personnel hired. Each unit needed to work with others to pool the expertise required.

There are many factors and constraints that directly affect our work, such as fiscal years, government reporting years, and semester schedules. We may have requirements about serving the public depending on our institution's mission, or we may be open only to specific communities. University of New Mexico Libraries is a participant in the Federal Depository Library Program as a regional depository. This participation comes with responsibilities to the public and for the care of the collection. Due to loss and realignment of staff, it was no longer feasible to have a department devoted strictly to the government documents collection, so it needed to be "mainstreamed" into acquisitions and cataloging. This was accomplished through training and workflow integration. The Libraries needed to have several meetings to walk through processes and tour the collection to understand how items were shelved. One result of this was a better understanding of how materials transition between departments. Taking on a new workload was a good reason to re-examine processes that had been performed on auto-pilot. This collaboration gave the library the opportunity to address a long-term need in government information: improved access to pre-1976 documents. The government information librarian, catalogers, and access services staff all cooperated to develop a "Quick Start" cataloging guide for non-catalogers to do the simplest cataloging of these documents during "down time" on service desks or other slow times, with step-by-step instructions and specific decision points to determine what material needed cataloger expertise. Since the Quick Start process was invented, access services staff and students have contributed to cataloging our previously uncataloged government posters and pamphlet collection. The government information librarian can now

add documents quickly when helping a patron rather than waiting for the title to be returned on a temporary record.

Projects that involve a number of departments are a great way to get to know colleagues in other departments. A well-designed project with a clear goal and an end date gives participants a sense of accomplishment that daily and ongoing duties do not always provide. Interdepartmental projects also foster good will and cooperation.

When UNM decided to close its separate Education Department Library and to transfer their collection to the University Library (UL), the UL found itself having to transfer, receive, and make a selection decision for about 15,000 titles, and then needed to catalog those items that were kept. This project involved subject specialists, access services, acquisitions, and cataloging. UNM's regular cataloging staff by themselves would not have been able to turn around this project in the desired one-year timeframe. Enlisting the help of volunteers from other departments enabled the library to meet that goal. "Volunteer" catalogers, consisting of staff from public and access services with some library background, were trained to do the straightforward titles (such as those with Library of Congress copy). These volunteers were trained in the basics of cataloging in WorldCat and in the local system. Each was set up with appropriate macros that streamlined the number of repetitive keystrokes required, as well as ensuring quality and consistency. Volunteers were also trained to identify titles that needed expert cataloging, such as assigning a call number or creating an authority record. Books that needed specialized attention were passed on to an experienced cataloger. Once the project was set up, three catalogers and six volunteers worked on cataloging the books. The physical processing section hired additional student employees to work on this project, so that the physical processing would not create a delay. Two catalogers also performed selection duties, making decisions on which titles to keep and which to reject. When the project began, the library set an ambitious goal of finishing in one year. Before long, trucks of the books were shuttling all over the system and quickly reaching the shelves. The project was completed within the desired timeframe, and many staff had opportunities to work with colleagues with whom they did not normally interact.

Creating the right environment

So, what are the requirements for creating an environment conducive to interdepartmental communication and cooperation? As seen from the

examples and scenarios described in this chapter, an institutional culture that recognizes and supports cooperation is essential. This ensures that staff from various departments will be willing to collaborate and invest the time in collaborative projects. Having institutional support also provides legitimacy to collaboration and gives staff the incentive to put effort into such ventures. This legitimacy is important, because it enables staff and managers from various units, who normally are not in the same reporting lines, to establish lines of authority and responsibility without interfering with the established reporting hierarchies. Collaborative teams, like any other teamwork, require clearly defined lines of authority, responsibility, and leadership. By providing a nurturing environment, library administration can ensure that various departments work together without trying to protect their turf. Common goals must be acknowledged and promoted. This type of environment makes for a more efficient organization and one which can adopt change more quickly. It also creates an environment with a better morale and provides a richer professional experience for its employees. The project planning method used at UNM helps build support and buy-in. Linking projects to strategic goals helps to connect staff efforts to library administration.

Conclusion

With some effort, in a proper institutional environment, different departments can start cooperating if they follow these common-sense steps of learning about each other's environments, each other's jargon, and each other's goals and objectives. In a well-run organization, most of the infrastructure for cooperation will already be in place. For less integrated organizations, this discussion should provide the basic framework necessary for implementing cooperation among departments, especially creating an environment in which people do not feel that they are competing with each other but, rather, are working for a common goal. This will minimize turf battles and confusing reporting lines, which can be very detrimental to cooperation. While institutional support is important, it is only the first step in encouraging successful cooperation. The practical aspects of cooperation consist in departments identifying common projects and following good project management techniques to bring them to a successful conclusion. The projects will create the opportunities for different departments to work together, to feel invested in each other's success, and ultimately to contribute to the overall success of the library.

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15

No middle ground? Perceptions and realities of the distinctions between tenured librarians and their professional colleagues

Peter Hepburn

Abstract: This chapter is an exploration of the varying models of status for academic librarians in relation to its implications for working relationships within libraries. This chapter examines strategies for collaborating with professionals with differing statuses. It builds upon existing literature and makes use of a survey instrument regarding the experience of tenured and non-tenured librarians and their perceptions of each other and of the fairness of the systems they work within. The author draws on his own experience as a tenured librarian in an academic setting that includes professionals with differing designations and ranks.

Key words: faculty status, tenure, clinical faculty, surveys, perceptions of colleagues.

Introduction

When approaching this chapter, foremost in mind were recent events at the author's institution. In 2011, clinical faculty at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Library successfully lobbied for professional development funding equal to that of their tenured and tenure-track colleagues based on a simple premise: *all* faculty should be treated equally. Why did it take until 2011? Why did so many librarians – clinical faculty

or otherwise – take the previous funding levels for granted? Perhaps most of us do not look beneath the surface at the working situations our colleagues experience, particularly at whatever impact status or rank may have. We assume that work is work, that we may have different tasks but serve the same mission in the library.

Tenure for librarians remains contentious, both prized and scorned within academic libraries and their parent institutions. With tenure comes entitlement, or so opponents believe. Proponents argue that with tenure come unique responsibilities and privileges. Left mostly unexamined, however, are the relationships among the various tenured and non-tenured ranks of librarians. This chapter sets out to explore that area. The author surveys perceptions of tenure and non-tenure statuses, discusses implications of status for working relationships within libraries, and suggests strategies for working with professionals with differing statuses. This chapter builds upon existing literature and makes use of survey data regarding the experience of tenured and non-tenured librarians and their perceptions. In addition, the author offers his own perspective, based on over a decade of having worked in an institution in which some librarians have tenure while others do not.

Literature review

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has created guidelines regarding promotion and tenure of academic librarians.[1] Anyone familiar with faculty governance documents will recognize much of the language in the guidelines, even if – as at the author's institution – these guidelines are not an explicit starting point. The topic of tenure and librarians recurs frequently in the literature. As Bernstein notes, the "subject of classification for academic librarians remains a mainstay theme in many respected library journals."[2] He also remarks that, despite some high-profile articles decrying faculty status and tenure, "a decidedly higher percentage of authors [favor] some form of faculty classification for academic librarians."[3] Coker and her colleagues, for example, provide compelling arguments for tenure and a rebuttal to such criticisms as "tenured librarians tend to become unproductive . . . they put their feet up and stop working."[4] Ultimately, Bernstein's count of over 100 peer-reviewed articles on tenure for librarians is a measure of how important to us that status can be.[5] The literature, moreover, is rich with advice on gaining tenure. In his overview of the literature, Bernstein points to research that discusses the relative advantages and disadvantages

of faculty status, citing such areas as positional advancement, better salaries, job satisfaction, and connection with the educational mission of the college or university.[6]

There is little written pertaining to distinctions between librarian statuses within institutions, however. One useful resource is Bolin, who provides an excellent survey of the landscape in her articles on typologies of librarian statuses. She summarizes the conventional conversation on status, noting that "discussions and surveys of faculty status often express it as a binary condition: faculty/not faculty."[7] Like Bolin, this author was interested in the spectrum that encompassed various statuses, whether faculty, quasi-faculty, or not faculty at all, cutting across many departments and specializations.

Background

In order to frame later discussion, it is helpful to provide insight on the current situation at the University of Illinois at Chicago Library. Librarians at UIC fall into five categories: tenured/tenure-track faculty, clinical track faculty, academic professionals, continuous appointments (lecturers and instructors), and visiting appointments (various ranks). The latter three do not confer faculty status. The first category of tenured and tenure-track librarians outnumbers the other categories combined.

At UIC, tenured and tenure-track librarians have historically been those in public services, as well as others, such as bibliographers, who work closely with faculty in other UIC colleges. The tenure track for faculty at UIC is usually a six-year process with no subsequent reviews unless an associate professor attempts to be promoted to full professorship. Achieving tenure includes a rigorous research and publication requirement. Clinical track librarians, by comparison, have traditionally worked in technical services and other non-public positions. They undergo a similar review process to the tenure track, though there is less emphasis on research and publication. Moreover, there is no incentive for clinical assistant professors to ultimately be promoted to associate professorship and beyond. Clinical faculty do not enjoy the same job protection that tenured faculty enjoy and, in fact, may be terminated with minimal notice. As noted, until 2011, the clinical ranks received less professional development funding.

The non-faculty librarian ranks are scattered across the remaining three categories and are not a homogeneous group. The academic professional ranks, for example, are not entirely made up of people

holding the Master of Library and Information Science degree but do include librarians. In recent years, the status of numerous academic professional positions across campus has been challenged, and, as a result, the Library is considering options for these librarians, including moving some to the clinical track. Academic professionals are invited (and often expected) to participate in faculty activities but cannot serve on faculty committees and have no vote in faculty governance. There is no peer review for them comparable to the tenure or clinical tracks. They also receive less funding for professional development. One benefit accorded this category of librarians is generous termination notification, up to one year depending on length of service at the Library. As for the other ranks, continuous appointments are few in number and include part-time positions. Like the academic professionals, these librarians are invited to faculty activities but are not technically considered faculty. Meanwhile, the set of librarians with visiting appointments often hold grant-driven positions. Their appointments are limited to the terms of their contracts ("visiting" implies a single-year status), and they, too, receive a lower amount of professional development funding than do their faculty colleagues.

In the last decade at UIC, there has been an overall shrinkage of the professional ranks and shifting in the relationships among the various ranks. Over time, some disparities, and resultant resentments, have come to the surface, where they have been addressed. To see whether this was a common occurrence within academic libraries, the author created a survey to query academic librarians on the varying statuses at their institutions, and what effect (if any) they thought this had on the organizational climate of their workplace. The author hypothesized that there remain deep and hidden divisions among librarians of differing ranks, and that those divisions have a significant impact on the climate at academic libraries.

The survey

In order to understand how status is perceived at other institutions, the author surveyed academic librarians from across professional ranks, be they tenured, clinical, or of another designation at their institutions. Participation was open to librarians nationwide (and beyond), with an email invitation being distributed through listservs to which the author belonged. The survey was made available for three weeks in November 2011. The survey instrument, which was administered online only, may be found in the Appendix.

There were 178 responses, and, while the respondent pool was not statistically significant in relation to the number of academic librarians nationwide, there were sufficient results to be suggestive of some noteworthy trends. More importantly, there was an abundance of commentary from the respondents. Table 15.1 shows the breakdown according to what sort of status respondents held at their institution.

The clear majority are faculty. This recalls Bolin's research; her initial study found that most librarians held faculty rank, though what that actually meant in terms of tenure or other conditions varied. As she noted about faculty status, it "is not a predictor of the details of that status."[8] The results of this survey, then, necessarily skew towards a faculty point of view, without an assumption that library faculty share the same rights across all institutions. In the minority is that group of "other": approximately 11 percent of those who responded indicated some other status that did not fit into one of the categories offered in the survey. Among that respondent subpopulation were the following designations: academic professional with continuous appointment, college faculty (non-tenure-track), continuous appointment track, librarian track (faculty), non-tenure-track faculty, part-time librarian, and associate faculty. Thus, faculty status occurs in forms the author had not anticipated.

One outcome of the survey was that few respondents indicated the existence of a clinical faculty status at their libraries. UIC was used as a model for the survey; therefore, the survey included such a designation. The status is not unknown at other institutions; indeed, McGowan and Dow argue in favor of it, drawing comparison to clinical medical faculty and especially their client orientation.[9] There is little else in the literature focused on this type of faculty appointment, however, resulting in the conclusion that this may be a status particular to libraries at institutions that include a medical school. In the end only 12 respondents (representing

Table 15.1 Survey respondents by status

Status	Number	%
Tenure/tenure track faculty	93	52
Academic professional (faculty)	37	21
Academic professional (non-faculty)	27	15
Clinical faculty	1	1
Other (respondents were asked to specify)	20	11

an unknown number of libraries) indicated that such a designation was found where they worked, and, as shown above, only one clinical faculty member responded to the survey. This was surprising and left the range of response less broad than desired, but there were sufficient responses from other non-tenure-track ranks to provide helpful insight.

The question "What type of librarians fall into each category at your institution?" was asked to determine whether the technical services/ public services split observed at UIC was prevalent elsewhere. Respondents were invited to assign librarians to a broad category roughly determined by department; for example, reference (public services) might be tenure track while acquisitions (technical services) might be academic professional. However, according to survey results, there was no clear divide. Tenure and tenure track was the most prevalent choice in each of the five broad survey categories. It was strongest in public services and weakest among systems librarians, but in all cases it was the most common status. Other possibilities gleaned from the comments were designation as staff or as administrative ranks, depending on position. Much as at UIC, part-timers generally sat outside the faculty system, according to several responses. There were also instances when respondents simply did not know who fell into what category at their libraries: "I assume that all librarians are tenure track until I learn otherwise. It often seems that status is arbitrarily or illogically determined." "I don't actually know what the statuses of the staff in some departments are." This notion of not knowing how colleagues are classified recurred later in the survey and informed some of the author's later conclusions.

Results and consideration

Aside from the demographic questions already outlined, the survey sought responses regarding two related but different viewpoints: how librarians viewed matters at their own institution and how they viewed their own actions and attitudes. One question asked the respondents to use a scale to indicate how relationships are among the differing statuses (Table 15.2), while an open-ended question invited comments on those relationships. Of those librarians who offered some insight, some tempered their opinions on the merits of differing status with the actuality of the working relationships around them. There were, for example, responses that status did not or should not matter, that these librarians did not give it much thought. Still, others did address the question, and

Table 15.2 **Perception of working relationships among different categories of librarians**

Respondent category	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Tenure/tenure-track faculty	33	39	12	5	1
Academic professional (faculty)	18	13	2	1	0
Academic professional (non-faculty)	12	11	1	0	0
Clinical faculty	0	1	0	0	0
Other (please specify)	9	5	4	1	1

Note: for responses in this table, *n*= 169

commented that their work environments were harmonious *despite* divisions in status. As one person expressed it, “I have always felt that we support each other and keep the end user in mind.” However, no respondents suggested that having differing statuses may actually bring out complementary strengths among colleagues, or any other potential benefits. One encouraging trend was that complaints were fewer in number than positive comments. Furthermore, some survey participants acknowledged that relations may not have been ideal but have improved: “At the present time academic rank is rarely an issue, although it has been contentious in the past. . . . Inequities have been addressed.” This is not unlike the situation at the author’s own institution.

Compensation disparities were a recurring theme on which respondents provided negative comments, in particular, salaries, professional development funding and activities, and support for other faculty-related activities. The other common complaint centered on acceptance and respect, with comments cutting both ways. Some non-tenured librarians feel excluded by those who have tenure or are on the tenure track, while those among the tenured ranks sensed resentment by those not on the track over the job security that tenure provides. The various comments recalled Mozenter and Stickell, who touched upon the notion of organization justice in their discussion of organizational culture. Though their study narrowly focuses on the attempt within their library to develop a transparent merit pay system, they provide a summary that divides organizational justice into three types: methods, policies, and procedures; treatment received; and fairness of allocations.[10] In the current survey, however, not one respondent used the word “justice,” and only one explicitly mentioned fairness in any way: “There are three

degreed librarians at our library. The Director and Cataloger are faculty; the Reference librarian is not. This is being disputed by the Reference librarian as blatantly unfair as she is the only one who actually teaches." Nonetheless, some survey comments, consciously or otherwise, raised issues of organizational justice that clearly exist in some libraries.

Elsewhere in the survey, when asked whether they felt there were advantages or disadvantages for the working relationships among librarians in having colleagues of differing status, a plurality of respondents felt that there are neither (Table 15.3). Beyond that group, however, the rest tipped towards disadvantage. Even then, there were positive comments, such as those noting that differing statuses add multiple viewpoints to the library and that the library can benefit from having librarians focus on their strengths, whether in research or in the more conventional work activities. Others, while expressing concerns, tempered them somewhat. For example, tenured librarians may get better benefits, but the non-tenured have no pressure to publish (though someone commented that the non-tenured get the same benefits and do not have the pressure to publish). Those who shared only negative feedback usually focused on discrepancies in pay, benefits, and job protection.

Some viewed the problems as not impacting the individuals as much as the institution, in having to deal with varying contracts or in occasional discrepancies between who was best for a task and who, because of rules regarding status, was actually charged with it. This was reminiscent of Moriarty's warnings (as quoted by Coker et al.) that librarians without true faculty status may be denied opportunities or responsibilities even when they are capable.[11] There are further echoes of this in Mozenter and Stickell: "The decision to eliminate tenure-track positions had the unintended consequence of making non-tenure-track librarians ineligible for certain campus committees, grants, and even phased retirement."[12] Finally, there was a librarian who lamented that collaborating with colleagues at other libraries where tenure is in place can be tricky because these librarians often think of the research and publication outcomes above anything else. It is a viewpoint that deserves better exploration as diminishing resources force institutions to collaborate even more.

As for their perspective on how *they* act, if anything, the respondents were more positive. As Table 15.4 shows, respondents feel that their personal working relationships are generally at least as good as what otherwise exists in their libraries (Table 15.3). In the case of tenure-track faculty, apparently it is better: 43 felt that their relationships with others were very good, by comparison to the 33 who thought that relationships

Table 15.3 **Perspectives on advantages and disadvantages for working relationships among librarians in having colleagues of differing status**

Respondent status	Significant advantages	Minor advantages	Neither advantage nor disadvantage	Minor disadvantages	Significant disadvantages
Tenure/tenure-track faculty	5	10	39	24	9
Academic professional (faculty)	0	1	26	5	1
Academic professional (non-faculty)	2	2	12	5	3
Clinical faculty	0	0	1	0	0
Other (please specify)	2	1	7	7	2

Note: for responses in this table, *n*= 164

Table 15.4 **Perceptions of librarians' own working relationships with others of differing status**

Respondent status	Very good working relationship	Good working relationship	Fair working relationship	Poor working relationship	Very poor working relationship
Tenure/tenure-track faculty	43	33	4	3	0
Academic professional (faculty)	18	9	2	0	0
Academic professional (non-faculty)	8	10	1	0	0
Clinical faculty	1	0	0	0	0
Other (please specify)	8	6	3	0	1

Note: for responses in this table, $n = 149$

within their libraries were very good. In response to the open-ended questions on personal relationships, there were a few clear refrains among the librarians. First were those librarians who, according to their responses, never thought about anyone's status and did not think status had any importance so long as the work got done and the end user was satisfied. The sincerity of these respondents should not be doubted, and end user satisfaction is certainly important. However, the author questions to what degree some may take status for granted and what they might consequently misunderstand about the status of others. There were also comments that implied empathy for colleagues, paired with good working relations. These two types of positive responses were the most prevalent. Still, not everyone was content, and, though the question asked respondents how they acted towards colleagues, the negative comments usually addressed how respondents themselves were (mis)treated. As one person succinctly put it, "There are times I feel dismissed because I am not on a tenure track." Again, this does not tell us how that person (or the others) feels he treats his colleagues of differing status, but it does suggest that there is some dissatisfaction.

The UIC Library has been addressing some discontent over the different treatment of and privileges for the differing ranks of librarians. The survey suggests that UIC might be in the minority in experiencing any discontent, no matter how mild. Either that, or there is little awareness of the impact of status on the workplace. Which of those options to prefer depends, barring other evidence, on how cynical one chooses to be. Ultimately, certain things should be kept in mind. First, as noted, the field is replete with articles and presentations on tenure, pro and con. Librarians, in other words, are concerned with rank and standing even if a lot of that contemplation is outward-facing, towards our institutions instead of ourselves. Second, due to a small sample size, the survey data cannot be considered representative of the profession. It may be roughly indicative of the landscape, but there is room for debate.

One notion, evident from the literature and the respondents, is that tenure is a tough slog that ultimately bears rewards. But what are the rewards? Judging by some of the responses, the rewards are financial remuneration and benefits, with additional respect a happy bonus when it transpires. Missing was the supposed goal of tenure: academic freedom. Had the survey asked about the value of tenure, certainly at least a few librarians would have touched on this. Instead, compensation and equitable access to various resources and forms of support were emphasized. In other words, the tangible aspects of organizational justice were those most mentioned and presumably the most valued. In a work

environment with differing statuses for librarians, that becomes the starting point for achieving a middle ground.

Suggestions and strategies

There are gaps in status among librarians, and, as the survey results suggest, many librarians deserve commendation for how they bridge the gaps to interact with colleagues. However, what lies within those gaps still matters. For example, Mozenter and Stickell noted that the attempt at developing a merit pay mechanism at their library "exposed some fundamental climate issues between tenured librarians and their covered colleagues . . . . [that] may have always been just below the surface."[13] The survey results bear this out: 34 percent of the respondents felt there were disadvantages of varying degree for the working relationships among librarians at their libraries in having colleagues of differing status (Table 15.3). This response rate cannot be overlooked. A library may not be rife with climate issues, but it could be well worth it for librarians and their organizations to take an objective look at relationships among professionals of various statuses in those organizations.

A preliminary step is to ask questions. As an administrator, you might initiate a climate exploration at your library. As someone not in administration, you might try something as basic as inviting a colleague to coffee or lunch and working status into the conversation. So what if you discover that there are tensions? Be transparent about it. This is an opportunity to get your colleagues talking, to expose any issues, and to resolve them. Keep in mind that you may confirm that all is, indeed, very well and that your library has a healthy climate. After all, 83 percent of the survey respondents shared such a perception. If that is the case, nurture it, build on it, and share your successes as a model for others. The first step to finding a middle ground, though, is taking that careful look.

Second, strive for representativeness in the work activities you undertake. This can mean different actions for managers and non-managers. The range of possibilities runs from simple consultation with your colleagues (the coffee conversations mentioned above but carried out more formally) on various aspects of the library, to composing work teams drawn from librarians of differing status when possible. Is this a form of tokenism? Not necessarily, especially if handled sincerely and if no one status is evidently favored repeatedly. Think of it as a diversity measure in its way. Given how librarians of different status could bring complementary perspectives and skills to library situations, it is one

worth trying. As one survey respondent commented, it "allows a diversity of skill sets to work together to meet the complex needs of the library." By extension, then, library users benefit.

Third, there is a more profound option: empathy. This means a two-way understanding of the obligations of differing statuses. The survey comments, as noted earlier, uncovered resentments harbored by more than just one status of librarian. Each side has a responsibility to ask, listen, and respond. In doing so, they can find out commonality, even if it is not exactly halfway between them. How this conversation takes place will differ depending on whether it is between you and your manager, those at a level with you, or those you supervise. Find strength in numbers, if needed, and approach it as a group – this is what *we* need, this is how *we* can work with you. It may be an awkward conversation at first, but it would be an honest and important one.

The three steps proposed circle back to organizational justice. In order to achieve fairness, it is important that everyone be seen, heard, and considered. Suggested changes to salaries, methods of awarding raises, or disbursement of other benefits cannot be remediated here, although a human resources department might have something to say about such suggestions. Consequently, the outcome may be that some things remain unevenly distributed. Fairness does not mean equity, though, and justice does not rely on being paid the same. There are deeper workplace satisfactions to be gained by looking, listening, and empathizing.

Conclusion

The end user is very important, and the way librarians interact with each other affects the way they serve users. The ACRL guidelines state as much: "Using these criteria and procedures will ensure that the library faculty and, therefore, library services will be of the highest quality possible."[14] That makes understanding an academic library environment in which librarians have differing statuses germane.

Although the author had expected to find deep divisions hidden among the ranks of professional staff in libraries, the survey indicates that may not be the case. However, there was also evidence of librarians not giving status its due consideration as a factor in workplace relationships. The literature reflects the degree to which academic librarians have been focused on the debate over tenure and its outward manifestation. It is the internal impact that has been missing. Tenure exists, and librarians and libraries are unlikely to retreat from it. Perhaps the profession can now

move past that particular discussion and on to nurturing and strengthening the workplace relationships that tenure affects.

Notes

1. ACRL Committee on the Status of Academic Librarians, "A Guideline for the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Librarians," *College & Research Libraries News* 71, no. 10 (2010): 552–60.
2. Alan Bernstein, "Academic Librarians and Faculty Status: Mountain, Molehill or Mesa," *Georgia Library Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (2009): 12.
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4. Catherine Coker, Wyoma VanDuinkerken, and Stephen Bales, "Seeking Full Citizenship: A Defense of Tenure Faculty Status for Librarians," *College & Research Libraries* 71, no. 5 (2010): 412.
5. Bernstein, "Academic Librarians and Faculty Status," 13.
6. Ibid., 14.
7. Mary K. Bolin, "A Typology of Librarian Status at Land Grant Universities," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 34, no. 3 (2008): 222.
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9. Julie Johnson McGowan and Elizabeth H. Dow, "Faculty Status and Academic Librarianship: Transformation to a Clinical Model," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 21 (1995): 348.
10. Frada L. Mozenter and Lois Stickell, "Without Merit: One Library's Attempt to Put 'Merit' Back in 'Merit Pay'," *College & Research Libraries* 70, no. 1 (2009): 36–7.
11. John H. Moriarty, "Academic in Deed" *College & Research Libraries* 31 (1970): 14-17. Quoted in Coker et al., "Seeking Full Citizenship," 415.
12. Mozenter and Stickell, "Without Merit," 37.
13. Mozenter and Stickell, "Without Merit," 55.
14. ACRL Committee, "A Guideline for the Appointment," 552.

Appendix: Survey

This survey has been designed to inform a book chapter exploring the relationship between tenured librarians and those within (and even outside of) their institutions who may not yet have tenure or who may be on a different professional track. Data from the survey will be used to establish the pros and cons of tenure, the implications of tenure on working relationships within the library, and strategies for collaborating with and managing professionals with differing statuses.

There are ten questions in the survey. Half deal with your library and half deal with your own experiences. The survey should take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete. You may drop out of the survey at any time without any penalty and that [sic] responses to the survey cannot be traced back to you. Data from the survey will be [sic] remain confidential and will be stored upon completion of the study.

This survey has been approved by the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board. Concerns about participation in the survey may be directed to the Review Board.

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1. By clicking on the button below, you acknowledge that you are sharing information regarding your workplace and yourself. You understand that you may withdraw from the survey at any time without any penalty. You are voluntarily participating in the survey.

   Yes, I voluntarily agree to take the survey. | No, I do not wish to take the survey.

The questions in this section are about your observation of your library. Please take into account the formal and informal organization practices in place where you work.

2. What are the ranks that librarians at your institution may hold?

   Academic Professional (non-faculty) | Academic Professional (faculty) | Clinical Faculty | Tenure/Tenure track | Faculty | Other

3. What type of librarians fall into each category at your institution?

   Collection Development | Public Services (including reference, instruction, circulation) | Special Collections (including archives) | Systems | Technical Services (including acquisitions, cataloging, metadata) | Please explain as necessary

4. How do you perceive the working relationships among the different categories of librarians at your institution to be?

   Very good | Good | Fair | Poor | Very poor

5. Please explain your response to question 4.
6. Do you feel there are advantages or disadvantages for the working relationships among librarians at your library to have colleagues of differing status?

   Significant advantages | Minor advantages | Neither advantage nor disadvantage | Minor disadvantages | Significant disadvantages | Please explain

The questions in this section are about your own experience. Please answer with reference to your own experiences in your library.

7. What status do you hold?

   Academic Professional (non-faculty) | Academic Professional (faculty) | Clinical Faculty | Tenure/Tenure track | Faculty | Other
8. Do you work with or manage librarians of differing status in your department?

   Work with | Manage
9. How do you feel about your own working relationship with librarians at your institution who are not of the same status as you?

   Very good working relationship | Good working relationship | Fair working relationship | Poor working relationship | Very poor working relationship
10. Please explain your response to question 9.

Thank you for your participation in the survey. Should you have any questions or wish to follow up with the researcher, please contact Peter Hepburn.

16

Mentoring in academic libraries

Diane Bruxvoort

Abstract: Mentoring programs in academic libraries come in a variety of guises: formal and informal, hierarchical and peer. The intent of the program may be to nurture librarians new to the profession or the organization, or to guide librarians through the steps of promotion and tenure. A literature review of mentoring in libraries reveals the nature of these programs and provides a variety of case studies on how specific libraries have implemented them. Best practices for library mentoring programs are delineated, covering topics such as establishing guidelines, making a good mentor/mentee match, establishing professional relationships, setting goals and timelines, sharing information, and being proactive.

Key words: mentoring, hierarchical mentors, peer mentors, communities of practice, mentoring programs.

Introduction

When first considering a chapter on mentoring in an academic library, the assumption is that coaching will be an integral part of the discussion, since they often go hand in hand. A Google search for "mentoring and coaching" yields 676,000 results. The same search in the Summon discovery tool yields 3481 results. However, even a cursory review of the results reveals that the two topics quickly diverge when implemented in the workplace. The phrase is ubiquitous; the practice is not, and the differences are quite clear. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a mentor as "a person who acts as guide or advisor to another person"

while a coach is "one who trains others."[1] In *Colleagues Helping Colleagues: Mentoring and Coaching*, Hopkins-Thompson tells us that mentors "support the well-being of their protégés, providing advocacy, counseling, support, and protection – feedback and information that they would otherwise not have."[2] Coaches, on the other hand, "have a high level of knowledge about specific skills and can teach those skills by breaking them down into behaviors, modeling them, observing them, and then providing feedback."[3] Mentors counsel and support; coaches teach specific skills. Mentoring and its place in the academic library workplace is the focus here.

In this discussion, selected books in the general literature and the articles in the library literature on mentoring and mentoring programs will be reviewed. Best practices for conducting a mentoring program for a tenure program will be delineated. The reader will be provided with information to guide decisions around the formation of mentoring programs and to provoke further thought on when and how mentoring becomes an integral part of the workplace.

A note about terminology: The word "mentor" is a known and comfortable word within our society; the word "mentee" is not. Some articles use the word "protégé," others refer to new librarians. Brewerton tells us: "'Mentee' is not always a popular term: indeed, the European Mentoring Centre in 1992 offered a prize of a magnum of champagne to anyone who could coin a widely acceptable alternative."[4] That was 20 years ago, and the magnum of champagne is still available, so "mentee" will be used throughout this chapter.

A review of the literature

Books

The literature on mentoring is as diverse as it is extensive. Many fields of endeavor have their own mentoring literature, with the most coverage in education and business. This discussion primarily looks at literature within the library profession, but there are two general mentoring books that are worth including here. *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life* by Kram is a standard in the field.[5] In this concise overview, which includes career stages, mentor relationships, and alternative types of mentoring, Kram defines the two primary functions of a mentoring relationship.

> Career functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance learning the ropes and preparing for advancement in an organization. Psychosocial functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role. While career functions serve, primarily, to aid advancement up the hierarchy of an organization, psychosocial functions affect each individual on a personal level by building self-worth both inside and outside the organization.[6]

Mentoring in academic libraries is most often a combination of these two functions, and this work coming from the field of psychology is an excellent primer on mentoring.

While Kram's emphasis is on the individual, Zachary's *Creating a Mentoring Culture*, coming from the business world, concentrates on the organization and how mentoring affects the organization.[7] "Because mentoring combines the impact of learning with the compelling human need for connection, it leaves individuals better able to deepen their personal capacity and maintain organization vitality in the face of continuous challenge and change."[8] More handbook than textbook, Zachary provides practical steps for implementation with a variety of exercises and activities.

Formal v. informal

Many articles in the library literature beyond the general overviews look at specific types of mentoring programs. Formal programs are set up by library administration for a specific purpose, such as preparation for promotion and tenure or following a rash of retirements and the concomitant influx of new librarians. Informal programs are occasionally started by administration but are more likely to be grassroots efforts started by librarians looking for leadership and growth. Formal or informal programs can be modeled on traditional (hierarchical) mentoring, peer mentoring, resource mentoring, and communities of practice.

Two excellent overview articles lay out the basics of mentoring within libraries. Brewerton employs a "what, why, who, and how" framework using lists to lay out the components of a mentoring program. He describes mentoring as "a long-standing and well-respected management technique that fell out of favour and has now been re-discovered."[9] Freedman echoes the evidence for and importance of a resurgence of

mentoring in libraries: "Increasingly, research libraries which foster a culture of learning have started looking into mentoring as a professional development effort as well as a way to retain workers and deal with the massive retirement of librarians."[10] However, she also points out that only 26 percent of research libraries have a formal mentoring program,[11] indicating that growth is still needed in this area to better take advantage of the wealth of knowledge accumulated by librarians now nearing retirement. Freedman also emphasizes the need for mentoring at the mid-career stage for the continued development of the librarian and the organization: "The impact on librarianship of plateauing at a particular career stage, namely mid-career, needs to be addressed by library leaderships and professional associations. Effective mentoring needs to focus not only on improving the performance of individual librarians, but also on enhancing library organizational productivity."[12]

Neyer and Yelinek provide the results of a survey assessing mentoring among Pennsylvania academic librarians and comparing the experiences of Boomer and NextGen librarians.[13] Their conclusions indicate that librarians of both generations are open to a variety of types of mentoring. They called for additional training for mentors and echoed the interest in mentoring at all career stages. Put simply: "Mentoring should be available to everyone who needs it and wants it."[14]

Case studies

The majority of articles in the library literature review programs as set out at specific university libraries, with much discussion on the efficacy of formal versus informal programs, and traditional hierarchical mentoring versus peer mentoring or communities of practice. Louisiana State University Libraries implemented a formal mentoring program for tenure-track librarians which begins with peer mentoring and moves to hierarchical mentoring.[15] The University of Kansas began with a formal mentoring-for-tenure program, but after a change of leadership broadened the program to include all staff interested in mentoring.[16] Kansas State University also broadened its program when a 20-year-old mentoring-for-tenure program was made more formal, but less restrictive.[17]

Other formal mentoring programs have more variance in their implementation. California State University Long Beach developed a formal mentoring program using resource teams, "in which a trio of senior librarians offer support, guidance, and training to a new librarian during their first six months of employment."[18] While requiring a large

investment of time and energy up front, the timeline is greatly shortened when compared with a mentoring relationship that is expected to last throughout the tenure process. The University of Delaware created a three-tiered mentoring program for staff and librarians at the introductory, mid-career, and advanced levels of professional development.[19] Breaking the process into shorter periods again changes the impact on the mentors, allowing a two- or three-year commitment rather than the six-year tenure commitment. It also allows interested librarians to become mentors at an early point in their careers, since their mentee can be someone at the introductory level.

Even with the variety exhibited by these programs, they are still essentially hierarchical mentoring programs. Other libraries have moved to peer mentoring, "which pairs an inexperienced person with a knowledgeable individual or group of the same status."[20] At Colorado State University Libraries, a change in the tenure requirements was the impetus for beginning a peer mentoring program in addition to the hierarchical program already in place: "The peer mentoring group was established to fill a void between the formal mentoring structure and the information and responsibilities needed by the growing number of newly hired and tenure-track librarians."[21] The University of Idaho Libraries went beyond peer mentoring to the formation of a community of practice: a group of people with a common interest or profession, sharing experiences and knowledge, in an effort to improve the skills of each member. This was an effort to fulfill the junior faculty's "desire for collaboration across departmental lines, support from senior faculty, a space to safely develop innovative ideas, in addition to the established focus in the literature on both the psychosocial and career functions of each member."[22]

One of the few informal programs documented is at Oakland University's Kresge Library, where the Untenured Librarians Club was formed in 2001.[23] The group meets regularly in a casual setting to share experiences, encourage active participation, and provide advice. The support group environment is most likely replicated in other libraries, but the informal nature of these collaborations does not require formal reporting, and may account for the underrepresentation of such groups in the literature.

The diversity in library mentoring programs is due to the many combinations available: a formal program may be hierarchical or peer, or incorporate elements of each. Peer mentoring programs may be strictly peer or incorporate more experienced mentors. Informal programs are more likely to be peer than hierarchical, but more research is needed to

really understand these programs. The overall message, however, is that mentoring programs are on the rise in academic libraries, and it is important to understand their effect on library culture as well as on specific programs.

Institutional culture

Traditional hierarchical mentoring, still the most common type of mentoring program in libraries at this point, may appear to be an activity isolated from the overall business of the organization, with employees meeting in pairs to work on one person's professional development. Fortunately, these meetings, when successful, have a larger impact on the organization. Zachary writes: "The relationship skills learned through mentoring strengthen relationships throughout the organization; as these relationships deepen, people feel more connected to the organization. Ultimately a mentoring culture enriches the vibrancy and productivity of an organization and the people within it."[24]

There is also a great deal of interest in the library community in investing in peer mentoring. Some are combining traditional and peer mentoring, others are seeing it as a viable alternative or are looking for additional alternatives such as communities of practice. Murphy urges the library community to continue to expand the mentoring practice to include relationships such as "dialogue groups, networks, mentoring circles, and even reverse mentoring, where the lesser experienced protégé helps the mentor to master a new technology or concept."[25]

Best practices

As a librarian and then administrator in two large academic libraries, the author has been involved as a mentor and as a program planner in two formal mentoring programs. At the University of Houston (UH), all incoming librarians were assigned a mentor by the administrative team. Attainment of continuing appointment (tenure by any other name) was the primary goal, but mentors were also expected to assist with the overall development of the librarian within the organization.

The mentoring program at the University of Florida (UF) is more formal and more restrictive. Upon hire, mentors are assigned to tenure-track librarians to assist them in their journey through the tenure and promotion process. This section will focus on best practices in mentoring

with the focus on promotion and tenure, using information gleaned through the literature and the author's experience.

#1: Clear guidelines

Whether employing a formal or informal hierarchical or peer program, it is essential that mentors and mentees have clear guidelines for what their participation in the program entails. This type of ongoing program has participants entering at various times, so it is crucial that training be provided regularly so that new mentors and mentees are matched with the information they need to be successful. At UF, for example, mentor training is offered at least once a year but more often if there has been a series of new hires. Training is organized by the training unit within the library's human resources department, but tenured faculty are asked to participate in presenting the training. This provides new participants in the program with a variety of people with whom they can discuss their needs and concerns in the training session and beyond.

#2: Know your goal

Many academic mentoring programs are aimed specifically at the attainment of tenure. It is believed that supervisors, department chairs, and peers provide sufficient support for learning a new job and adjusting to a new culture, but that tenure needs special attention by someone outside the supervisory chain so that its importance is not overshadowed by day-to-day work.

#3: Make a good match

A variety of factors are to be considered in matching mentors and mentees. Mentor matches should not necessarily be made solely on similarities of assignment; other factors considered should include the backgrounds of mentor and mentee, personality types, and availability.

#4: Don't wait to get started

When bringing tenure-track librarians into the organization, it is crucial that the importance of building their career within the tenure process be

communicated early and often. Mentors should be assigned early, ideally in the first month of work, and trained to contact their mentee to begin the process immediately. We often hear the "give them time to settle in" refrain, but the tenure clock starts at hire, not in six months. Six months lost from a six-year tenure program is an 8 percent loss, and lost time cannot be regained. In reality, the mentee will probably not begin on tenure work in the first six months, but if the preparation for this work does not happen at that time it must happen later, and this will inevitably delay progress towards tenure.

#5: Share information

The mentor and the mentee need information as soon as possible. The mentor needs to get from the mentee a copy of his/her vita or resumé to be informed on the background and interests of the new colleague. The mentee needs to know how tenure and the requirements for such are defined within the organization. An initial meeting should be set up to share this and like information and to open the lines of communication.

#6: Consider your viewpoint

As a mentor working with a new hire, it is important to view the organization through the eyes of your mentee. The mentor should be knowledgeable about task force, work group, and committee opportunities that are appropriate for the new hire. Mentors may also browse through the training opportunities available for someone at the mentee's level. It is important for mentors to take a mental step out of their own work position and into the mentee's.

#7: Establish a professional relationship

In the first months, the dedication of the mentorship relationship should be to the mentee. The mentor should make every effort to make time to build the relationship, initiating meetings and being available for questions. Turning away a mentee because of workload may be a logical reaction to a given situation but may look like rejection to the mentee, and a second request may never come. The mentor's primary goal at this time is to establish a professional working relationship with the mentee as a foundation for future interactions.

#8: Don't continue a bad match

In an ideal world, every mentor/mentee pair will bond immediately, creating a strong working relationship that will see the mentee through tenure and bring great personal rewards to the mentor. In the real world, sometimes pairings just don't work. Mentoring pairs should not be afraid to admit this when it happens. An early understanding of a bad match allows time to provide a different mentor for the new librarian without adversely affecting their work towards tenure. The goal is for this to be a strong working relationship, not a six-year sentence.

#9: Share professional connections

After building a strong foundation, mentors work with their mentees as needed. While it may be tempting, and somewhat legitimate, to sit back and wait for mentees to come to mentors when they have a question or need advice, the mentor should also be proactive. One of the most important ways in which a mentor can help a new librarian is by sharing professional connections. Mentors should talk to mentees about their service interests and use their own connections to assist mentees. The right connection at the right time can advance a new librarian's potential exponentially.

#10: Be proactive at each step of the promotion and tenure process

The mentor should volunteer to review the mentee's mid-career packet before he or she presents it to the Tenure and Promotion (T&P) committee. The review may be as simple as proofreading or as complex as suggesting new ways to present the information to be more effective. If the T&P committee at an institution offers an in-person discussion of the mentee's dossier, the mentor should ask if he or she might be able to attend. Hearing first hand what the committee has to say about the dossier will help the mentor guide the mentee moving forward. After the mid-career review, the job is simple: more of the same. Continue to be available to the mentee, reviewing their work at least annually, and again stepping up to be a resource for completion of their packet when going up for promotion and tenure.

Conclusion

Mentoring of any stripe is an opportunity for growth: for the mentee, the mentor, and the organization. There is no one model that fits all libraries, but administrators and librarians need to work together to develop the mentoring program or programs best suited to their organization, and to recognize that these programs need planning, vigilance, and renewal. Taking the time to build a mentoring culture is an investment in the most important resource in any organization: the people.

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17

How transformational leadership translates into recognized excellence in academic libraries

Rosalind Tedford, Lauren A. Corbett, and Mary Beth Lock

Abstract: The Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University was the recipient of the 2011 Excellence in Academic Libraries Award from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). The ACRL award committee noted how the mission and programming of the library effectively matched the institution's goals. This resulted from the transformational leadership of the new dean and provost that encouraged creativity, autonomy, and experimentation, responded in innovative ways to requests from students, and unified the organization to help faculty, students, and staff succeed. The library underwent a culture change from a provider of traditional services to an integral part of the academic mission of the institution.

Key words: transformational leadership, library hours, library food policy, mission statements, emotional intelligence.

Introduction

In the last few decades, the Z. Smith Reynolds Library (ZSR) at Wake Forest University has had a strong service orientation and a high employee retention rate. This retention rate served as a foundation for the more

recent deliberate and explicit emphasis on service. However, it also created the development of a bunker mentality after years of budget cuts, salary compression, and an increasingly outdated building. All of the energy went into sustaining existing, traditional, and reliable services. While these services were valued, the faculty perceived the library more in a supporting role rather than as an integral part of the academic mission of the institution.

That culture changed in 2004, when Dr Lynn Sutton came from Wayne State University to become the new director of ZSR Library. Arriving at Wake Forest University, she quickly adapted to a smaller private institution with an ethos of personal connection to students. Sutton listened to students and staff and began to make incremental changes based on their stated needs. Students felt comfortable approaching Sutton and requests came through student government as well as from individuals. Library staff had a multitude of opportunities to provide input. Sutton overcame the long-standing mentality of "making do" by fearlessly asking university administrators for more resources, while emphasizing that those resources would benefit the students and faculty. One success led to another as the staff responded with trust, new ideas, and a willingness to change. Because Sutton championed changes in service, whether proposed by staff or students, the overall environment changed to one where constant improvement was desirable and exciting.

Sutton's leadership catalyzed the Z. Smith Reynolds Library organization into applying for the 2011 Excellence in Academic Libraries Award from the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). In announcing ZSR as the winner, ACRL recognized that "The selection committee was impressed with the strong alignment of the library to institutional values and ambitions as evidence [sic] through the variety of programs developed to support and foster student learning. . . . The Z. Smith Reynolds Library is a catalyst bringing together faculty, students and staff. The library values and celebrates its employees whose teamwork creates the energy and vitality evidence [sic] in their application."[1] The authors will review the ways a new leadership perspective permeated the library employees' work ethic, generating a metamorphosis of ZSR's services, building, and role in the university.

Literature review

In searching the literature first on leadership in general, the authors determined that the metamorphosis at ZSR was brought about by a style of leadership known as transformational leadership. The term

"transformational leadership" appeared in literature in the field of education as early as the 1920s and is currently defined as "A leadership style that involves generating a vision for the organization and inspiring followers to meet the challenges that it sets. Transformational leadership depends on the leader's ability to appeal to the higher values and motives of followers and to inspire a feeling of loyalty and trust."[2] A search of the literature for peer-reviewed articles specifically on transformational leadership, and limited to those written during ZSR's period of transformation, revealed elements matching Sutton's style at ZSR. Townley wrote with a focus "on the use of transformational leadership in technological university libraries."[3] He stated that transformational leadership is the least used of three methods of addressing change, but "is the one change method which library leaders and workers can apply directly in any situation."[4] In describing transformational leadership, Townley provided a case study for each of five practices, identified earlier by Kouzes and Posner: (1) modeling the way; (2) inspiring a shared vision; (3) challenging the process; (4) enabling others to act; and (5) encouraging the heart.[5] Smith conducted a survey of library school students and asserted that the Kouzes and Posner practices can be taught.[6] Mavrinac, drawing from works by Kotter as well as by Kezar and Eckel, viewed transformational leadership through the lens of peer mentoring, and in her literature review significantly notes that "There is a strong relationship between the success of the change initiative and its alignment with the existing organizational culture."[7]

Hernan and Rossiter apply the newer lens of Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (EI) in researching the successful traits of library leaders, and, in comparing EI with transformational leadership, find similarities. They explain that transformational leaders:

- "have special skills that allow them to provide a supportive environment while motivating followers to higher levels of personal action. A transformational leader inspires the members of the organization to achieve more than they thought possible."
- "maximize the needs of followers," meaning that "By appealing to higher-order needs, the transformational leader generates subordinate commitment to achieving the organizational mission."
- "empower their followers due to their ability to translate intention into reality and sustain it for the followers. This empowerment puts duality into motion; empowerment creates more empowerment, which in turn creates more power and allows followers to achieve their potential."

- "are passionate about their roles, tasks, responsibilities, and obligations to their staff. They forget their personal problems, lose a sense of time, and feel competent and in control. Without passion, there is no direction and vision is short-lived."

"In reviewing the literature on transformational leadership, the following traits appear consistently: acting creatively, acting interactively (with vision), being empowered, passionate, and ethical."[8]

Vision and empowerment are elements common to the style of leadership described by Kouzes and Posner and the one described by Hernan and Rossiter. Parallels could be drawn between "challenging the process"[9] and "acting creatively." Similarly, "encouraging the heart"[10] could be construed to have the same effect upon followers as being passionate.[11] Lastly, "modeling the way"[12] and being "ethical"[13] both embodied the idea of leading by example, or "walking the talk."

Beginnings of change, sparked at the top

Early in the tenure of the new director of ZSR Library, students asked, as they had been asking for a while, for the library to stay open more hours. The library had only been open until midnight Sunday through Thursday nights when a committee of the University's student government approached Sutton with a request to extend library hours to 1 a.m. Prior to Sutton's arrival, stated obstacles included lack of money for new staff, security risk, and anticipation of added cost in support of only a few students. But Sutton's approach of "let's try to find a way to say yes before we say no" resulted in the ability to achieve the students' desire. One of the night staff was willing to shift his schedule to end at 1 a.m. Sutton had challenged the status quo, acted creatively, and fulfilled the students' wishes without additional resources. This act was the first example of a driving philosophy of Sutton's, and an inspiring and empowering new perspective for the rest of the library leaders.

In the spring of 2006, Sutton wanted to keep the library open for 24 hours a day during exam week (a practice initiated at the Undergraduate Library at Wayne State some years before), which required additional staffing and shifting staff hours. First, Sutton modeled the way, volunteering to stay extra hours and issuing a call for four other volunteers to stay overnight. Thirty people stepped forward. Such an overwhelming response epitomized the alignment between change and the long-standing service culture of the organization and how Sutton's modeling the requested

behavior affected the ability to make the change. One staff member, inspired by these events, took initiative and solicited local restaurants to donate food, enabling ZSR to provide students a study break with food each night and coffee at all hours for the entire week. With the willingness of the library employees to relax the policy prohibiting food and drink in the library, the library culture changed. The event was dubbed "Wake the Library," and the building filled to capacity. That success energized staff and students alike. Staff were impressed by the students' expressions of appreciation as they went through the food line and by the good will the event engendered long after it was over.

The successful initial event, originally supported by Sutton, encouraged the heart as much as it challenged the status quo for the rest of the organization, and enabled the staff to be courageous in suggesting and implementing even more change. Shortly afterwards, the food prohibition policy was permanently retired, which raised some concern among staff initially, but confidence increased as feared bug infestations failed to materialize. Ending the "no food" policy was a conscious attempt to make the library a more welcoming place for students, faculty, and staff all year long, not just during exam week.

"Wake the Library" was repeated for the exam weeks of fall 2006 and spring 2007, providing the necessary data to recommend a permanent change to remain open 24 hours a day for five days a week. The extended hours began in February 2008, after Sutton was able to repurpose a vacant position into an overnight supervisor and funding for a Security Guard was arranged by Provost Jill Tiefenthaler, who had just arrived in July 2007. This change in hours showed students again that the library staff cared about them above and beyond traditional service, and simultaneously informed the staff that significant change was possible.

At the same time as those ideas were implemented, a strategic planning process in the library and in the university was underway in 2006–7. Teams and individuals across the library began to think big, transformative ideas, enabling others to act because they were encouraged that new ideas that helped students and staff would be vigorously explored, pursued, and supported. The planning process generated a clear, easily remembered vision and mission:

Vision: The Z. Smith Reynolds Library will be the first and favorite source for Wake Forest users in their quest for knowledge.

Mission: The mission of the Z. Smith Reynolds Library is to help our students, faculty and staff succeed.[14]

The primary focus of the mission on the success of our students, faculty, and staff is the one that resonated with library staff when Sutton suggested it spontaneously during a staff meeting and inspired the shared vision. The immediate and enthusiastic reception confirmed that the statement had the desired impact.

Sutton displayed the traits of transformational leadership with her passion for the vision and the mission, which unified the staff in an explicit expression of purpose that matched well with an existing service-oriented culture.

Continuing change: transformational ideas begin to come from functional teams

A primary part of the strategic plan developed in 2006–7 focused on identifying renovations that would enable better use of the library. The students' renewed enthusiasm for the library generated from both the "Wake the Library" initiative and the extended hours caused building usage to skyrocket, but the original 50-year-old building and the 15-year-old addition were showing age. Sutton and Provost Tiefenthaler, a transformational leader herself, forged a strong relationship, and together they realized a longtime dream of many: a coffee shop in the library. Sutton and Tiefenthaler shared the vision and the Provost allocated funds to renovate two worn cinder-block study rooms, one on each side of the main entrance to ZSR. By fall 2008, one room was converted to a Starbucks and the other to a 24-hour study room with a graduate student lounge attached, both styled in warm, inviting earth tones with comfortable seating. Students, faculty, and staff flocked to the new spaces and the Starbucks quickly became the central meeting spot for the campus.

This remarkable transformation galvanized others to brainstorm ways to make existing spaces more user-friendly and both inspired the vision and challenged long-standing processes. For example, the Research and Instruction group downsized and relocated current periodicals and microtext collections, which opened up two large rooms for student study space. The university leadership proposed renovating two other spaces to make room for non-library units that meshed well with the ZSR mission: the University Writing Center and the Information Systems Help Desk. These moves placed these services more conveniently, as so many students already frequented the library building. These renovation projects encouraged all library employees to think more expansively.

In a highly ambitious plan, members of the Access Services Team visualized renovating another space into a 120-seat auditorium and an adjoining media room for the DVD collection. This change would not only provide a much-needed meeting and presentation space but also would remove the barrier of students having to request media items from closed stacks. With the Dean championing the ideas of the staff, and support from the Provost, the dream was realized in fall 2011.

These successful projects took an immense amount of planning, relocation of people and resources, and countless hours of staff time. What the significant projects (Starbucks, the new study spaces, and the auditorium and media center) all had in common was that the initial ideas came from below rather than from the senior leadership. All library teams were thinking about making the library better for our students, faculty, and staff and were being encouraged and rewarded for doing so, gaining inspiration while seeing results and receiving positive feedback from the community. The library became a destination: the daily gate count more than doubled, rising from 1281 in fiscal year 2007 to 3015 in fiscal year 2011.

While the above-mentioned changes were big, no idea was too small if it would help students succeed. Leading from the heart and recognizing the challenges that students have to overcome to succeed, the Technology Team and Access Services Team worked together to increase the types and numbers of equipment available for students to check out: power supplies, power strips, microphones, cameras, Nooks, Kindles, and iPads. Power strips were far more significant than they might seem, because the lack of outlets in the building had been a top complaint both in survey results and anecdotally. The iPads were wildly successful, resulting in queues so long that additional units had to be purchased to keep up with demand. Show and tell sessions encouraged faculty to ask questions and later led to a panel discussion to help faculty understand differences in the various types of e-books and e-readers.

A member of the Technology team had the unorthodox idea of holding video game nights in ZSR after closing time on Fridays. For the three following years, "Get Game @ ZSR" was a great success, trumped only by even more popular games that began in 2010: "Capture the Flag" and "Humans vs. Zombies." Both of these games were suggested by outside groups. "Capture the Flag" came from Residence Life and Housing employees who wanted a fun event for new students on the first weekend after classes began and just needed a venue. "Humans vs. Zombies" was arranged at the request of a ZSR student worker who lamented the fact that students who loved playing this game kept getting ejected from other

campus buildings. Because the library had provided such a welcoming space to the students, they felt both sufficiently comfortable and inspired to suggest even more non-traditional uses for the library, challenging the process and enabling others to act. The precedent of using ZSR for recreational student space had been set, and the library's leadership swiftly agreed to these later requests because the culture had already changed.

Sutton's examples of success with "Wake the Library" and the coffee shop inspired creativity, autonomy, and experimentation, and staff were motivated to execute this multitude of successful ideas with wide-ranging impact.

Continuing change: transforming ZSR's role in the university

The students clearly began to view the Library as more than a place to study, socialize, and get research materials. Students were not the only focus of transformational efforts, however. Library employees actively worked to embed themselves and library services into the academic and intellectual life of the campus, as well as increasing involvement in the community of the campus overall.

Early in her tenure, Sutton had shared the vision for the library to serve not only as a study space, but also as a meeting place where ideas, current events, and research could be discussed. One staff member, as Chair of the Marketing Committee, was empowered to start the Library Lecture Series with a few events in 2006, bringing in faculty to talk about their research and other projects. As the popularity of the series increased, faculty and other units on campus asked to be included and the number of lectures more than tripled in seven years. That same year, building on the success of the Lecture Series, library staff organized a dinner celebrating the year's accomplishments by the university's authors, editors, and fine and performing artists. This event, paid for by the Provost's office but coordinated and hosted by ZSR, has become an annual one, intrinsically associated with the library and much appreciated by the faculty. Both of these staff-run programs, while labor intensive, advantageously positioned ZSR librarians as partners engaged in the scholarly enterprise.

The ZSR librarians, with the assistance of staff, had been teaching the for-credit Introduction to Information Literacy class (LIB100) since 2002. In 2007, of their own volition, Research and Instruction Team

members, eager to assist students majoring and minoring in their own areas of subject expertise, developed subject-specific upper-level courses. With the addition of these new courses, and as the number of classes in the LIB100 program increased, not only the university faculty but also the students began to perceive librarians more as faculty. Several librarians also volunteered to become university academic advisers to freshmen and sophomore students. These initiatives demonstrated how librarians had become both passionate and empowered to achieve their full potential.

The Library Lecture Series and faculty author dinner, along with the addition of the upper-level classes, began the process of transforming the Library's image with faculty. Another turning point in that process came with a change in the library's placement on the university's organizational chart. When Sutton arrived, she reported to the Vice President for Student Life, who had a Master of Library Science degree himself. As this was not a typical reporting line in higher education, Sutton began reporting to Tiefenthaler, the still relatively new Provost, in 2007. Reporting to the chief academic officer for the university provided the library with much greater academic visibility and better access to logical funding channels.

Also in 2007, at the suggestion of Sutton, the professional librarians began a discussion about obtaining faculty status. Analysis, deliberation, and decision-making were left solely to librarians, and with support from the Provost, in July 2009, librarians became self-governing faculty. By then, University faculty already saw librarians as partners in teaching and scholarship, and the change was met not with mere acceptance, but with real enthusiasm. Sutton, previously titled Director, became a dean, and library faculty gained visibility and voice in the workings of the university through new representation on the University Senate, Dean's Council, the Institutional Review Board, and a representative on the search committee for a new provost in 2011.

In sum, ZSR librarians have become an integral part of the academic mission of the institution and interact with university faculty in a far more collegial manner now than was the case in 2004. Sutton's vision regarding ZSR's role in the university and the empowerment stemming from all of the previously described successes up to 2009 led to this significant overall transformation in ZSR's role in the university.

Higher levels of personal action

Hernan and Rossiter identified traits of transformational leaders that "allow them to provide a supportive environment while motivating

followers to higher levels of personal action."[15] ZSR's librarians and library staff have often committed to giving a little extra time and talent to make the library and the university a better place. For example, the "Wake the Library 5K and Fun Run," an annual event held each fall from 2008 to 2010, raised money for the "Wake the Library" event described above. In another example, responding to University-wide appeals for volunteers to assist with building for Habitat for Humanity, eight to ten ZSR staff have formed a group each year for several years. Yet another group has helped to raise money for the Brian Piccolo Cancer Fund annually by running in the University's "Hit the Bricks" fundraiser. Library staff have volunteered routinely to answer phones during the on-campus National Public Radio station's pledge drives. Some of these traditions originated before Sutton's arrival, underscoring Mavrinac's assertion that alignment with the existing culture enables the success of a change initiative. Dean Sutton's continuing support enabled these stronger ties with the university and the surrounding community.

Stronger ties have formed within the library as well. Project teams have become typically cross-departmental, and even individual members of the various functional teams have begun to check with members of other teams when thinking of implementing change to better analyze "ripple effects" and to develop solutions more quickly. A "culture of collaboration" has enabled everyone to ask questions without fear of judgment. The resulting relationships across the traditional functional silos have better enabled ZSR employees to share problems, strategies, and successes beyond the walls of those silos.

Conclusion and future directions

Once the perspective of ZSR staff was unified behind a common goal (expressed in the mission), it brought about remarkable change. "Wake the Library" began as a creative attempt to meet needs of the students and quickly became a beloved tradition, so that it is now proudly included by university student guides in their tours for prospective students. For ZSR, "Wake the Library" embodied the focus on meeting the needs of the students even at the expense of employee comfort (e.g. being "too old to stay up all night"). The price was paid voluntarily, inspired by Dean Sutton's leading from the heart. The strategic plan for the library, published in the spring of 2007, was deliberately and directly mapped to the discrete parts of the university's strategic plan of 2006. These plans served primarily as a framework, and the leaders in the Library generated

mission-focused change in that context, with flexibility and speed. They were supported by a culture that rewarded creative thinking, allowed for failure, and encouraged all members of the staff to strive continually to find new ways to help students, faculty, and staff succeed. Working in a library where employees can say "yes" is more enjoyable than operating within policies requiring employees to say "no."

It sounds deceptively simple that transformational leadership spread like wildfire, reframing ZSR's mission and mindset, then significantly changing the way we worked, but this is what happened. The resulting transformations to the services, building, and the library's role in the university, a few of which were initiated at the top, some from middle management, and some from staff, ultimately led to the honor of winning the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award in 2011.

How can ZSR employees sustain the innovative atmosphere? Four principles common to organizations that innovate successfully are:

1. A commitment to controlling their environments rather than the other way around.
2. An internal structure that creates the freedom to imagine.
3. Leadership that prepares the organization to innovate.
4. Management systems that serve the mission of the organization rather than the other way around.[16]

As more people at ZSR try new things in the effort to meet the needs of their community and feel supported, encouraged by success, and undaunted by failure, they find the innovative spirit and the desire to implement change.

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18

Generations at work: what we can learn from each other

Martin Garnar and Erin McCaffrey

Abstract: This chapter examines the characteristics of three generations working in academic libraries: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials. Stereotypes of each generation from the popular press are compared with research-based findings. Focus groups of librarians from each generation are asked about their vision of 21st-century academic libraries and what their role will be in making that vision a reality. Focus group results are discussed and compared with generational stereotypes. Management implications for working with each generation are reviewed, along with suggestions for succession planning.

Key words: generational stereotypes, focus groups, Boomers, GenXers, Millennials.

Introduction

The 21st-century academic library is an institution straddling two worlds. Libraries continue to preserve, use, and even expand their legacy print collections while embracing digital formats for many of their resources. Library buildings still house collections, but they are increasingly focused on providing communal work and learning spaces. Just as computers filled the empty space created by the removal of card catalogs in the late 1980s and early 1990s, these collaborative places for students and faculty are taking the place of book stacks in the first decades of the 21st century. Within the library, another transition is poised to start. Librarians in the leading edge

of the Baby Boom generation have reached retirement age. Generation X librarians are working their way up the management structure. In increasing numbers, Millennial librarians are joining the profession as jobs become available. This chapter will examine how each of these generations envisions the 21st-century academic library and how the stereotypes associated with each generation may have implications for management.

Background

Before the authors received tenure, they were asked to lead the Regis University Library's strategic planning efforts. As the youngest librarians on the faculty, there were some initial concerns about how their recommendations would be received by their senior colleagues. Their experiences were reported in a *College & Research Libraries News* article, which looked at generational differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X and how to take advantage of what both groups "brought to the table."[1] Both authors have since moved into supervisory roles in their departments and have become interested in how generational differences may impact managerial strategy in the coming years, especially now that the generation behind is beginning to enter the workforce. The authors were also curious to see whether librarians' vision of the 21st-century academic library would be differentiated based on their generation. The authors conducted separate focus groups for academic librarians from three different generations: the Baby Boom generation, Generation X, and the Millennials.

A note on terminology and definitions: while the Baby Boom generation (also known as Baby Boomers or simply Boomers) and Generation X (also known as GenXers) are well established as identifiers, there is still a variety of names for the next generation: Millennials, Generation Y, and NextGen (occasionally used to combine with Generation X), among others. For the purposes of this chapter, Millennials will be used as the descriptor. The defined span of each generation also varies widely in the literature. When advertising for the focus groups, we chose to use Zaporzan's delineations for the generational birth years: 1946–64 for Boomers, 1965–80 for GenXers, and 1981– for Millennials.[2]

Literature review

A review of the literature on generational issues in the workplace reveals that many of the publications are based on anecdotal evidence.

Generational differences and stereotypes are a favorite topic for management consultants and are often featured in articles from a variety of trade magazines. These anecdote-based articles are often cited by other authors writing on the topic, thus lending credence to the concept of generational differences as being something grounded in research. As part of the literature review of how generations are portrayed and compared, the authors looked at whether the conventional wisdom asserted in the popular press is supported by research in scholarly publications.

As more of the Millennial generation enters the workforce, an increasing number of authors have written about this cohort's special needs as employees. Articles from trade publications follow a fairly typical pattern: after describing the Millennials' characteristics, the authors give advice on how to manage this distinctive group. Barnes lists four attributes of Millennials that are often repeated in the popular literature: they are highly motivated to achieve; have a strong relationship with their parents that continues into adulthood; are unused to failure and don't know how to handle it; and, due to their short attention spans, want instant communication.[3] Mooney et al. echo these stereotypes, in particular the strong parental bond and the desire for managers who can serve as surrogate parents, the trouble they have learning from their mistakes, and their need for instant communication and access to organizational information.[4] Mooney et al. also predict that the Millennials' "addiction" to social networking will drive organizations to embrace platforms and software that encourage participation and collaboration if they don't want to lose Millennials as employees.[5] A final observation from Mooney et al. is that Millennials appear to value a work/life balance more than previous generations.[6]

A special issue of the *Journal of Business & Psychology* in June 2010 was devoted to the topic *Millennials and the World of Work: What You Didn't Know You Didn't Know*. To summarize the tenor of this discussion, here's a quote from the opening article:

> Older people today perceive younger people as using too much slang, having poor communication skills, and being difficult, entitled, and service-focused. When these now older people were the age of Millennials today, previous generations used the same descriptors to characterize them. In short, there is a growing body of research indicating that the beliefs about whichever younger generation is entering the workforce has remained remarkably stable over the past 40 years.[7]

The authors go on to state that the research literature does not support the assertions of major generational differences in attitudes or work ethics, and that any generational differences are not large enough to matter in the work environment.[8] Instead, the data shows that there is no difference in the number of hours worked by Millennials and GenXers when they were the same age, thus suggesting that some differences attributed to generational membership may be better explained by differences in life stage.[9] Wong et al. affirm this explanation, as their research did not find any support of stereotypes in the data.[10]

However, other articles from this special issue assert that some stereotypes are supported by evidence, such as the extraordinary confidence of Millennials in their own abilities, their desire for more communication than previous generations, their inflated sense of entitlement, their desire for rapid advancement and salary increases, and their close ties to parents and other mentors.[11] Ng et al. do caution that some of the generational attributes may not apply to all members of the age cohort due to other demographic differences (i.e., minority status, educational attainment, etc.), so it's still important to recognize that stereotypes may not apply to everyone in a targeted group.[12]

In 2001, O'Bannon reviewed the literature and examined whether or not the histories that GenXers and Boomers bring to the workplace impact communication, perceptions, and attitudes.[13] The author found that GenXers have a strong work ethic and are satisfied with their work, and that both Boomers and GenXers desire family-friendly benefits. Neyer and Yelinek surveyed Boomer and NextGen academic librarians in Pennsylvania to assess their mentoring experiences. In response to attitudinal statements, the authors found that:

> The generations were more similar than they were different in their stated beliefs about work, and the two differences actually ran counter to expectations. Such results suggest that generation is only one factor affecting attitudes and behavior at work; others include previous work experiences and current career stage, to mention just two.[14]

A final thought on stereotyping generations: Deal et al. found it intriguing that stereotypes based on generations are accepted in a way that would never be allowed for other demographic categories, such as race or gender.[15] As noted by Parry and Urwin, most literature based on generational differences is not empirical or academic, but comes from

trade publications and management consultants. However, due to the extensive interest in this topic, it still bears review, but it is best to be cautious about accepting statements without being critical about the source and applicability.[16]

Method

To gather information on how different generations envision the 21st-century academic library, the authors conducted a separate focus group for each of the three generations. Participants were academic librarians or library workers recruited through several listservs, including: LIBNET, the general library email list for Colorado; the email lists of the Colorado Academic Library Association, the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries, and the University of Denver's library and information science program; and also through postings on Facebook. The generational spans were advertised using the following birth years: 1946–64 for Boomers, 1965–80 for GenXers, and 1981– for Millennials. For participants who felt they were on the cusp of these generational divides, the authors asked them to self-select based on which group was their preferred identity. Participation was strictly voluntary. In what was the first indication of generational differences, the majority of Millennial participants were recruited through Facebook, while all the Boomers were recruited through email. GenXers were divided between the two formats.

The electronic scheduling software Doodle was used to schedule each focus group. The focus groups were held at the Regis University Library. Two hours were allocated for each session and food and beverages were provided. The total length of time for participation did not exceed 90 minutes. The authors took notes during the focus groups and did not make video or audio recordings of the sessions. There were 19 participants in all: seven Boomers, six GenXers, and six Millennials. Each group was asked three questions, and was given the opportunity to present final thoughts on the discussion. The questions presented to each group were:

- What is your vision for the 21st-century academic library?
- In what way is your generational group uniquely suited to make that vision a reality?
- What are the constraints or challenges that impede your vision?

Findings and discussion

Visions of the 21st-century academic library

Regardless of generational group, a common theme underlying the responses to this question is that the library connects people with the information they need, although the format of the information might change over time. One Boomer said, "The library in the twenty-first century is fluid, it has brick and mortar, has people, and has technology." Three themes emerged across all groups in addressing the 21st-century academic library: outreach and marketing, instruction, and resource formats.

The importance of marketing the library and continually doing outreach to promote the library and its services was a major theme across all three groups. Participants in all generational categories mentioned hearing discussions about the demise of the profession; though they all agreed libraries aren't going anywhere, libraries and librarians need to continually demonstrate their relevance. Academic libraries wrestle with identifying the right ways to reach students. Boomers commented that libraries are competing with other departments for university funding and traditionally have not been good marketers or competitors. GenXers discussed identifying points of need and reaching students there, acknowledging that it can be a challenge not to overwhelm users with all that the library offers. Libraries know their product the best, and it bothered Millennials when libraries contract outside sources for public relations.

All three groups also discussed the importance of teaching people how to use information and creating a scholarly community, that information is useless unless someone knows how to use it and research needs to be taught as a continuous process. More and more, students seem to have no concept of being able to evaluate information to discern whether a source is scholarly or contains references. "Free resources don't have the easy 'peer-reviewed' checkbox; we need to teach them how to think critically about research." Both GenXers and Millennials see the library becoming more of a partner with other university units, such as writing centers.

Print materials were included in the vision of the 21st-century academic library. Of the three groups, Boomers and Millennials were most confident of the persistence of print. GenXers see a greater emphasis on electronic and mobile resources, while Millennials recognized that users want to access information via the medium they want it in, whether a physical item or an e-book. Boomers noted that the role of the library has always been the same: libraries connect people with the information they need. "Librarians need to learn ourselves what the next format is that's coming,

how does it fit in our set of tools? Why is it better, is it better?" GenXers also commented on libraries staying at the forefront and to "not be caught up in only the resources we pay for." Surprisingly, Millennials said they would prefer materials in print. Libraries can spend lots of money to upgrade their formats, but print still persists. "People who want print are frustrated by e-books."

Interface design and usability emerged in both the Generation X and Millennials' discussions. Millennials noted: "it's easy to become entranced by visual improvements or updates but that can impede usability." GenXers touched on the struggle to keep up with so many technological platforms: "Libraries will have to loosen up and have everything be beta."

Unique characteristics for making their generation's vision a reality

Technology was the departure point for each group when addressing the question of making their generation's vision a reality. Boomers were raised without a dependence upon technology; there are "basic skills the 'old' generation has that are still needed when technology fails." They felt Millennials are too dependent upon technology. GenXers view their generation as the bridge between Boomers, who use technology infrequently, and Millennials, who are immersed in technology. One of the GenXers said, "Boomers have a comfort level with technology but are still afraid they're going to break it . . . For Generation X, it's what does this program do, wanting to understand why it's useful. For Millennials, it's why isn't it doing what I want it to do." In contrast, Millennials felt their generation is more even-handed in dealing with technology. Some Millennial participants felt theirs is the generation to acknowledge technology won't fix everything, while others disagreed, saying they know many peers whose immediate reaction is to go to the internet or Google. They saw themselves bridging a gap between their parents' generation, which might not be technologically savvy, and the generation after them that doesn't know life without the internet. They find they are asking more often what a technology is for and how it works. Technological curiosity crosses generational lines.

Boomers reflected upon their role as leaders and mentors in the 21st-century academic library. They recognize the value younger colleagues bring to their organizations, and feel they have a lot to pass on to younger generations. They want to be the ones who inspire someone else to consider becoming a librarian, and they recognize the importance

of leading by example. They are "the elders" of the profession. Some of our Boomers are still somewhat new to the profession, transitioning to librarianship from other careers. One started library school in her forties, quickly saw that librarianship wasn't a dying profession at all and learned about many new technologies. "Wow, look what we've seen" echoed through the conversation. This generation has worked with mimeograph machines, spent hours searching through print indexes, taken notes on index cards, and typed out citations without the use of a citation generator. Boomers persevere and are willing to change. GenXers are "either more flexible or more apathetic to change. You just roll with it." They are at the point where they are willing to take some risk. "We all know how much we don't know." They feel more secure in their job skills than when they were fresh out of graduate school. These participants also felt their personal and professional lives were more blended, with lines between the two being blurred as opposed to work–life balance. This group was the only one to discuss what motivates them and their professional passion.

Millennials grew up with more collaborative group work in comparison to other generations, "are holistic" and "want to have departments work together." They believe that academic libraries would be better if different departments communicated with each other more and worked together. They also discussed the community service orientation of their generation and the desire to help people, looking at relational models of providing library services. One Millennial participant questioned whether or not their "generational ADD" is going to set them back, noting that the internet is a constant distraction.

Constraints or challenges that impede their generation's vision

Funding was the immediate constraint mentioned by both Boomers and GenXers. Maintaining the old and supporting the new seems to continually be a part of the conversation around adequate resources. Everyone is faced with how to do more with less, and that is a challenge for academic libraries. Outreach was another challenge mentioned by these generational groups, who noted that academic libraries need to identify the partners that can help make the vision a reality and get academic institutions to see the value of the library. According to participants, the library is often an afterthought and needs to make sure it is relevant to university administration.

Each group viewed the constraints of technology slightly differently. Boomers observed the growth of institutional repositories and digital collections. Technology affords "the blessing of connecting socially" but in the area of scholarship there has been an unwillingness to share in that realm. GenXers discerned that consumer technology will continue to outpace what publishers are providing. Academic libraries will be expected to keep up with new technologies but won't be able to offer the ease of use that consumer technology provides. Millennials remarked on the rapid change in technology. They saw their generation falling more easily into a technological trap and being blindsided by an over-reliance on computers.

All groups acknowledged the demands of staying current with professional developments, participating in research and scholarship, and keeping abreast of new technologies. Boomers indicated that there is no 40-hour work week anymore, and several commented they are thinking about work all of the time. It's challenging to stay current and be accessible to students in the myriad of social networking sites that exist. It's a "fallacy that we'll ever get caught up. If we're staying relevant, we're building more work for ourselves." GenXers pointed out the difference in work–life balance between their generation and the Boomers, perceiving Boomers to have a mindset of overwork, being more rigid about being in the office 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and letting you know that they've put in work hours while on vacation, whereas GenXers want more flexibility, such as options for telecommuting. Our Millennial participants acknowledged that their generation is often viewed as "pretentious" by older generations and that they need to work on better intergenerational communication. They were raised as "bigger, better, faster, more" and the organizational culture of academic libraries tends to be conservative and slow to change.

Final thoughts

Given the expressed constraints and challenges, Boomers remarked on how much they enjoy what they do compared with friends in other professions. They are believers in service, no matter the mode. GenXers are concerned about older colleagues retiring for fear that those budget lines will not be replaced. GenXer participants were fairly evenly split on whether or not they found it easier to converse with Boomer or Millennial colleagues; some found their Boomer colleagues to be more appreciative while their Millennial colleagues are

more entitled. The Millennials were more sensitive to being removed from the decision-making in their current positions. They want to make a difference in the work that they do and see "where the library could go but no one is taking us there."

Observations

Underlying all of the focus group conversations was a certainty that higher education is poised for real change. Several rhetorical questions arose as to the new media literacy, such as "Is serendipity a part of the electronic world in the library of the future?"and "Why don't we teach research as a continuous process?" and what that will mean for research, teaching, and classroom technology. Serendipity has been a big part of discovery in libraries. There needs to be more continuity in teaching the research process; it is not only about finding information, but also producing scholarship and creating a scholarly community. At several points in the discussions, there was mention of the sheer number of subscription and licensing models that exist in academic libraries and the challenge of maintaining large systems and resources that are duplicated in so many other libraries. There was also concern about the increasing number of higher education administrators who come from outside academia. One participant shared a story of a budgetary meeting with the chief financial officer of her institution, who had no idea there was a library on campus. In a room of non-librarians, that story might elicit a gasp. In this group, the participants could relate to the story and shrugged it off. Regardless of age or generation, academic librarians are living with many changes.

Millennial participants did not differentiate much between Boomers and GenXers; everyone older than their generation seemed to be categorized into one generation. While all three groups expressed opinions in line with some of the stereotypical characteristics applied in the popular literature for their group, we also found that a few of our Boomers shared the same concerns as some Millennials regarding the current employment market and the difficulty in obtaining the experience needed to secure a position. Several of the Boomers were more recent graduates of library school, so, although they were in a different generational category, they shared similar worries with some Millennial participants. Additionally, the Millennials' preference for print resources is in contrast to the findings of interviews with Millennial interns in the American Library Association's Reference and User Services Association.[17]

While other predictions about the importance of customer service and a larger teaching role correspond with the RUSA findings, the interns did not defend the importance of print sources.[18]

Management tips and succession planning

Whether or not the various generational stereotypes promoted in the popular literature hold true for individuals, the management advice for addressing these issues is worth reviewing. Barnes prescribes teamwork as the best situation for Millennial employees, as it capitalizes on their desires for immediate feedback, extensive networking, and working on a variety of tasks.[19] Gordon agrees that a team work environment is important for retaining Millennials, as well as offering training and mentoring.[20] However, Martin suggests that Millennials want to work alone and will use the support of a team only when they want expert advice.[21] In the face of conflicting information, the best course of action may be to ignore the stereotypes and work with employees to determine what's right for their individual situation.

Patterson offers suggestions to help all generations: demand competent leadership, aim for clear communication, and provide professional development opportunities for all generations.[22] Other universal suggestions from Martin include providing coaching and feedback, building collegial relationships, and staying flexible.[23] Ferri-Reed presents five strategies for managing Millennials that should hold true for all new employees: provide a thorough orientation; create a "cool" workplace including creative communications and open work spaces; give them specific challenges to allow them to prove themselves; balance constructive feedback with praise; and help them chart a career path.[24]

Using these management techniques for employees of all generations can build a stronger sense of community in the workplace, thus setting the stage for succession planning without pitting generations against each other. In 2003, the Library Research Service studied retirement, retention, and recruitment in Colorado libraries.[25] The study's authors note the substantial experience retiring librarians take with them and the potentially significant impact of the loss of that experience without succession planning. Wilcox and Harrell explain that succession planning is imperative not only to develop the next generation of library leaders but also to retain Generation X and Millennial librarians.[26] Edge and Green suggest Millennial librarians interface with their older colleagues on technological developments while Boomers and GenXers impart

administrative and interpersonal skills to their younger colleagues, fostering further avenues of communication.[27]

Conclusion

As each new generation enters the workforce, it seems that generational differences are exaggerated. Research has shown that generations have more in common than we have been led to believe. Regardless of generations, here are three tips for a more productive workplace based on common themes from the literature that were affirmed in the focus group discussions:

- **Listen.** Listen to your co-workers and give them the kind and amount of feedback they need to be effective.
- **Communicate**. Some people like face-to-face conversations. Some prefer email or written memos. Others would be happy to chat and IM about work issues. Meet them where they are, and be clear about your expectations for responding to the message regardless of the medium.
- **Respect.** Whether it's the voice of experience or a new idea, honor the contributions of your team in the spirit with which they're given. Don't discount something just because "it's the way we've always done it" or because it's the latest trend – it's foolish to rule out options solely on the source of the idea.

The authors' interviews with different generational groups affirm that academic librarians and libraries will continue to evolve throughout the 21st century, but only a mix of tradition, flexibility, and innovation will keep them from becoming extinct.

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19

Staff motivation at a university library: use of intrinsic motivation at Western Carolina University

Peter Johnson, Mark A. Stoffan, and Timothy V. Carstens

Abstract: In difficult economic times with consequent budget reductions, conventional methods of motivating employees with raises and other benefits become difficult, if not impossible. Consequently, managers need to find other ways of motivating staff. These methods can include providing greater autonomy to staff, providing opportunities for professional development and job growth (including job exchange and MLS programs), improving work–life balance, and involving staff more closely in decision-making processes. Supervisors at Hunter Library at Western Carolina University have experimented with a number of alternative approaches and several techniques are described in detail in this chapter.

Key words: motivation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, professional development, flexible scheduling, employee recognition, staff communication.

Introduction

Motivation at work may be loosely defined as what gets employees to their jobs every morning and keeps them interested, engaged, and productive once they are there. Pay and benefits increases are traditional

ways for an organization to keep employees motivated. Unfortunately, these are not always possible for libraries. Decreases in benefits and loss of staff positions are a more likely situation in difficult economic times. This scenario has been the case at Western Carolina University's Hunter Library. Hunter Library employees have received no raises in the last four years while paying more for their benefits. The library has also experienced position eliminations, hiring freezes, and significant cuts to the collections and operating budgets.

To keep staff motivated in challenging economic times, libraries must take steps to reduce staff alienation and keep them engaged and interested in their jobs. Some ways for libraries to achieve these goals include giving staff more control over their work environment, involving them more closely in the direction and life of the organization, and giving them greater opportunities to grow in their jobs.

Literature review

Extrinsic monetary rewards are still the most common motivator used in the for-profit world, but, as Earney and Martins point out, "the financial motivator is not really an option for most library services."[1] Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs[2] forms the basis of a model of intrinsic motivation in the library literature. According to Maslow's Hierarchy, once basic human needs for safety and security are met (e.g. a good work environment and sufficient salary), workers are motivated by an innate desire to satisfy higher-order psychological needs such as social belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Also inherent in contemporary needs theories is the idea that workers prefer to have some degree of autonomy and independence in their jobs. Christopher states that the goal of motivation is "to create an environment that enables employees to strive for higher-level needs."[3]

Staff training and professional development are common themes in recent discussions of methods for motivating library employees. For example, Tella et al.[4] and Ugah[5] point to job enrichment as a powerful motivational technique that prepares library employees for greater job challenges and provides opportunities for self-improvement. A survey of staff motivation at Kuwait University Libraries by Alqudsi-ghabra and Mansouri[6] found that 40.9 percent of professional and 59.1 percent of non-professional employees were motivated by the provision of training courses. In a pilot study at Cardiff University Library, Earney and Martins concluded that job rotations – cross-functional movement between jobs

or tasks within an organization – resulted in a wide range of positive outcomes, including increases in both motivation and technical skills.[7]

Among low-budget ways to offer professional development opportunities to library staff, Davis and Lundstrom count attending local and virtual conferences, making use of internal wikis, conducting lunchtime talks, and implementing in-house staff exchanges.[8] In an informal survey of managers of Interlibrary Loan departments asking what they do to reward and motivate their employees, respondents said they encouraged employees to join committees and groups and encouraged professional growth through training, professional conferences, and continuing education.[9]

Bibb and Kourdi discuss the relationship between trust and motivation in organizations: "Trusting relationships are more likely to lead to higher levels of motivation, and consequently greater success, than relationships where trust is absent."[10] Giesecke and McNeil identify the need for employees to feel that their views are valued and their input is gathered and used, in order to feel trusted.[11] Similarly, Evangeliste describes the motivational effect of feeling trusted by her managers to serve on her library's strategic planning committee.[12] Green et al. note that involving staff in decision-making and strategic planning strengthens their feelings of ownership in and long-term commitment to the organization.[13]

Ugah suggests that offering flexible work hours and compensatory time can help accommodate the diverse individual needs of employees while still allowing the necessary work to be accomplished.[14] Giesecke and McNeil also recommend the use of flexible scheduling as a non-monetary reward. They point out that libraries can offer more options for flexible scheduling because they are generally open longer hours than other organizations.[15] In *Telework 2011*, a survey conducted by the organization WorldatWork, three out of four employers report that "flexibility programs have a positive to very positive impact on employee engagement, motivation and retention."[16]

Providing individual employees and organizational units a degree of autonomy over their physical work environment is another potentially low-cost method for improving motivation and morale. Recent experiments conducted by Knight and Haslam on the relative merits of different approaches to office space design found that people who had more control over their workspaces were more motivated and productive than their less empowered counterparts.[17] In their experiments, subjects were given sorting and vigilance tasks to perform in "lean," "enriched," "empowered," and "disempowered" work environments. The lean environment consisted of a simple office with a desk and a chair. The

enriched environment added potted plants and pictures along the wall in a fixed configuration. The empowered environment contained the plants and pictures, and participants were told they could arrange them in any way they liked. In the disempowered environment, subjects were also allowed to arrange the plants and pictures, but when they were finished an experimenter entered and rearranged their decorations. Their analysis showed that subjects in the empowered environment took less time to complete their tasks, felt more psychologically comfortable, and reported greater job satisfaction than those in the lean, enriched, and disempowered environments. A comparative analysis of employee motivation at two university libraries in Ghana found that "being held in high esteem" and "praise and recognition" ranked among employees' top three motivators.[18] Many libraries have a committee or task force dedicated to staff rewards and recognition. Often, these programs involve financial rewards of some sort, but Nelson and Spitzer hold that non-monetary forms of recognition can be more effective motivators than monetary rewards if they are frequent, fair, and consistent.[19]

Encouraging fun activities at work can also be a low-cost way to boost employee morale and motivation. "Fish!," a business philosophy that emphasizes play and creativeness at work, has received substantial attention in the library literature and was applied at the University of Florida libraries with some success.[20]

Case study

Hunter Library serves Western Carolina University, a comprehensive regional university of the University of North Carolina System with 9500 students who are enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs in a variety of disciplines. Hunter Library has used many of the motivation techniques described in the cited literature. Providing library staff with professional development activities; working to ensure that staff feel trusted and included in decision-making; allowing staff control over their physical environment and work schedules; and recognition of good work are all techniques described in the literature that have been used at Hunter Library. The library has not practiced these techniques through formal programs; rather, they have been informally implemented by individual supervisors in response to staff suggestions or departmental needs. Hunter Library has a culture in which supervisors feel free to make such informal arrangements.

Providing staff with opportunities to work at jobs in other departments within the library can improve morale and motivate staff in several ways. At Hunter Library, department heads have authority to assign people to work in other areas, subject to human resource regulations regarding fair compensation and workload. In practice, the weekly hours worked across departments have generally been restricted to ten hours or less, mainly due to the practical limitations of needing to maintain the employee's primary job duties. Variety can be a reward in itself because it allows staff to do something other than their regular job, providing them with new intellectual stimulation. Employees may have the opportunity to learn new skills that help advance their library careers. Staff may also learn more about and better appreciate the larger mission of the library. These new skills and insights can help them do their regularly assigned job better and with greater satisfaction. It may even lead to improved relationships between organizational units.

The opportunity to work shifts on the reference desk has frequently been made available to well-suited staff who are not members of the Research & Instruction Services department. For example, a paraprofessional circulation staff member who recently earned her Master of Library Science (MLS) and is interested in pursuing a public services career currently helps staff the reference desk. The benefits of working the desk to this staff member are obvious; she has had the opportunity to acquire real-world reference experience that will be valuable on her resumé and the opportunity to see if this is a good fit for her. Cataloging staff have benefited from serving on the reference desk in other ways. Desk service provides them with an opportunity to work directly with patrons, something they would otherwise rarely have the opportunity to do. Getting the satisfaction of a "thank you" from a grateful patron helps them see first-hand the value of the service the library and the catalog provide. Seeing how catalog records are actually used can help the cataloger work to customize records in ways that will best serve library patrons. There is a good relationship between Hunter Library's technical and public services departments; one reason for this may be the tradition of having some non-public services staff work on the reference desk. Shared experience helps build group solidarity and mutual respect. Public and technical services staff may find that they have complementary skills. This proved to be true in the case of one high-level cataloger who had worked at the reference desk for many years. That cataloger published a book in collaboration with two of her reference librarian colleagues on the ways in which reference librarians can make better use of Library of Congress (LC) subject heading subdivisions. In

this case, mutual respect and complementary skills led to a very fruitful outcome for all concerned.

There are, however, some dangers involved with allowing staff to work in another unit, one being insufficient training. Recently a member of the circulation staff swapped jobs part-time with a serials staff member with electronic resource management responsibilities. It proved difficult to provide sufficient training to the circulation staff member in complex electronic resource management tasks within the limited time provided. Conversely, the serials staff member was disappointed to discover that she would probably never be able to take a full-time job in circulation without taking a pay cut, since circulation positions were in a lower classification range than her job. Despite the fact that no promises were made, the expectations of these staff members may have been raised in ways that could not be fulfilled.

Another incentive appreciated by staff is the opportunity to learn higher-level skills within their own work unit. Because of its geographic isolation, Hunter Library sometimes finds it to be less expensive and more convenient to bring trainers to the library as opposed to sending several staff to a distant location for training. In recent years, the Cataloging Unit has brought in outside trainers to provide catalogers with training in special collections cataloging, maps cataloging, and music cataloging. In each of these cases, all catalogers, from copy catalogers up to the most advanced catalogers in the unit, were invited to attend these sessions. In addition, all catalogers are encouraged to attend webinars provided by outside trainers on cataloging topics. Copy catalogers have also been invited to attend advanced training sessions on the *Library of Congress Subject Manual* and other advanced cataloging topics taught by Hunter staff. In a few cases, long-term training in cataloging skills appropriate to a higher-level job has been provided to a lower-level cataloger. For example, several years ago the unit's soon-to-retire media cataloger trained a lower-level cataloger in media cataloging for approximately one year. When the media cataloger did retire, the trainee was ready to step into her shoes.

This tradition of training lower-level staff in higher-level skills has had a number of advantages for the cataloging unit. Additional understanding of how cataloging records are put together helps all staff improve job performance and better appreciate the responsibilities of others. It is also the experience of managers at Hunter Library that staff who have received additional training are quicker to take on new responsibilities when they are promoted. While no promises can ever be made, these training opportunities provide staff the possibility of advancement into increasingly

higher-level and better-paying positions. This possibility of advancement is both a powerful motivator and a boost for morale.

Another way to help staff who wish to advance their careers is to encourage interested support staff to enroll in MLS programs. The rise of distance education has made this option increasingly available to would-be professionals. Hunter staff who attend an MLS program offered within the 16 campuses of the University of North Carolina System may take advantage of system-wide employee tuition remission to pursue a degree part-time at a greatly reduced cost. Allowing staff to arrange their work schedules so that they can attend classes or make necessary trips to the library school they attend has been another practical way to encourage staff who are MLS students.

Finally, verbal encouragement and approval of scholarly efforts, as well as useful advice on what kinds of classes to take, and so on, can be powerful ways to support staff. Over the years, many paraprofessional staff have successfully completed library school programs while working for Hunter Library. One of them is now the Head of Hunter Library's Special Collections. Two others are now the heads of both branches of the local county public library. These examples of successful careers help encourage other staff who are interested in pursuing further education as a way to advance their careers.

Appointing staff to committees and task forces is another way to let paraprofessionals know they are valued and encourage them to feel ownership for the library organization. Library staff members serve on search committees for both professional librarian and support staff positions. They also serve on standing committees, such as the Marketing Committee and Leisure Reading Committee, and on task forces such as the Book Sale Task Force. During Hunter Library's strategic planning process, input from the support staff was regularly and systematically solicited at all phases. Recently, the Unit Heads Meeting, which holds discussions of library administration, was renamed the Operations Meeting. All staff, not just those with supervisory responsibilities, are now provided with the agenda and invited to attend meetings of that group.

The degree to which staff are empowered to exercise control over their physical work environments also has a big effect on motivation and morale. Hunter Library had powerful evidence of this when the physical area in which technical services functions was remodeled several years ago. Previously, this area was a blend of old desks, tables, dividers, shelving, and other furniture accumulated over the more than 30 years since the construction of that wing of the library. Thinking that staff would truly appreciate new furniture, a now-retired Library Director

decided to replace this configuration, at considerable expense, with a set of uniform cubicles and cubicle furniture. Neither staff nor their supervisors were meaningfully involved in the decision-making process leading to selection of this furniture, and staff had very few options for arranging their cubicles once they were installed. Difficulties and significant time delays with the installation process were also experienced. Staff were irritated and disheartened, morale dropped, and many of the staff experienced some sort of repetitive motion disorder until they were able to find ways to reinvent seating and keyboard arrangements that would fit their bodies. A task force to redesign the technical services area again has recently been formed. The entire task force is composed of those who will be affected by these changes. It is hoped that the new process will be as bottom-up as the previous one was top-down. The task force is empowered to make changes to the way existing furniture is arranged and to recommend the purchase of new furniture and/or the replacement of the existing cubicles (although any such recommendations are not likely to be implemented until the current budget situation improves).

Individual staff members are allowed to arrange their desk areas in any way that does not interfere with the functioning and productivity of library operations. In addition to allowing staff the autonomy to configure group workspaces in ways that facilitate their workflows, they could be allowed to personalize their individual workspaces as well, as long as their decorations do not make their co-workers uncomfortable. For example, Hunter Library's small Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Department office is festooned with Mardi Gras beads, mobiles, and posters that create a fun work environment that is enjoyed by the ILL staff and student workers alike.

Staff are also empowered to control their work time when this does not affect the effectiveness or productivity of the library. Most units within Hunter Library allow flexible scheduling. Staff in technical services areas may select their own regular work hours during the long work day stretching from roughly 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Access Services staff have additional options, since the circulation desk is staffed at all hours the building is open. During the last two weeks of the semester the building is open and staffed on a 24/7 schedule, a decision initiated by the circulation staff themselves from a desire to offer better service. Staff will voluntarily work at night and on weekends to allow this expansion. Conversely, during breaks when classes are not in session, the building hours are greatly reduced. In the latter case staff who work the evening shift will normally work during the day. During inclement weather, the staff will voluntarily trade shifts to allow staff members who live at a

distance to avoid travelling on slippery roads. That these changes are made easily is due to the flexibility given to staff members by their supervisors. There are staff in all units of the library, often those who have long commutes, who have made their regular scheduled work week four ten-hour days. This is an arrangement that many Hunter Library circulation staff are pleased to take advantage of during the summer months when business is slower. Staff who must take time off because of bad weather or commitments outside work are often permitted to make up the lost time later in the work week, provided that this does not violate the Fair Labor Standards Act.

A few units within the library have recently been experimenting with allowing support staff to work at home, especially if there are extenuating circumstances. For example, a staff member who was experiencing severe back pain was allowed to work at home while recovering from that condition. Typically, staff who work at home are required to work out a plan with their supervisors whereby they agree in writing on what will be accomplished during this time and how such accomplishments will be measured. With the permission of their supervisor, library faculty may be permitted to work from home should they have special projects to complete or a need to engage in scholarly activities. It should be noted that such accommodations are not always easy to achieve in a culture where telecommuting is not yet a regular practice. For example, library administration ultimately had to get involved in order to get the campus IT staff to enable firewall permissions necessary for an employee with unique software needs to work from home.

A danger of allowing this range of flexibility in work arrangements and time schedules is that some staff may come to view these arrangements as a "right" instead of a privilege. Such staff are not likely to properly appreciate library efforts to accommodate the needs of their personal lives and may be tempted to abuse their privileges. The supervisor must always be prepared to withdraw these privileges from particular individuals, and some staff within Hunter Library have had their privileges limited. Fortunately, most Hunter staff do not misuse such advantages and do appreciate the flexibility they offer. Accommodating work schedules to personal needs when this does not interfere with organizational efficiency can reduce employee stress, increase employee productivity, and improve retention of good employees.

Good communication between all levels within the organizational hierarchy is one aspect of the community life of Hunter Library that requires continual effort and improvement. When staff at Hunter Library are asked about things that bother them at work, lack of communication

is always near the top of the list. Communication within the organization is complicated by the fact that personnel issues and other sensitive matters may not be disseminated publicly. Nevertheless, many matters may be appropriately communicated, and Hunter Library makes efforts to do so at the operations meetings, through meeting minutes, through email or blogs, and by means of personal conversations. Despite these efforts, staff still frequently seem to find themselves uninformed on important library matters. The only solution to this problem would seem to be for Hunter supervisors, such as the authors of this article, to redouble their efforts to properly disseminate information. Some ideas being considered are weekly departmental email summaries from the department heads and use of a new campus-wide intranet to post key materials.

Upward communication also needs to be encouraged. Staff must be provided with opportunities to communicate any problem related to organizational effectiveness up through the ranks, and must feel safe when they do so. Anonymous methods such as drop boxes and online forms could be employed, but these are sometimes mistrusted since some staff know that computer network addresses or handwriting could link them to the feedback. An environment of trust cannot be bureaucratically created. It will only exist when every supervisor consistently treats all staff communication with the respect it deserves.

One form of communication that has special power as an incentive and as a way of improving motivation is letting people know that they have done a good job. Hunter Library has a tradition of providing every staff member with a card each year, signed by the Dean of Library Services, noting their years of service and thanking them for their efforts. The Dean also sends out emails to the entire library staff praising the group's efforts, especially when he has received a compliment from a faculty member or administrator. While such corporate thanks are appreciated by staff, the personal touch of individual recognition is especially valued. A letter or email to an employee's immediate supervisor from a member of another unit praising a particular accomplishment is one method of individual recognition that has been effectively employed at Hunter Library. Although this is an informal process initiated by individual department heads and supervisors, such letters are especially appreciated because they can later be incorporated into performance appraisals. Face-to-face recognition of work by a supervisor immediately after that work is performed and then later in performance reviews is especially appreciated. This is already part of Hunter Library's organizational culture, but it is a practice that can never be encouraged too much.

Conclusion

Maintaining staff morale can be difficult during times of financial crisis when providing monetary rewards to employees is not possible. Hunter Library tries to support staff morale through a number of practices designed to empower staff and minimize workplace stress. These practices include giving employees the maximum possible control over their physical environment and individual work schedules; providing them with opportunities to grow in their job and learn about other departments in the library; providing them with a possible career path within the library; including staff on library committees; attempting to communicate effectively with all staff; and praising employees' accomplishments whenever appropriate. Most of these practices are not the result of formal programs or policy but are the spontaneous actions of individual supervisors. It is hoped that the performance of these practices over time has created an organizational culture within Hunter Library where staff feel more valued, empowered, and satisfied with their jobs.

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20

Managing conflict and incivility in academic libraries

Leah Plocharczyk

Abstract: The word *conflict* typically brings to mind unpleasant images of stress, frustration, mistrust, and dysfunction. Yet, seldom is there discussion of the benefits that conflict can bring to a library organization and a work environment if it is handled in a constructive manner. This paper intends to provide an overview of the different types of conflict that occur within an academic library setting and the conflict management styles that have the most impact on task and relationship conflict, thus increasing or decreasing the presence of conflict and its effects on personal stress within the workplace. The most effective conflict management styles will be discussed, as well as the benefits of conflict when it is handled effectively and the detriments that occur when conflict is mismanaged. Conflict-competent leaders and conflict-competent organizations can exist once employees recognize the advantages that well-managed conflict can bring to a work environment, while avoiding the destruction that occurs from mishandled conflict.

Key words: conflict management, task conflict, relationship conflict, conflict resolution, incivility.

Introduction

To fully understand the nature of conflict and the many ways that it can benefit a library organization, it is necessary to dispel certain myths and untruths that exist about organizational conflict. One misconception is

that conflict is destructive and something to be avoided. Rather, when conflict is handled well, it can actually enable administration and library staff members to reach their goals in a beneficial manner. Constructive conflict, or positive conflict, enables disputants to consider different viewpoints and perspectives when approaching an unfamiliar situation, thus resulting in creative and effective conflict resolution techniques.[1] Another myth about conflict is that it causes communications to cease. Instead, constructive conflict enables the disputants to clarify the issues at hand and find ways to brainstorm and share new ideas that can strengthen interpersonal relationships.[2] Conflict can serve as a catalyst for creativity and innovation. The final conflict myth is that conflict usually results in a winner and a loser, or a win/lose situation.[3] Many potential solutions are possible when people are working collaboratively toward a common goal, in the hopes of achieving winning results that are mutually beneficial. The best possible conflict situation will result in a win/win scenario in which all sides are heard and everyone's needs are met.

Different types of conflict

Task conflict, which encourages analytical thinking and problem-solving, is thought to have a positive influence on organizations. Another type of conflict is relationship conflict, which deals mostly with group dynamics and is the cause of animosity and personal disputes.[4] The two types of conflict typically occur together and can have negative effects on decision-making, group performance, and outcomes.

Task conflict is usually beneficial because it improves the quality of decision-making. Ideally, task conflict is best used when there are decisions that need to be made under a deadline. For the slower, more deliberate decision-making process, task conflict can have a negative impact on the group and interfere with the process.[5]

In a conflict situation, integration is the preferred conflict management technique because it stimulates creative and dynamic decision-making. The concept of integration is defined and illustrated by Rognes and Schei:

> At a broad level, integration concerns the creation of values over and above what is achieved if the parties only divide the values that seem obviously available at the outset of a conflict management process. . . . For example, two farmers may be in conflict over how to divide between them a limited supply of water. Rather than quarrelling over a fixed pie of resources (i.e. water), the farmers can

> try to expand the pie of resources by cooperating on how to increase the total amount of water supply (e.g. by building a dam). In order to transform the conflict, the parties must search for the underlying causes of their disagreement, and explore whether this can lead them towards solutions that better meet their needs than fighting over a fixed and limited water supply.[6]

In fact, choosing to use integration will decrease one's likelihood of experiencing conflict at work, thus reducing stress levels.[7] The expectation is that integrative conflict management will have an impact on relationship conflict by minimizing its occurrence. The more an individual uses integrative approaches for tackling conflicts at work, the less opportunity there will be for relationship conflict to occur. When present, integrative conflict solutions seem to lessen the effects of relationship conflict because of their collaborative nature, which decreases tensions and confrontations. Relationship conflict is known to have a negative impact on the decision-making process because it tends to cloud the group's judgment and slow down the decision-making time. In a relationship conflict situation, individuals focus more on their issues with one another instead of the situation at hand. Ideally, one would attempt to increase the task conflict and diminish the effects of the relationship conflict, except that the two usually occur simultaneously. In fact, task conflict typically is the catalyst for relationship conflict, and the higher the task conflict, the greater the relationship conflict will be.[8]

Certain examples of relationship conflict behaviors that can occur within a work environment include making disparaging and condescending remarks about co-workers, issuing the silent treatment, ignoring or interrupting others, undermining colleagues, not giving credit where credit is due, or insulting and yelling at others. The latter are examples of more bullying tactics that cannot be ignored by supervisors. Supervisors are advised not to turn away when they sense that a bullying situation is occurring. Ultimately, the goal is to fire the bullies instead of transferring or reassigning them.[9]

Specific cases of conflict in academic libraries

To gather information regarding conflict situations in academic library settings, the author conducted a phone interview with Pat Wagner of

Pattern Research, located in Denver, Colorado. Wagner is a conflict management consultant who has more than 30 years of experience working with university libraries of all sizes from all over the country. She has visited more than 150 university or college libraries and worked with individuals on a one-on-one basis in another 50 libraries. Her webinars and live programs attract hundreds of librarians who seek counsel in how to effectively handle conflict. She participates in major conferences such as the Association of College and Research Libraries, Medical Library Association, and the American Association of Law Libraries, and handles conflict for a variety of libraries ranging from the Ivy League to community colleges. Much of her conflict consulting takes place in state universities, medical schools, and small liberal arts colleges.[10]

When there is a conflict that needs to be managed, and the administration is unsure of the best way to approach the situation, Wagner is called in to hold workshops and training sessions with the staff. The types of conflict management that she is asked to handle range from administrative issues to interpersonal staff issues. Wagner stated that the most common conflicts that she encounters deal with relationship conflicts and usually include issues such as bullying, micro-managing on the supervisory librarian's part, and broken communication lines from the top down. Examples of Wagner's counsel will be mentioned throughout the paper to support what the library literature says about the most effective ways to handle conflict management. Some of her examples are humorous and many of them unusual. To respect the privacy of the parties involved, certain details have been altered to protect their identities.

As mentioned earlier, conflict situations can be a catalyst for creativity and innovation. The following is an example of a relationship conflict that could have potentially led to an innovative change for the library if it had been handled well. A large university library was in the process of changing automation systems and needed to decide between two products. The department head of technical services and the department head of interlibrary loan were given the charge by the library dean to make a collaborative decision. Unfortunately, the librarians had not been on speaking terms for a number of years. When discussions occurred between them, they usually ended in screaming matches complete with name calling and expletives. As a result, the librarians refused to interact with one another or have any meetings regarding which automation system to choose. The deadline for a decision came and went and still no automation system was put into place. The dean of the library, who happened to be a bit conflict-averse, refused to step in and use her authority to direct the librarians to get over their interpersonal issues and

come to a conclusion that would benefit the library and its users. Thus, time marched forward and still no new automation system was chosen. This example illustrates what can happen when conflict is avoided instead of embraced. Had the dean used a more direct approach with the feuding librarians and given a deadline for a specific behavioral change to occur, the librarians might have been able to put their personal differences aside or at least capitalize on their differences of opinion to collaborate and pick out the very best automation system possible. A collaborative decision-making process could have occurred, utilizing the experiences and perspectives of both librarians. Alas, an opportunity to turn a conflict-ridden situation into a chance for creativity and change was missed, and the entire library and its patrons suffered as a result.[11]

Some believe that, if it is avoided, conflict will disappear altogether. Instead, conflict needs to be addressed immediately, lest it escalate out of control. In fact, one of the aspects of good conflict resolution is the timing of when a conflict is addressed. The earlier the conflict is handled, the greater the likelihood that conflict will reach resolution.[12] Therefore, the timing of addressing conflict is essential.

The following scenario featuring a small liberal arts college library is another illustration of mismanaged conflict. The dean was secretly making massive changes behind the scenes and had only informed a select few of his administrative team. Because the dean was conflict-averse and felt that he did not have a good working rapport with his colleagues, he chose to keep his employees in the dark about the changes he was planning on implementing for fear of the backlash. However, the staff were aware that something was afoot and gossip and rumors ran rampant. Wagner was called in to hold a training session with the staff because rumors of imminent layoffs were floating around the library. In the meeting, tension rose and there were angry outbursts as staff accused the dean of wanting to fire them. The situation escalated almost out of control as employees left the room in tears. Had the dean been upfront and honest with his colleagues and presented clear lines of communication and collaboration with his employees, most of these outbursts could have been avoided.[13]

As this example demonstrates, lack of communication from library leaders and upper administration can be destructive. Transparency is important so employees have input and some control in making informed decisions about their future. Private decision-making can be dangerous, especially when information is not shared and issues are not brought to the forefront. If there is important information that is going to impact the lives of the employees, then it is vital for the library management to

communicate this information immediately to everyone who will be affected. It is essential that everyone involved be told the same thing and at the same time.

Any time there are groups of people from different backgrounds with opposing perspectives working together, conflict is going to occur. This is the reality of group dynamics and interpersonal relationships, and proved to be the case involving one prestigious library. The hiring committee hired a recent graduate who hailed from a library school with a significantly different culture from theirs. This librarian was used to a politically active environment where it was not uncommon to question authority and speak openly about one's views. As a result, this librarian took it upon himself to file grievances against his co-workers whenever he witnessed an instance that he felt went against library policy or against his personal beliefs. He took his actions one step further and tried to implement policies without the administration's knowledge, and then harassed his colleagues when they refused to abide by his new rules. His behavior toward his colleagues was viewed as bullying, and he was asked by management to discontinue filing grievances. The work environment grew tense as librarians went out of their way to avoid this librarian and they refused to serve on committees with him. Eventually, the librarian moved on to another position at a different library where he felt he was a better fit.

This situation illustrates how conflict, when it is avoided or mismanaged, can escalate into a situation that causes discomfort for all of those involved. The first and more appropriate step to take in this situation would have been for the grievance-filing librarian to approach his perceived offenders and have a civil discussion with them about what he perceived to be an offense or a personal slight. A supervisory librarian or manager could have facilitated the conversation to ensure that both sides were heard equally. This integrative approach to conflict management would ensure that all concerns were voiced and that collaboration towards a mutually agreeable resolution was reached. If no resolution presented itself, someone from the outside with a more neutral position, such as a human resources manager, could step in and facilitate a mediation tactic.[14]

As these scenarios demonstrate, some examples of conflict are the result of poor communications and misunderstandings about what the group is trying to achieve. Differing values, goals and objectives, and role ambiguities also lead to conflict. Within an academic library setting, role ambiguities and miscommunications about job goals can be one of the greatest causes of interpersonal conflict among staff members and supervisors. Limited or scarce resources can create

competitive work environments where conflict is likely to occur due to limited space, tight budgets, and lack of finances or limited resources available for incentive.[15]

A staff member who is passed over for promotion and then finds him or herself working for a colleague, who received the promotion instead, may feel resentful and want to sabotage the new supervisor. Suddenly, deadlines are missed and information is intentionally withheld. In these instances, it is the job of the direct supervisor who granted the promotion to sit down and have a frank conversation with the candidate who did not receive the promotion. The supervisor needs to be clear about what the organizational guidelines are and what his or her expectations are of the employee. It is the responsibility of the supervisory librarian to be direct and specific about what behaviors will and will not be tolerated in the workplace. At the very least, respect and civility are required from all employees. Every work environment needs a code of behavior and written policies in place to spell out what the expectations of the organization are.[16]

One particular bullying situation within a community college library was allowed to escalate and carry on for years with no reprimands or formal documentation. A particular library staff member with a vitriolic personality was prone to verbal outbursts directed towards his colleagues. Much of his fury seemed to be aimed at his female co-workers and was triggered when things did not go his way. His immediate supervisor refused to correct his behavior or document any of his outbursts because she simply could not deal with it anymore. Instead, she would retreat into her office and shut the door when another episode occurred. As a result, the staff member was passed from department to department in the hopes that someone would be able to manage his temper. Of course, the longer his abusive behavior was allowed to continue, the more toxic the work environment became and morale suffered.[17]

Another example that Wagner provided was the following. During a move from one floor to another, the director of access services librarian was in charge of overseeing the move of the collection. The dean of the library happened to be out of his office on a coffee break and witnessed the librarian throwing a temper tantrum and screaming loudly at the workmen who were moving the books. Unfortunately, this was not the librarian's first emotional and angry outburst in public. His colleagues had been witness to many outbursts from him in the past but had failed to report them. Luckily, the dean had a clear enough mind to approach the librarian and let him know that under no circumstances was bullying to be tolerated. The dean suggested to the librarian that he return to his office

and take a break. The dean then suggested to the maintenance workers that they take a paid lunch break and return later to finish the job.[18]

At first glance, it may appear that the dean was conflict-averse and avoided a confrontation by dismissing the librarian. Instead, the conflict technique that the dean employed was to provide a cool-down period so the irate librarian could reflect upon his actions and what might have triggered his outburst. Sometimes, in a heated conflict situation, a cool-down period is exactly what is needed to prevent the conflict from escalating. Then, when the librarian had had a chance to reflect on his actions, the dean met with him and communicated that he needed to take the rest of the afternoon off. The dean made clear her expectations of the librarian, which included behaving in a civil, professional, and respectful manner to everyone, regardless of status. The librarian was instructed to think about whether or not he could comply with the dean's request, and, if he did not think that he could comply with her rules of decorum, he was strongly encouraged to start looking for a new job.[19]

In this example, the dean was specific and direct. She clearly informed the employee what her expectations were and what behaviors would not be tolerated in the workplace. There was no room for confusion or misunderstanding. During her discussion, the dean allowed the librarian an opportunity to decide what his next course of action would be.[20] As a follow-up, any future outbursts from the librarian would be documented and disciplinary measures taken.

Barriers and solutions

Aside from lack of respect and incivility, other barriers that create conflict include lack of communications, poor communications, poor listening skills, unreasonable expectations, and inflexible or rigid policies and rules.[21] Poor communications among staff members and between administration and staff can create conflict when not enough information is being shared. One way to improve the communication style of the library employees is to practice active listening skills. Active listening involves remaining calm when faced with conflict and maintaining eye contact with the person with whom one is communicating. The listener needs to put aside any emotional responses to parse out the key points that are going to enable reaching resolution. When library supervisors forget to practice active listening with their employees, the employees begin to feel as if their opinions no longer matter and that they have no buy-in regarding what occurs within the organization, making conflict inevitable.

Many additional factors can contribute to the creation of a conflict situation within an academic library. Some of these factors include too much or too little work responsibility and confusion about duties and responsibilities. A lack of job variety and interest can create boredom among staff and librarians. Difficult relationships at work and a restructuring of the organization, or uncertainty about the future, most certainly lead to angst and conflict.[22] Examples of ways to prevent or ease the burden of interpersonal staff conflict in the library are: to vary the workloads of your employees so the day to day does not become mundane and routine; to rotate people on assignments so they have an opportunity to work with a diverse group gaining exposure to new ideas and experiences, while expanding their knowledge base and learning how to perform other job functions; and to give people time to rejuvenate, whether on the job or off, with time off and occasional sabbaticals.[23]

Remaining flexible and making exceptions to rigid policies and procedures is another way to handle a potentially explosive conflict situation or prevent it from occurring. The librarian and library staff should always offer alternatives when possible. Instead of saying to the non-student patron who wants to check out a study room, "I'm sorry but you cannot check out a study room because you are not a student," offer instead "the best way that I can help you is to offer you a quiet area in the corner of the library where you may work." Or, "perhaps I can make an exception this one time since the rooms are not occupied and we are not busy today." Turn a negative into a positive, and do not focus on the problem, but instead offer a solution.[24]

Since many of the conflicts that occur within academic libraries tend to involve interpersonal conflicts between co-workers, it is important to separate the behavior from the person. When approaching a conflict situation that is brought about due to a difficult or toxic colleague, address the behavior that is creating the problem instead of attacking the person. Most importantly, when dealing with a difficult co-worker, it is important to remember that you are an afterthought. The difficult co-worker's behavior is predictable, whether it is to shut people down when ideas are expressed or to refuse to be a team player. Since the negative behaviors are predictable, the colleague interacting with a toxic co-worker can better plan his or her reaction to the behaviors.

It is necessary to work towards logical responses and avoid an emotional response. Do not allow a toxic co-worker to hijack your emotions and your life. In addition, it is important to remember that everyone has a different work style and there is no one right or wrong

way of doing things as long as the same conclusion and outcome are reached through collaboration. According to Deb Johnson of Johnson and Johnson Consulting, when dealing with the difficult co-worker, it is suggested that the focus remain on the process and not the people.[25] Johnson states that 80 percent of the conflict is due to the process and 20 percent actually has to do with the person. It is not usually the person doing the work, but how the work is being done, that causes the most conflict. Having said this, Johnson also states that conflict is a necessary part of our work environment and serves as a catalyst for change and for moving forward. Conflict creates situations that enable employees to express viewpoints different from their own and accept a fresh way of looking at things. Johnson also offers recommendations for how to deal with difficult people.[26]

In addition, written policies must be put into place early that state which behaviors will be tolerated at the workplace and which are inexcusable and warrant disciplinary action. Clear guidelines must be presented to all employees with the understanding of what the consequences are when these guidelines and rules are violated. Furthermore, a human resources representative needs to be informed immediately when conflict arises. Most importantly, the incident needs to be written up and documented. Staff from human resources may suggest that the employee participate in an anger management workshop or receive additional counseling. Beyond this advice, any additional outbursts or violations of the guidelines will result in termination.[27]

Various conflict management styles have been presented within these case studies. Accommodating, or obliging, as a conflict management technique results in a lose/win situation for the parties involved. In this example, one party agrees to yield or give in, allowing the other person to win and resolve the conflict at hand. An individual would use an accommodating conflict management technique if attempting to preserve the relationship and maintain an image of being a reasonable and fair person.[28]

The most ineffective conflict technique and, unfortunately, the most commonly used technique is avoidance. Many of the examples presented in this paper are representative of conflict avoidance, and, as the literature supports, this conflict management style usually results in an escalation of the conflict. Conflict-avoidant individuals are known to be self-serving, want to be liked by all, and typically are afraid of offending anyone.[29] Using the avoidance technique as a conflict management tool causes one to forgo good opportunities for learning and growing.

It is inevitable that academic libraries will be faced with conflict at some point, whether the conflict involves task conflict, which is related more to the process of how things are done, or relationship conflict, which deals with interpersonal staff disputes. In times of interpersonal staff conflict, it may be necessary to bring in a conflict coach or consultant such as Wagner. A representative of the human resources department or a member of the employee assistance program may also be called to intervene and assist with the conflict mediation and dispute management. It is up to the administration within the organization to decide how they best see fit to solve their conflict issues and what resources they can spare in the resolution process. Academic library administrators who deal with conflict in their organization immediately fare better than administrators who choose to ignore conflict in the hopes that it will disappear.[30]

Conclusion

Conflict, when handled constructively, can be beneficial to interpersonal relationships and library organizations. Well-managed conflict can open the communication lines among disputants and introduce new perspectives, encouraging creative resolutions as well as new and more flexible library processes. Mishandled conflict can be destructive as it breaks down communication lines and trust, thus harming relationships and morale.

As discussed, task and relationship conflict are two types of conflict that can occur simultaneously. Task conflict is typically beneficial because it promotes innovative decision-making and can move a library organization forward in a positive direction. Relationship conflict tends to be negative by having a detrimental effect on interpersonal relationships. Often, individuals who experience relationship conflict are consumed by emotions and cannot focus on the task at hand.

There are different conflict management techniques that an individual can use when approaching a conflict situation. Certain conflict management techniques, such as collaboration, are more effective than others and will have a long-term impact on the nature of the dispute and how it is resolved. As the case studies in this chapter illustrate, avoiding conflict is both unfair to library employees and destructive to the overall well-being of the organization. The efficiency of conflict resolution depends upon how quickly the issue is addressed, and which management tool is utilized. Overall, conflict should not be avoided, but viewed as a

useful tool that can strengthen relationships, improve communications, and have a beneficial effect for all involved.

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21

The transparent organization: keeping staff in the loop

Laura Blessing

Abstract: Good internal communication within an organization builds trust, avoids speculation and reliance on grapevines and produces engaged employees. However, communication by management may suffer due to shrinking budgets, unfilled vacancies and an overload of information. This chapter will introduce research that supports the view that informed employees make better employees. It will outline the best practices of effective communication, both traditional face-to-face methods such as staff meetings and modern electronic methods such as the intranet, blogs and email, as they are used at North Carolina State University Libraries. Many of these communication channels can be duplicated in most libraries.

Key words: organizational communication, culture of communication, transparent organization, internal communication, employee engagement.

Introduction

Good communication is an essential component of a healthy work environment. The current pace of change and overload of information in academic libraries has made it even more vital to connect with all staff through the exchange of information. When libraries have traditional and electronic communication systems in place, employees feel more connected and committed to the organization, and managers can shape

their own communication programs for their staff. In order to be effective communicators, managers need to take advantage of organizational methods of communication that are already in place to help build a culture of openness and transparency.

At times, communication activities may take a back seat to ensuring core work functions are being carried out. In recent years, library managers have struggled to adjust to shrinking budgets and unfilled vacancies. They have found that, while a diminishing number of staff are asked to take on more responsibilities, there are fewer opportunities for formal communication or even the informal "water cooler" catch-ups. An overload of information may mean that managers do not have time to sort through what is necessary to pass along to others. While having a strategic communication program may seem like a luxury under these circumstances, this situation actually makes it even more crucial.

Managers who do not harness the power of a strong communication program may find that their staff are not prepared to cope with the pace of work and its changing nature. A library without a strategic communication program may find itself falling behind. Employees may feel disconnected from the mission of the library and look elsewhere for employment, or they may stay and simply not give their full attention to work requirements. Additionally, when managers do not actively communicate with employees, employees are left to figure things out for themselves. Speculation and grapevines can cause employees to have a less positive view of the organization than administrators would ever want. Having a communication program in place, however, gives employees a sense of transparency of the organization and helps build trust.

Literature review

Hayase defined internal communication as "the exchange of information both informal and formal between management and employees within the organization."[1] Although it is important to communicate with constituents other than the organization's employees (external communication), this chapter focuses solely on communications between employees and management. The terms "organizational communication" or "internal communication" will be used to refer to this type of information exchange.

In 1938, Barnard claimed that "the first executive function is to develop and maintain a system of communications."[2] Although this was written

many years ago, the declaration still rings true today, as communicating with employees remains a fundamental responsibility of management. More current literature emphasizes this important managerial obligation. In 2004, for example, Tourish and Hargie stated: "Communication is central to any study of what managers do, and to the effectiveness or otherwise of organizations."[3]

Research on organizational communication indicates that there are a number of benefits for organizations that have strategic communication programs in place. For instance, management literature finds positive correlations between internal communication and job satisfaction and commitment.[4] Research also shows that communication efforts decrease turnover intent and actual turnover rates among employees.[5] Thus, organizations may want to consider strategically using internal communication to reduce turnover rates.

Asif and Sargeant found that organizational communication produced additional positive outcomes including: shared vision, satisfaction, service focus, empowerment, commitment, and loyalty.[6] Like Asif and Sargeant, others have highlighted the importance of factors that relate to employee performance in addition to job satisfaction. Baumruk et al. noted that employee satisfaction only measures how people like their jobs or job environments. It does not measure what behaviors employees could exhibit that might further the employer's mission.[7] In studying these desired behaviors, Kahn used the term "personal engagement," and explained that engaged employees are able to find identity and purpose in their work.[8] Others have described engaged employees as being motivated, self-improving, and productive.[9] They desire to be part of the organization despite other opportunities and exert extra time, effort, and initiative to contribute to the success of the organization.[10]

In addition to the positive outcomes of organizational communication, it is important to note that an effective communication system may also reduce some negative elements frequently found in many organizations. Hoover's research found that "an organization that is silent can experience the worst outcomes as it forces employees to speculate, listen to the grapevine and turn to the media for information about their company . . . even in a time of crisis, good communication keeps employees engaged and the organization moving forward."[11]

Knowing the benefits of organizational communication and the consequences of its absence, a supervisor might try to find ways to regularly maintain good communication with his/her staff. King et al. showed that employees who are generally satisfied with their jobs and have good relationships with their supervisors tend to believe they receive

good organizational communication from them.[12] However, it is the opportunity to communicate with all levels in the organization, including senior management, that has the greatest effect on employees' feelings of commitment towards their organizations.[13] In order for managers to see communication as a priority, a culture of communication and transparency should be modeled from the top. Asif and Sergeant have argued that: "When a culture of communication pervades the entire organization, it encourages horizontal and vertical communication flows across the organization."[14]

What should organizations be communicating? One study conducted by a business membership and research organization asked managers from over 200 companies what they considered effective employee communication. Respondents believed that effective communication should improve morale, create a positive relationship between employees and management, inform employees about internal changes, explain employee benefits, and increase understanding about the organization's goals and culture.[15] These objectives signal a change in thinking regarding internal communication. Clearly, employers see the need to be more strategic in their communication programs.

Furthermore, DeBussy et al. described the idea of organizations marketing to their own employees as if they were the organization's customers. They described how managers could use communication to increase the satisfaction and loyalty of their employees in the same way as we do with external customers.[16] D'Aprix explained that employees these days are looking for more than just job satisfaction. They need to believe that the work that they do is meaningful work, and they will look for communication to prove or disprove that notion.[17] Keeping this type of employee engaged may dictate a strong communication program.

To meet these needs, researchers emphasize that communication needs to be two-way, that is, an interchange between management and employees.[18] DeBussy et al. further stated that the effectiveness of internal communication is its ability to "reach and motivate lower level employees within organizations."[19] Any internal communication effort should be designed with opportunities for upper management to speak with and listen to all levels of employees throughout the organization. Tourish and Hargie note that most employees tend to want the answers to six basic questions. These are: "What's my job? How am I doing? Does anybody give a damn? How are we doing? How do we fit in to the whole? How can I help?"[20]

Libraries that have taken the time to put communication programs in place may still find that communicating with employees is not as effective

as it once was. One reason is that employees are now expecting organizations to use both traditional as well as electronic means of communicating. A 2004 study by the consulting firm Watson Wyatt Worldwide examined organizations that used strategic communication methods. They found that organizations using technology in their communications are better at conveying the significance and implications of their message.[21]

In fact, employing technological methods may have additional benefits over more traditional methods. For instance, DeBussy et al. found that the use of new media, in particular the intranet, positively affected internal marketing communication.[22] It was positively related to the perception of an ethical work climate and mutual trust within the organization as well as "organizational attitudes toward innovation and the alignment of personal work goals with those of the organization."[23]

Waldeck et al. studied the effectiveness of using various communication methods, both electronic and traditional. Traditional communication media they studied included face-to-face communication, memos, newsletters, and employee handbooks. They also researched newer communication technologies, or "Advanced Communication and Information Technologies (ACITs)."[24] ACITs that they researched included email, intranet, instant messaging, and videoconferencing.[25] Today we could probably add several newer electronic communication trends to that, such as blogs and wikis. The study found that, where ACITs were used, respondents wanted to see the communication in another format, whether the format was another ACIT or a more traditional method.[26] Essentially, the study shows what many of us already know: employees prefer specific communication methods depending on the type of message being transmitted. However, employees note that, even when an electronic channel is the preferred method, another (electronic or traditional/in-person) method should be used in conjunction with it in order to ensure the message's successful delivery.[27]

Finally, Dobos found that "channel habituation" is common within organizations.[28] This occurs when organizations continue to use the same medium for communication even when more effective and efficient channels are available for use. This may serve as a valuable reminder to review your library's communication strategy regularly to ensure you are communicating as efficiently as possible and that you are taking advantage of all the communication media available.

In the examples below, you will note that many of the communication methods are those with which the library administration began or had much influence in creating. This not only enables managers to see clearly

that one of their most important responsibilities is communicating with their employees; it also gives them a blueprint from which they can build their communication programs in their own units.

Case study: North Carolina State University Libraries

In the last decade at North Carolina State University (NCSU) Libraries, many communication methods have been used effectively. Traditional communication methods have included regular departmental meetings between department heads and their staff, monthly brown bag sessions with the Director of Libraries, library-wide meetings with the director, and one-on-one meetings between the director and a staff member hitting years of service milestones (five, ten, fifteen-year, etc., employment anniversaries).

One benefit of these information exchanges is that they give the employees an opportunity to feel heard by management and in some cases by the top administrator. Employees may ask questions and receive answers, at times receiving those answers directly from the top. They do not feel as if layers of hierarchy are filtering their messages when the director/dean is right in front of them. Even meeting with a departmental manager can be empowering when an employee reports to a supervisor lower down in the hierarchy.

One of our more popular types of these information exchanges is the Brown Bag Lunch with the Director of Libraries, held approximately once per month. These informal lunches are voluntary, but open to all employees of the library. They give employees an opportunity to hear about the most important issues that are happening in the Libraries and on campus, according to the director's perspective. Staff are encouraged to bring up any questions or issues of concern – whether they were issues that the director planned to speak about or not.

In addition to the Brown Bag Lunches, each department meets annually with the Director of Libraries. These meetings are similar to the Brown Bag Lunches, except that employees have a greater chance to focus on questions relating to their departmental units. The meetings are often run without an agenda, and they can become more like brainstorming sessions than a formal or informal meeting. New ideas for projects or even ideas for workflow may result from them, but often the greatest outcome for employees is the building of camaraderie with the director.

A larger venue for employees to meet with the Director of Libraries is all-staff meetings. These meetings are held at least twice per year. The Libraries' director imparts the latest budget updates as well as information about major strategic initiatives. The most important part of the meeting, though, is the opportunity for staff members to ask the director any question – whether related to what has been stated earlier or not. This gives employees the feeling that the meeting belongs to them and they can control the agenda. Recent staff meetings have included agenda items as basic as what furniture is currently being considered for the current building or as involved as the details for the new library under construction that will open up in the next year.

As important as it is to meet with the top administrator of the library, employees may equally appreciate the opportunity to check in more frequently with their manager or department head. At NCSU Libraries, department heads are encouraged to hold regularly scheduled meetings with their staff to update them on budget and strategic matters that may affect their work. Department heads hold regular meetings (usually weekly or twice monthly, depending on the department's needs) with their staff. In this way, matters can be brought to the appropriate level of attention early on. Also, it gives the manager an opportunity to get to know his or her staff in a less formal setting. In addition, managers are encouraged to have an open-door policy for matters that are more easily dealt with one-on-one.

Finally, the Libraries has a "Library Council," in which staff representatives from all parts of the library join with library management and administration twice per year to review major strategic initiatives. Each Library Council member acts as a representative for other library employees, as they are encouraged to go back to their areas and share what they have learned in these meetings. Again, Library Council members are encouraged to ask questions and bring issues of importance to the group.

In addition to traditional methods of communication, the NCSU Libraries employs a wide range of technological communication methods to enhance library-wide communication.

Like many libraries, NCSU has a library intranet. This intranet has a mix of information types: procedural information and forms, FAQs, blogs, and staff updates. The staff updates are found on the *Library News* section of the intranet. In addition to new employee announcements, these updates include professional development accomplishments of Libraries employees, such as recent publications, professional presentations, library-wide or regional/national awards, and library

school or convention scholarships. *Library News* comes up on the front page every time an employee logs on to the staff intranet. These types of updates build community within the Libraries.

In addition to these intranet updates, the Libraries employs the use of a "Yes Button." This is a button located on the front page of the intranet where any employee may make a suggestion that goes straight to the Director of Libraries. She reviews these suggestions regularly and takes action on the issues raised. Of course, the idea of the Yes Button is that, barring legal, budgetary, or procedural barriers, most ideas will get a "Yes" from the director. A popular Yes Button suggestion that was implemented was the installation of a video camera at our Libraries' coffee bar that appears on the Libraries' website. With this in place, staff – and patrons – can easily see if the line is too long to risk coming down to get a quick cup of coffee. Other implemented Yes Button suggestions have dealt with workflow issues involving interdepartmental matters. The director may choose to bring up a Yes Button suggestion and its resolution at staff meetings or other venues. We have again found that, regardless of the outcome, the most important feature of this method is ensuring that employees know they are heard by the highest levels in the organization.

Blogs are another technological communication resource that the NCSU Libraries has used effectively. For example, NCSU is currently building an additional main library on campus. Many of the current staff will eventually be transferred to this new building, so employees are anxious to hear updates. Near the beginning of major planning for the Hunt Library, a blog was created wherein any Hunt Library-related report could be posted. Also, major decisions and budget issues were openly listed on the Hunt Library blog. Staff may still get frustrated when administration does not have the answers to all of their questions, but having a place they can go to get updates helps them to feel more involved in the planning stages for the new library.

Even email can be used strategically to communicate staff updates. For instance, each new employee is announced via an all-staff listserv email. The announcement includes information such as previous experience and education. In this way, current employees feel they know a little more about someone they may be working with closely in the future. Also, new employees can feel good knowing they have been "bragged about" to other employees, easing their transition into the organization.

The all-staff listserv is also used both for day-to-day updates to employees, such as announcements of fire drill testing, and more professional items, such as workshops and training sessions or campus

events. In addition, all Libraries vacancies are posted internally by email so that employees have an opportunity to apply for the position early on in the search process. Opportunities for tuition scholarships to library school programs or to conferences are also sent out via email.

As new technology brings new methods of communication, the Libraries will work with the Information Technology unit to experiment with them. At the same time, the Libraries will keep using face-to-face methods, as these often seem to bring about the most dynamic dialogues with employees. When deciding on the best communication method, managers should keep in mind the goals of keeping the library's decision-making processes transparent to employees and keeping all levels of employees involved in the initiatives of the library.

Conclusion

Internal communication produces engaged employees and ultimately healthier work environments. Library administrators can enable good organizational communication by having a culture of communication in place. Many of the communication channels NCSU Libraries uses can be duplicated in most libraries. When communication is marketed to employees in the same way as it is marketed to library users, employee commitment is enhanced. Internal communication should not, however, be thought of as being one-way only. Lines of communication should go both ways, with a distinct emphasis on opportunities for exchanges with senior management.

Managers need to be familiar with all available communication channels and be mindful of selecting the best channel for each issue. Electronic methods can be perceived as being superior to traditional methods, but the best method may depend upon the type of message being communicated. It should be noted, though, that multiple communication channels are sometimes best.

In-person/traditional communication methods include one-on-one meetings, all-staff (or smaller unit) meetings, and informational brown bag lunches. Electronic methods include intranet, email, wikis, and blogs. Managers can use multiple communication channels to reach the largest group of people. It is a good idea for all managers to review current communication methods and ensure that they are using the most efficient methods when imparting information to employees.

Organizational communication at lower levels is heavily influenced by the culture of communication already present within the library. It is

therefore of utmost importance for library administrators to ensure multiple communication channels – both in-person and electronic – are being taken advantage of by the top levels of the organization. Only then will managers see their role as communicators as a top priority.

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Index

access services, 194, 224, 226–7, 269
accountability, 11, 15–16
accents, 125, 136–7
acquisitions, 168, 206, 223, 226–7, 238
Asian Pacific American Librarians Association, 126, 131
Asian Pacific Americans 125–7, 134
Assessment, 23, 32, 60–77, 88, 102, 105, 157–8, 162
Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), 82, 85, 104, 131–2, 158, 165, 234, 245, 263–4
architectural accessibility, 152
attitudes, 11
Auburn University Libraries, 163, 167

Boomers, 100, 278, 280–6
budget, 44, 46
building renovations, 30, 45, 48, 147, 155, 161, 268

Carleton University, 23–5
Cataloging, 54–5, 151, 168, 193–4, 206, 209, 212, 214, 221–4, 226–7, 297–8
celebrations, 16
channel habituation, 327
Civility Wordle, 179–80
climate surveys, 102, 105–6, 175–6, 179, 213–14, 216
ClimateQUAL, 61, 63, 102, 105, 120
coaching, 16–17
collaboration, 14
communities of practice, 254, 256
Competing Values Framework, 22–3
conflict management style,316
conflict resolution, 311, 317
continuing education, 46
cross-training, 212
culture change, 22, 31–3, 263–4, 267
culture shaping, 14, 16
cultural ambassadors, 137
cultural competency, 130–1
cultural conflict, 100–1
cultural intelligence, 130–1
cultural rituals, 8, 44, 47

darkness, 153
density, 151
diversity
  committee, 105–6, 117–19, 131, 178–9, 181
  in the workplace, 130, 177–8
  initiatives, 61, 99, 101, 117–18, 120–2
  librarian, 118–21

employee engagement, 26, 32, 295
employee expectations 12, 83–88, 135, 298
emotional intelligence, 265
eReaders, 269
ethics, 113

faculty status, 10, 234–5, 237, 240, 271
family, 44, 132–3, 176, 196, 280
feedback, 12, 16, 17

flexible scheduling, 295, 300
focus groups, 278, 281
for-credit classes, 43
fun, 182, 189, 190–3, 197, 199, 269, 272, 296, 300

Gallup Strengths Finder, 112
gaming in the library, 169
generational stereotypes, 279, 287
GenXers, 278, 280–7
Governance, 27–8, 46, 61, 166, 234, 236

immigrants, 133, 138
inclusion, 103, 108, 121
inclusive workplace, 100, 117, 120–2
information commons, 165–6, 168
information literacy, 165
information technology, 9, 10, 164, 167–8, 172, 181, 206, 211, 226, 331
innovation, 23, 25, 30–1, 71, 81, 180, 288, 308, 310, 327

Job satisfaction, 62, 82–4

knowledge management, 204

leadership, 8, 11–14, 16, 17
leadership theories, 114–15
learning culture, 12
learning organization, 112–13
library food policy, 267
library hours, 266
loyalty, 16

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, 294
mentoring, 86, 89–90, 140
Millennials, 100, 278–87
minority leaders, 115
mission statements, 51, 63, 208, 267–8, 273
mixed heritages, 134, 138
model minority, 134–5
Mood Elevator, 16
morale, 47, 69, 149, 189–91, 193, 195–7, 205, 211, 222, 228, 295–7, 299–300, 303, 313, 317, 326
motivation, 22, 30, 199, 205, 293–6, 299, 302
Mount Royal University, 23–5, 27, 29, 33

openness, 150
organizational health, 12
organizational history, 11, 164
outreach, 43

play, 190, 195–6
preferred culture, 22–4, 28, 32–3
professional development, 294–6
programming, 32, 119, 139, 178–9, 181, 183
public services, 10, 41, 44, 55, 62, 193–4, 206, 215, 221, 223–5, 235, 238, 297

rank, 60–1, 66, 100, 121, 179, 181, 233–9, 243, 245, 247
recognition, 296, 302
recruitment, 82, 85, 87–8, 99, 101–3, 109, 118–21, 129–30, 135, 138–9, 190, 287
relationship conflict, 308–10, 317
refugees, 133, 135
retention, 82, 85–6, 101, 118–19, 121, 129–30, 190, 263, 287, 295
risk taking, 25–6, 33

Schein, Edgar, 8
Senn Delaney, 11–12, 14, 15–16
shared management, 31
social engagement, 154, 162
sociofugal, 154–5, 162
sociopetal, 154–5, 162
space assessment, 150

staff development, 14, 33, 59–60, 65–7, 74–6, 112–13, 117–18, 120, 180–1, 190, 210
strategic plan, 15, 26, 27, 31–2, 60, 62–4, 73, 77, 178, 208, 209, 210, 262, 267–8, 278, 295, 299
students, 27–30, 41–2, 44, 100, 108, 135, 139, 149, 165–72, 196–9, 212, 214, 226–7, 264–73, 277, 282, 285, 300, 315
subcultures, 9–10
support staff, 28–9, 33, 60–2, 68, 148, 165, 167, 206–7, 213, 299, 301, 303
systems thinking, 112

task conflict, 308–9, 317
teamwork, 23–4, 28–9, 59, 61, 63, 68–9, 71, 87, 119, 149, 228, 287
training, 14, 27–8, 32, 61, 65, 67, 75, 77, 100, 105–6, 108, 120, 137, 164–6, 168, 170–2, 178, 190, 208–9, 212–14, 216, 223–4, 226, 254, 257–8, 287, 294–5, 298, 310–11, 330
transformational leadership, 264–5, 266
trust, 10, 30, 46, 47, 89, 106, 148, 151, 158, 191, 199, 204–5, 208, 210–11, 264–5, 295–6, 302, 317, 324, 327
turnover, 46

university faculty, 43

values, 11–12
vision, 15
volunteers, 198, 225, 227, 266, 271–2

Wake Forest University, 263–4
women leaders, 115